

Council approves 1.13% tax increase in 2021 Budget following Feb. 16 meeting

By **ALYSSA PARKHILL**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Caledon residents can expect to see a 1.13 per cent tax increase as part of the 2021 Budget, following Council's approval of the 2021 Budget on February 16.

The Town states they worked at organizing the Budget to focus on impacts being faced by residents and local businesses stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and, at the same time, preparing for future growth.

"Our focus this year is on people, community and recovery. This means that the best thing we can do for residents and businesses is maintain service levels and keep our infrastructure in a state of good repair," Mayor Allan Thompson.

The first draft of the budget was put together on January 4 following online surveys which took place between November 30 and December 11.

Presentations were made by local organizations such as Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Caledon Detachment, Caledon Fire Department, and Caledon Public Library.

Town staff were given a budget target of two per cent, which they were able whittle down to an even lower number.

The 2021 Budget was approved by Council with an overall increase of 1.13 per cent. The Budget includes tax increases from the Region of Peel and the school boards, states the Town.

This boils down to a \$59 tax increase on the average residential tax bill, a drop from last year's \$117 property tax increase.

Here's a breakdown of the 2021 Budget:

\$30 million is being put towards the Town's Road Capital Program, along with another \$1.8 million for the Bridge Capital Program for future road projects, including reconstruction, maintenance, design and other necessary road treatments.

The Caledon East Community Centre expansion will continue being constructed. \$17.5 million was approved in last year's budget to begin Phase 4 of the expansion which will have a new pool, library branch, gym and fitness centre, and community areas.

Other projects that will continue to be expanded including the Caledon Seniors' Centre in Bolton and the Rotary Place.

\$3.1 million will go towards community improvements including parks, playgrounds, parkways and the rehabilitation of the Caledon Trailway Bridges.

Valleywood Fire Station will gain five new full-time firefighters, as well as \$0.8 million will fund a multi-year project in order to expand fire stations in Palgrave, Mono Mills and Alton.

"Our focus this year is on people, community and recovery. This means that the best thing we can do for residents and businesses is maintain service levels and keep our infrastructure in a state of good repair," said Thompson.

For further information on the 2021 Budget, visit Caledon.ca/budget.