



### For Immediate Release

Dec. 2, 2021

## Georgina Council approves 2022 budget with zero per cent operating tax increase

**Georgina, ON** – Council has approved the 2022 budget, which was developed with a commitment to ensuring the Town can continue to provide a high level of service to residents while minimizing the impact of tax increases. It includes a zero per cent operating tax increase. There is an additional infrastructure levy of one per cent for capital reserves for a total increase of one per cent. This translates into an estimated property tax increase of \$21 a year for an average home (non-waterfront) with an assessed value of \$402,995.

“We are proud of the hard work staff have done to be able to bring in a budget with a zero per cent operating tax increase,” said Mayor Margaret Quirk. “2021 was the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and while it brought challenges, we were able to remain flexible with the budget. We have a large capital need in our growing community, and Council has approved adding a one per cent contribution to capital reserves to ensure the Town can continue to deliver its 10-year capital program and reduce the infrastructure funding gap. I would like to thank Council and staff for their commitment to this budget, and the community for working with us to ensure a strong future for Georgina.”

The Town is able to provide a zero per cent operating increase in 2022 due to an above-average surplus being forecast for fiscal 2021. The surplus is primarily due to receiving federal and provincial COVID-19 funding to assist with operating pressures, as well as a reduction in recreation service levels in 2021 due to recreation staff being redeployed to support the mass vaccination clinic at the Georgina Ice Palace. The surplus will be contributed to the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve and this reserve will now be used to fund the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) program to completion over the next three years. This created a permanent one per cent reduction in the tax levy operating budget, allowing for a zero per cent operating increase in 2022.

Highlights from the budget include:

- \$2.3 million investment in roads selective resurfacing, maintenance and rehabilitation
- \$1.9 million for water and wastewater infrastructure, including upgrades to public water taps
- \$1.1 million for the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) tree removal program
- \$1 million for the Pefferlaw Dam
- \$1.4 million for recreational amenities in Pefferlaw
- \$850,000 for a rescue pumper apparatus
- \$756,000 towards the Building Condition Assessment (BCA) program, and facilities repairs and remediation program
- \$600,000 for the culvert and ditch design and rehabilitation program
- \$330,500 for community organizations including Georgina Centre for the Arts and Culture, Georgina Chamber of Commerce, Georgina Farmers' Market, GTTI, the Military Museum and Routes Transportation
- \$90,000 for streetlight upgrades

Council also approved the 2022 water and wastewater budget, which will see an increase of 5.84 per cent or \$14 for the average quarterly billing. The water and wastewater budget is funded by the water users and is not funded by the property tax levy.

“Georgina’s changing environment will continue to present many budgetary and financial challenges,” said Rob Wheeler, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer. “To ensure a sustained economic recovery, the Town has invested in economic recovery strategies including the creation of a dedicated economic recovery team and programs. These will ensure Georgina has the tools in place to address the financial pressures related to COVID-19, economic recovery, proposed growth and long-term financial sustainability.”

The Town promoted a number of opportunities to encourage public engagement and received resident input into the 2022 budget from an online survey and dedicated email.

The total 2022 property tax rates for all levels of government will not be determined until early April, following the tax rate setting by York Region and the Ministry of Education for their portion of the property tax bill.

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**Media Contact: Tanya Thompson | Communications Manager | Office of the CAO**  
Phone: 905-476-4305, Ext. 2446 | Email: [tathompson@georgina.ca](mailto:tathompson@georgina.ca) | [georgina.ca](http://georgina.ca)