



Tuesday, January 21

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE SETS 2020 BUDGET**

### **No increase to municipal taxation or utility rates**

Rocky Mountain House, Alta. – The Town of Rocky Mountain House has approved its [2020 operating and capital budgets](#), totaling \$31,942,973.

For the second year in a row, the Town of Rocky Mountain House will not increase its municipal taxation revenue.

“I am very proud of the work of Council and Staff in preparing this budget,” said Mayor of Rocky Mountain House Tammy Burke. “Despite a reduction in provincial and local government grants, we have been able to maintain services without increasing municipal taxation. We found efficiencies and savings at the municipal level, to make sure we are not asking our residents and business-owners for more than absolutely necessary.”

Highlights of the 2020 operating budget include \$2.1 million for administration, \$3.5 million for protective services, \$2.2 million for engineering and operations, \$4.3 million for recreation and culture, and \$900,000 each for social services and planning and development. The cost of governance (Council) is \$352,704, or 1.3% of the operating budget.

#### **Public engagement**

Budget 2020 included a dedicated public engagement period in September 2019. “This was the first time we have conducted dedicated public engagement in advance of preparing the budget,” said Mayor Burke. “Council appreciated the thoughtful input from residents and business-owners, and is proud to have incorporated that feedback into this budget.”

Participants asked for more details on why money is spent, not simply how much. Budget 2020 includes service level details and explanations/justification for areas of expenditures. [These documents are available online](#), or in person at the Town Office.

#### **Capital projects**

Respondents also indicated support for the Rocky Spray Park, a new Zamboni and ice plant at the Christenson Sports and Wellness Centre, as well as covered grandstands at the North Saskatchewan River Park. The grandstands were completed in fall of 2019, and the rest are funded in the [2020 Capital](#)

[Budget](#), along with 27 other projects ranging from acoustic baffles at the Credit Union Co-op Aquatic Centre to solar-powered speed signs and pavement overlay and repairs.

The 54 Street extension, connecting our Creekside neighbourhood with downtown, will be proceeding in 2020. This \$4.2 million project, funded through reserves and private debenture, is a carry-over project from 2019.

### **Utilities**

In 2020 the Town of Rocky Mountain House will also complete the replacement of water meters throughout town with radio-read meters. This will streamline utility billing and eliminate system-estimated invoices.

There will be no rate increases to utilities (water, wastewater and solid waste). The \$4.7 million utilities operating budget is funded through fees-for-service. With the dissolution of the Rocky Mountain Regional Solid Waste Authority in the spring of 2020, the Town of Rocky Mountain House has engaged a new residential solid waste collection contractor for curbside collection. This change takes effect in February.

The Town will also be exploring organic curbside collection in 2020.

### **Planning for the future**

The Town of Rocky Mountain House has a funded five-year capital plan, that will maintain reserves at current levels. This is part of Council's Strategic Plan goal to ensure sound long-range financial planning for the Town of Rocky Mountain House.

Council held two days of Budget discussions on Jan. 14 and 15, 2020. The meetings were open to the public, and [livestreamed](#).

The 2020 tax rate bylaw will be set in April, once the Town receives its final property assessment numbers.

For more information, please contact:

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