



## News Release

For Immediate Release

### **Town of Altona Freezes Municipal Taxes for 2020**

#### **Altona, MB. March 27, 2020:**

The Town of Altona has amended the 2020 Financial Plan to help ease economic burden on taxpayers in Altona. Originally, a 2.0% tax increase was proposed. The Council reconsidered the increase due to economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and has chosen to freeze the municipal tax levy instead.

“Our Council felt strongly that under the current circumstances, a tax increase was not in the best interests of the community,” said Mayor Al Friesen. “We have trimmed the budget to reflect a zero per cent municipal tax increase, and have challenged our administration to scrutinize expenditures to obtain the best value for our residents' tax dollars and will make ongoing decisions accordingly for the 2020 tax year.”

Freezing the municipal tax levy means that the average homeowner will see a very little, or no, municipal tax increase in 2020. Some homeowners may still see an increase or decrease however, as 2020 is a property value reassessment year. The average increase in property assessment value is 6.50% - if your assessment was higher or lower than that average, you will see an increase or drop in municipal taxes, respectively.

The amended 2020 Financial Plan still includes a number of projects and initiatives, including finishing the Fiber Network Infrastructure project that began in 2019, replacing the pool liner at the Altona Aquatic Centre, and converting to a new Public Safety Communication System, as mandated by the Province of Manitoba. Upgrades to the Storm Drain Pump Station are scheduled for this year, as is the first phase of the project to convert to radio frequency water meters.

A large-scale project on the books for 2020 is the replacement of two lift stations and re-lining of sewers. These projects have received funding from both the Provincial and Federal governments.

Residents of Altona will see a variety of street and path projects in 2020. These include 12<sup>th</sup> Ave NW, 10<sup>th</sup> Ave NW, and completion of Lynnwood Bay NW, which will allow for an addition of 25 lots to the residential market, as well as improvements to trails and pathways, according to the Financial Plan. The Plan also budgets for water and sewer infrastructure to service a new, mixed-use residential development in Town.

The Town of Altona is also prepared to take on a large project to improve drainage in the downtown area, should a funding agreement be reached.

“We are also confident that the 2020 budget continues to reflect the overall financial health of Altona, and our desire to move ahead with infrastructure, essential services and community investments that are in keeping with our strategic plan,” said Mayor Friesen.

***Please direct inquiries to:***

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