

December 5, 2018

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## Community services and City budget – 2019 financial planning concluded

City Council has concluded financial planning and finalized the City's 2019 budget. The budget is expected to be adopted at the Dec. 17 Council meeting, in time to submit to the Province before year-end.

*"This is the fourth 10-year budget for Campbell River, built on the principles of long-term vision and stable, predictable property tax rates to provide essential services, with funding for renewal and replacement of aging infrastructure and new or improved services that meet community needs and expectations," says Mayor Andy Adams. "The 2019-2028 Financial Plan builds on the previous international awards for best practices in local government budgeting. We appreciate the hard work of the entire finance team and the efforts of all staff in this process that translates financial planning into community services."*

*"Council has delivered a budget to maintain the momentum of economic activity driven by new development, while planning to meet long-term community needs," says city manager Deborah Sargent. "2019 will be another busy year for infrastructure replacement – and the 10-year plan ensures funding, employees, tools and equipment, programs and services to support community development and advancement, with plans ahead to spread out costs of modest service enhancements."*

*"With significant investment and construction continuing in Campbell River, this provides additional revenue that allows the City to fund new ongoing services related to community growth, and in response to community demand. Examples include enhancements in protective services, development services, economic development and parks services," says Ron Bowles, the City's general manager of community development and acting chief financial officer. "Also the annual gaming grant and Community Works Fund (Federal Gas Tax) will continue to help fund enhanced services and capital improvements."*

Financial planning meetings took place Dec. 3 through 5. Presentations from community residents ahead of Council's deliberations focused on establishing a bike park on the Sportsplex property and urban forest management. View recordings of the budget meetings at [www.campbellriver.ca](http://www.campbellriver.ca) (click on the Council Webcast button).

Less than half of the City's budget is funded through local property taxation; the majority is funded through user fees, sale of services and senior government grants.

More than 34 per cent of the amount collected by the City was on behalf of other agencies (for provincial and regional district taxes, and for the hospital, schools and library.)

See videos about City of Campbell River budgeting and property taxes on the City's YouTube channel (one click from the icon at the top of the website at [campbellriver.ca](http://campbellriver.ca)).

For more information about the City's 2019 budget, please contact Ron Bowles, acting chief financial officer at 250-286-5759.

Services provided by the City of Campbell River include: drinking water, sanitary sewer, emergency response, garbage, recycling and yard waste collection, storm water management, streets, sidewalks and traffic control, development services, economic development, tourism, bylaw enforcement, fire protection, police, parks, recreation and culture programs and facilities, transit, airport, environmental management, museum, art gallery and other public facilities.

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## **Background**

### ***Highlights of 2019 budget***

- maintains more than 100 existing City services
- provides approximately \$78 million for operations, with another \$35 for capital projects
- includes a property tax increase of 2.55 per cent, which maintains a predictable tax rate increase (in line with Council's budget parameters, between 2 and 3.5 per cent to cover inflationary costs and contract increases in the base budget, including major contracts to maintain existing RCMP, transit and solid waste services)
- includes funding for new capital projects and for infrastructure renewal (\$11.7 million for aging infrastructure over the next 10 years, funded through a \$190,000 incremental tax levy each year)
- allocates unanticipated revenue and expired debt payment commitments directly to pay for infrastructure renewal and replacement – directing existing funding to re-invest in infrastructure without raising property tax rates higher than budget parameters
- Consistent with Council's budget parameters, the draft budget maintains stable property taxes. The proposed levy on a Campbell River home of average value is in the mid-range of tax rates in other British Columbia communities of similar size.

### ***Highlights of service enhancements in 2019***

- support a significant increase in development applications (one additional building inspector)
- address community concerns with respect to public safety (one additional RCMP member)
- maximize the effectiveness of the economic development office (operational funding)
- maintain and enhance urban forest (horticulturist), including tree protection bylaw

### ***Highlights of capital projects and community infrastructure investment***

- detailed design on the Highway 19A road improvements from Simms Creek to Rockland Road (construction begins in 2020)
- Campbellton entrance and ongoing planning work
- Elk Falls cemetery expansion
- downtown washroom improvements
- additional bus stop shelters
- Willis Road pedestrian upgrades
- bus pull-out on Dogwood Street at Carihi
- Sportsplex roof replacement and facility rehabilitation
- ongoing community infrastructure renewal for sewer, water, roads and storm drains

### ***Highlights of operating projects***

- manage organizational change and maintain the City as an employer of choice (human resource employee one-year term position)
- enhanced Skate Park environment (youth leaders at Skate Park during busy summer season)
- continuation of grant programs to local associations in four main commercial areas (downtown, Pier Street, Campbellton, Willow Point)
- continuation of Safer Downtown program (safety office and additional bylaw enforcement)