



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Jan. 30, 2018**

## **Town council OKs 2018 budget**

**Wasaga Beach** – Town council approved the 2018 municipal budget during its meeting tonight.

“As I stated in December when Committee of the Whole approved the budget, this financial plan positions us to meet the needs of our community today and it also allows us to be successful in the future,” Mayor Brian Smith said. “This is a responsible budget that is the result of careful deliberation on the part of all council members. Council and staff look forward to the implementation of this budget throughout the year.”

The town’s operating budget is \$37-million and the capital budget is \$17.5-million. Wasaga Beach residents will see an estimated 2.97 percent increase on their municipal property taxes. The average homeowner with a property assessed at \$320,000 will see an increase of \$62.79 to the municipal portion of their annual tax bill. Of that increase, \$14.13 is due to an increase in assessment and \$48.66 is due to the municipal tax rate increase. With the county and school board rates factored in, the overall increase for an average home is estimated at \$57.04 per year.

Major capital investments include \$6-million for roads and bridge projects, \$3.2-million for water and sewer projects, \$2.5 million for the design of the new community hub (arena, indoor recreation space, cultural space and library) and \$450,000 for parks’ projects. Additional funds have also been earmarked for enhancements to community events such as Easter Extravaganza, Jazz in the Park, the annual Christmas tree lighting, and the Santa Claus Parade.

A total of \$2.8-million is budgeted for the implementation of the downtown project in 2018. The creation of a new downtown has been an ongoing project this term of council. The goal is to create a community hub, additional shopping choices, and condominium-style housing options. Once complete, the development will generate additional tax revenue that will benefit the community for generations to come.

Council also earmarked \$843,000 for the Beachfront Management Board budget. These funds will be used to operate and maintain the buildings, property and the beach area at Beach Area One.

A challenge to this year's budget was the loss of \$441,000 through the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF). Funding is decreasing because the town is becoming more urbanized and therefore has a greater taxation base to draw from. The 2018 (OMPF) grant is \$2.5-million compared to \$2.9 million a year ago. Staff found \$215,000 in savings to help offset the decrease in funding for 2018, but the shortfall will continue in the years ahead. An additional \$207,000 was identified through taxation. These funds will be transferred to reserves. In 2019, the town will only receive \$2.1-million through the OMPF fund and in 2020 the grant will only be \$1.8-million. By 2022, the grant will only amount to \$1.3-million. Council and staff will have to continue to address this loss in revenue in the years ahead.

### **Investing in Wasaga Beach (Capital project highlights)**

- **\$1.4-million for Ramblewood Drive urbanization**
- **\$40,000 for 58<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk construction**
- **\$824,150 for Beachwood Drive Trunk Watermain**
- **\$767,000 for Bay Sands North Storm Sewer System**
- **\$200,000 for Sunnidale Road Watermain Replacement**
- **\$652,000 for Zoo Park Road (Phase 1) Drainage Improvements**
- **\$135,000 for renovations/repairs at the RecPlex**
- **\$30,000 for renovations to the annex at the Youth Centre**
- **\$45,000 for light duty truck for fire department (replacement for 2004 vehicle)**
- **\$53,000 for the library (furniture, computers and office equipment, items for the collection).**
- **\$1.2-million to replace aging vehicles and equipment from various departments**

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### **For media requiring additional information, please contact:**

Michael Gennings  
Communications Officer  
Town of Wasaga Beach  
(705) 429-3844 ext. 2237  
[communications@wasagabeach.com](mailto:communications@wasagabeach.com)  
[www.wasagabeach.com](http://www.wasagabeach.com)