



January 8, 2020

Message from the Mayor, Joe Nowak

At last night's Council meeting, Council of the Township of Wellesley passed your 2020 Budget. The 2020 Budget acts as our business plan for the year, demonstrating the costs associated with providing municipal services and the revenues required to sustain these services. It also aims to continue with the mission and vision set by Council in the Strategic Plan and continues to provide the high levels of service that residents of the Township of Wellesley both expect and enjoy.

Township Staff are always looking for funding opportunities and innovative approaches to make the best use of the funds that we have available and to minimize the burden on taxpayers. For 2020, we have applied for Provincial and Federal funding for a new Township Recreation Complex. We are hopeful that this application will be successful and will continue to look into other funding opportunities as they become available.

Extreme weather events, such as the current bushfire crisis in Australia, severe floods, droughts and excessively high temperatures across the world, have made climate change hard to ignore. In October 2019, Council of the Township of Wellesley passed a resolution endorsing the Declaration of a Climate Emergency, with the directive to provide continued support to corporate and community climate action at the Township and to work towards improved targets where possible.

In order to support the reduction of our carbon emissions, the 2020 budget includes three green initiatives for Wellesley Township:

1. 0.5% Greening Levy (approximately \$25,000) towards the purchase of trees that would be available to residents throughout the Township for planting to replace trees that were affected by the emerald ash borer and to support the reduction of our carbon footprint. More details on this project to come;
2. The purchase of an **electric ice resurfacing machine** for the St. Clements Arena; and
3. The installation of 3 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations throughout Wellesley Township in collaboration with the Region of Waterloo through grant money awarded from Natural Resources Canada.

Climate Action Waterloo Region is leading the creation of a long-term Climate Action Strategy and Carbon Budget for the municipalities of the Region of Waterloo with a goal of reducing local greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent below 2010 levels by the year 2050. These projects are in their early planning stages, but are a positive step towards doing our part as global citizens to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change on the environment.

Wellesley Township Council would also like to investigate ways to make more employment/industrial land available and develop more affordable housing in the Township of Wellesley. The joint service delivery review being done by the four Waterloo Region townships by KPMG should also help identify any areas where efficiencies could be found in the study areas and possible cost reductions for our residents.

Council approved a 2020 Budget with a 3.355 per cent tax increase plus a 0.5% Greening Levy. For a typical home assessed at \$399,038, this means approximately \$3.01 more per month than 2019 property taxes.

I believe this is a fair and balanced budget that allows the municipality to acquire new infrastructure, repair existing assets and provide the daily services that significantly impact the quality of life in the Township of Wellesley, while also preparing for a bright and prosperous future.

As always, I welcome your feedback. Township Staff, Councillors and myself can be reached by email or telephone through the [Township of Wellesley Website](#). On behalf of Council and Staff of the Township of Wellesley, we wish you all the best in 2020 and we thank you for being a part of making the Township of Wellesley a great place to live, work and play!