



Public Budget Meetings Summary October 7, 2019

Last night at Council the 2020 proposed budget presentations were discussed. The evening began with a welcome from Mayor Bob Young and opening remarks from the City Manager. The meeting continued with the financial overview for the upcoming year(s) and the Operating and Capital Budget for Corporate Services.

We are pleased to announce that, for the fourth year in a row, our Finance Department has received the International GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) Budget Award. This award is the highest recognition in governmental budgeting and speaks to the quality of information, level of transparency and the outstanding financial structure, policy and process that our Finance Department exhibits. Congratulations!

The proposed budgetary plans have two main driving factors: to balance today's needs with an understanding of future requirements, and to remain attractive for new business and industry with a focus on the long-term. Key considerations such as unbalanced growth in our residential and non-residential sectors, living within our means and making strategic multi-year decisions were front and centre as administration took to planning the 2020 proposed budget presentations. Yearly inflation, CPI (Consumer Price Index) and MPI (Municipal Price Index) remain an annual consideration when determining tax strategies as well.

This year's budget process included engaging with our community throughout the year to help inform the 2020 plans. The Public Budget Planning Survey was released in the spring of 2019, and the results indicated that the majority of our citizens enjoy the level of services the city provides, and 76 per cent of respondents perceived the value received for taxes paid as good, very good or excellent. Our 2019 Citizen Satisfaction Survey was also a driving force behind service-level decisions, which indicated an overall quality of life rating of 95 per cent.

There are two main aspects that comprise a municipal budget: the Operational Budget and the Capital Budget. The 2020 Operational Budget is set at \$104 million and will fund all requirements to maintain existing service levels while supporting Council's strategic goals. The 2020 Capital Budget is set at \$32 million and will fund things like maintaining our current infrastructure for assets like roadways and parks, as well as preparing for future growth as the city is likely to grow nearly 110 football fields in the next two years. Approx. 30 per cent of the capital plan is funded by provincial and federal grants.

In order to deliver these goods and services, the city has a team of employees working behind the scenes: this department is called Corporate Services. Corporate Services provides support to the organization, who then provides services to our residents. The Corporate Services presentation centered on laying the foundation internally to continue to support the community. Key highlights of the presentation focused on maintaining and improving service delivery levels for current and future initiatives, looking ahead to ensure fiscal responsibility through transparency and accountability, and facilitating the transition to enhanced transparency, open government and a smarter city through enhanced technology (in accordance with the implementation of the Information Technology Strategic Plan). Plans for a new Finance/HR software implementation project are scheduled to launch in 2020, but additional research will be conducted in an effort to lower associated costs. In addition, the city will continue to develop the asset management

program, which focusses on more efficient work flows for maintaining our city assets while enabling enhanced decision making. The city will also be rolling out a new community reporting tool to enable residents to report problems or submit kudos via their mobile device.

Aligning with our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, the 2020 budget will maintain competitive and affordable user fees for our community, low non-residential taxes, and offer a large selection of services and a wide variety of businesses in Leduc. The presentations continuously highlighted that in order to remain a competitive and attractive city we must work effectively and collaboratively with our partners, both regionally and globally.

At the end of 2018, the 2020 tax strategy proposed a 4.34 per cent increase. Despite various economic challenges, the city was able to reduce the operating budget and reprioritize the Capital Plan to drop the proposed tax strategy to 1.73 per cent for 2020, which equates to approximately a \$3.20 - \$5.25 increase per month per household. Subsequently, administration recommended the proposed multiyear tax strategies for 2021 and 2022 at 3.5 per cent and 3.08 per cent, respectively.

Click [here](#) to see the full presentation.

Public Commentary was offered following the presentations. One member of the public expressed a desire to have more lifestyle options in Leduc, such as increased evening access to Edmonton, with a focus on the younger generations. Council shared that they will continue to look for opportunities as our municipality grows. The next public commentary will be offered at Leduc City Council Chambers at the Leduc Civic Centre on Monday, October 28 at 8:15 p.m. Presentations will begin at 7:15 p.m. and include the Operating and Capital Budget for Community and Protective Services, which includes things like Family and Community Support Services, City of Leduc Enforcement Services, community initiatives and more!

The 2020 Public Budget meetings will occur during our regularly-scheduled Council meetings in October and November, and the proposed budget is set to be approved on December 2, 2019. Click [here](#) to see the full schedule. We hope to see you there.