



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH FRONTENAC

MEDIA RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Becoming a Rural Leader: South Frontenac Council Approves Ambitious New Strategic Plan and Budget for 2020

Sydenham, ON: The last Council meeting of the year brought the conclusion of many months' work by both Council and staff to chart a new path for the Township of South Frontenac.

On Tuesday, December 17th Council approved an ambitious new Strategic Plan as well as its 2020 Operating and Capital budgets. Both documents, developed concurrently over the latter half of 2019, are intended to position South Frontenac as a regional leader and prepare the Township for significant growth and regional collaboration.

"The focus of this new strategic plan is squarely on the future," said Mayor Ron Vandewal, "We've recognized that the Township has the potential for big things, but if we aren't proactive, we may miss or lose control of those opportunities."

South Frontenac is anticipating significant residential growth in the coming decade, and with that pressure comes opportunities and challenges with respect to service levels, organizational capacity, community amenities, and environmental impacts.

"When we considered those pressures in the context of increased Provincial uncertainty, Council recognized the need to take control of its own destiny," said Neil Carbone, Chief Administrative Officer for the Township, "a common theme of the Strategic Plan and the 2020 budget is a desire to lead, to grow, and to look outside our borders for opportunities to collaborate."

The Township's focus is clear in its succinct new Vision for the community:

"Natural, vibrant and growing – a progressive rural leader"

"The importance of our communities, our environment and our residents' quality of life remain central to this new strategy," said Mayor Vandewal, "but change means we need to do things a bit differently in order to maintain and improve on those things the community values." He said.

The four key priorities for the Township moving forward are:

- 1) Positioning South Frontenac as a Regional Leader;**
- 2) Supporting growth while maintaining the integrity of the environment;**
- 3) Ensuring the organizational capacity to deliver services in a changing world; and,**
- 4) Being a catalyst for the creation of vibrant and complete communities**

"While the Strategic Plan sets a direction for the Township, the budget is the means of putting those priorities into practice," said Mr. Carbone, "This budget paints a clear picture of what we want to accomplish – It puts 'our money where our mouth is' so to speak."

Among those strategic actions being funded in the 2020 budget are the development of a new Official Plan to help guide growth, the creation of a climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy, establishing communal servicing options to enable rural residential growth, the implementation of new software solutions for development permitting, and the addition of Planning staff resources to accommodate development demands.

Continuing the proactive theme, the Township will undertake a Fire Station location study in 2020 to identify the best way to optimize its Fire Stations and fleet in order to provide more efficient and effective local emergency response as the Township grows.

The budget also allows for increased road maintenance – a key priority for residents – and new operational resources in support of roads and recreation services. A recreation Master Plan, a number of recreation infrastructure projects and downtown revitalization efforts are also funded, along with a service delivery review aimed at better aligning services with our neighbouring municipalities.

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Natural, vibrant and growing – a progressive rural leader

“The Township has been on sound financial footing for some time, with no debt, growing assessment, healthy reserves and relatively low taxes,” said Mayor Vandewal. “This is one of the reasons we’re able to fund these priorities while maintaining an average taxpayer impact of 2% in this 2020 budget.”

The Township’s annual budgets are also based on its long-term financial plan which is derived from its asset management plan. South Frontenac is already a leader in rural municipal asset management having participated on various municipal working groups and developing best practices in this area.

“Several years ago we established programs for funding our capital renewal and new capital requirements over time,” said Louise Fragnito, Director of Corporate Services & Treasurer for the Township, “This has taken the guesswork out of capital budgeting and ensures we are prioritizing investment in roads, bridges and other infrastructure based on objective criteria and in a way that we can afford.” She continued, “Our approach means that we continue to reduce our funding gap – the difference between the cost of necessary capital renewal and the funding we have available for it.”

Implementation of the new Strategic Plan will begin in 2020 and will include additional detailed actions and performance indicators which will be established in Q1 of 2020. “I am excited to see our strategic plan also brought to life with data that we can share with constituents,” added Mayor Vandewal, “This information will help us make informed decisions about our strategies and budgets moving forward, and is just another way we are striving to be progressive rural leaders and a community that our residents can be proud of.”

Further information about the 2020 budget will be circulated to ratepayers along with the notice of first installments sent out in March of next year. The complete 2020 budget and Strategic Plan can be found on the Township’s website at www.southfrontenac.net.

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For more information on South Frontenac’s New Strategic Plan, please contact:

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For more information on the 2020 Budget, please contact:

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About the Strategic Planning Process: Over the course of the summer of 2019, Council and the newly appointed CAO, Neil Carbone, conducted a series of public consultations designed to engage the residents of South Frontenac and gather feedback to aid in the development of an updated plan. The strategic planning process involved four public open houses, a public survey, two Council workshops and consideration of various studies and publications.

About The Township of South Frontenac: The Township of South Frontenac was established through amalgamation in 1998 to create the 941 sq. km municipality that exists today. Poised to grow and only 15 minutes from Kingston, South Frontenac is home to a population of 18,646 permanent and thousands more seasonal residents situated in its numerous hamlets and villages and around its 75 pristine lakes. South Frontenac provides a wide range of services, including: public road construction & maintenance, solid waste collection, disposal and recycling, parks & recreation services including boat launches, community halls, sports facilities, swim and day camp programs, cemeteries, bylaw enforcement, land use planning, building services, fire & emergency management services and localized utilities.

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