



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 9, 2023

Here are the highlights from the Special South Dundas Council meeting held February 3, 2023

Draft 2023 Budget Presented to Council

The Draft 2023 Budget was presented to Council at a Special Meeting held on February 3rd. The proposed budget is a balanced approach to maintaining or improving services while keeping the tax rate below the rate of inflation, a situation that has brought about uncertainty and pressure for the Municipality, its residents and businesses, and across Canada and globally.

“Today we are tabling our first budget as a new Council team,” said Mayor Jason Broad in his opening remarks. “We will be communicating the state of our finances as councils around Ontario complete this process. Many believe this may be one of the hardest budgets in years. We can’t ignore inflation, it is happening. It is not going to be perfect; there will be service challenges, unforeseen weather events and unpredictable breakdowns. None of these issues will be easy to fix and it will not happen overnight. This year, and the coming years, we will be applying for delegations, we will be searching for ministries to get more funds into the coffers. We will knock down doors the best we can do. Staff will take the necessary steps under Councils direction to look at the facts and use data to drive our decisions. We want the best for South Dundas; we are facing a challenging time and we will need to keep life affordable for residents in 2023, but we can’t ignore the facts.”

“What we should focus on is what we require to run our business and that comes back to levels of service and taxation. What do we want to do, and how much does it cost,” noted Acting Treasurer Lachlan McDonald, as Council began to review the operating and capital budget.

Facts and Highlights of the Draft 2023 Budget include:

- 41.76% of taxation remains with South Dundas; the remainder going to SDG Counties and Education.
- Proposed total levy of \$8,360,608; an increase of \$645,192 from 2022.
- 2% increase per year (20-year phase-in period) for Asset Management Planning (road network, bridge & roads, storm sewer). *new to the budget this year*
- \$2.8M worth of capital items which results in taxation of \$183,215.
- Reserve funds are sitting at \$9M.

“Like any budget, it’s always challenging as a lot of things change from year to year,” explained CAO Shannon Geraghty. “The biggest thing we will be looking at in this year’s budget is inflation. Quite simply, the cost of everything has gone up, but staff have done an excellent job in being mindful of that and ensuring that taxes and the tax levy come in at a reasonable rate. I’d like to thank staff who have spent numerous hours and days going through all the numbers to bring you a budget that I think is reasonable.”



“This is an extraordinary year and I don’t think, or I hope that we will not see a year over year increase at this level ever again, so I was ready to accept the budget as is,” noted Councillor Danielle Ward. “I think there was a lot of trimming that happened, and I know there are a lot of big projects that the public want us to do that we have to postpone because the tax rate is already so high.”

Mayor Broad concluded the meeting by commending the teamwork involved in creating and reviewing the draft budget. “We are working on this together as a team and we have all corners of the municipality we touch and communicate with, so we have an idea of what’s fair to our residents. Inflation is real, the things that are happening are real,” explained Broad.

With the budget sitting at 6.32% after a full day of deliberations, Broad noted “If we could just do a little more work to bring the rate down a little bit then we can specifically share what it means to our residents, whatever number we land on, what that looks like for the average household.”

It was noted that to see a reduction to 5.5%, staff would have to find \$56,000 in options to reduce or cut, while simultaneously adding another \$44,000, which equates to \$110,000 of action on this budget.

Staff will go through the numbers, create an itemized list of things that have been removed from the budget to date including comments on the impact and taxation results based on changes for councils’ consideration at a future meeting, to be determined.

The Municipality of South Dundas Draft 2023 Budget is available [here](#).

For more information, contact [Shannon Geraghty](#), CAO at 613-543-2673

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Looking Ahead: Upcoming Meetings

Regular Council Meeting: Monday, February 13, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

Regular Council Meeting: Monday, March 13, 2023 @ 6:00 pm