

Council approves 2017 Operating, Capital and Development Fee related Budget

Sharon, ON (December 21, 2016) - Town Council approved the 2017 operating, capital and development fee related budget at last night's Council meeting. The approved budget is divided into three areas:

Community safety: The budget continues Council's focus on community safety with the hiring of a new full time firefighter in 2017. This requires a tax levy increase of \$16 for the average homeowner, which is a 1 per cent increase. Also included in the Development Fee portion of the budget is the provision for a full time Fire Inspector.

Programs and services: The budget will also maintain existing programs and services with a tax levy increase of \$13 for the average homeowner, a 0.8 per cent increase.

Hydro costs: Due to increasing hydro costs, the budget also requires a tax levy increase of \$16 for the average homeowner, a 1 per cent increase.

When combined, the total proposed tax increase will be \$45 for the average homeowner, which is a 2.8 per cent increase. When combined with the York Region and school board increases, the total expected increase for the average homeowner in East Gwillimbury residents is 2.2 per cent.

"There were many pressures facing our budget this year," said Mayor Virginia Hackson. "Increasing costs, such as rising energy costs, are beyond our control. Staff worked with Council to limit increases and introduce cost restraint measures where possible. What we have ended up with is a *"What we need"* budget not a *"What we would like to have"* budget."

The budget process began in August with public budget deliberations commencing in November. As a result of the Council deliberations, the initial proposed budget increase of \$70 for the average homeowner was reduced to \$45.

East Gwillimbury will continue to be one of the few debt free municipalities in Ontario and residents will still pay the lowest relative taxes in York Region.

For more information, please visit the Town's website at www.eastgwillimbury.ca/budget.