

COUNCIL CORNER

John Hirsch
Councillor, Ward 9
South Marysburgh



January and February – time for consultation

Currently we are seeking public input on a number of initiatives:

- The County of Prince Edward is preparing a **Parks and Recreation Master Plan** to guide the future direction of recreational facilities and services. The plan will assist the County in managing the direction of parks, open spaces, programs, events, facilities and amenities in a cost effective and sustainable manner.
- **Join the conversation about the future of Prince Edward County – a 10-year plan**
In 2021, Council engaged Strategy Corp Inc., and directed staff to work with the consultants to create a wide-reaching consultation plan to understand the broad needs of the community. The community plan will help set priorities for the municipality and will inform the strategic plan for Council. A community town hall will be held on March 7 in Picton.
- The County of Prince Edward is reviewing its **Comprehensive Zoning By-law**. The process will result in a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law to replace Zoning By-law (No. 1816-2006) which was first adopted by Council in 2006.

Details and background information about all of these consultations are available on the County's Have Your Say website: haveyoursay.thecounty.ca – or call or email me and I will send you documents.

Council News

- After considerable research and discussion council adopted a 5-year capital road network improvement plan which uses science and computer analysis of road condition and other factors to determine priorities for preservative treatments and reconstruction. I would be happy to email the staff report and 5-year list of roadwork plans.
- Council decided to devote 70% of the County share of the MAT tax to roads construction but rejected a staff proposal to create a capital infrastructure levy this year to accelerate road construction.
- The consultants hired to rewrite the Comprehensive Zoning bylaw presented their workplan to Council including the public consultation plan.
- The two proposals for Lithium ion battery storage facilities were not approved by Council. Consequently the projects cannot move forward since they did not receive municipal support.

- Council made Councillor appointments to Boards and Advisory Committees for this term of Council. I was chosen to sit on the boards of the Quinte Conservation Authority and Hastings Prince Edward Public Health as well as the Environmental Advisory Committee, the Built and Cultural Heritage Committee (formerly PEHAC), the Audit Committee and South Marysburgh Recreation Committee.
- **The municipal operating budget** includes a 7.9 per cent tax increase or 5.8 per cent after assessment growth. The 2023 operating budget will result in an estimated increase of \$57.99 on an average assessment of \$100,000.
- Council also passed the rate-supported operating budget for water and wastewater services of \$11.4 million. Water and wastewater rates will continue to follow the rate schedule set by Council in 2021.
- Council unanimously approved the continuation of the **Municipal Financial Relief Program** to support low-income households in Prince Edward County. The program, which began as a pilot in 2022, will be offered with expanded eligibility in 2023.
- Households earning less than \$32,240 (single income) or \$64,480 (family income) will be able to apply to one of two streams of the program:
- Qualifying tenants who pay for water and wastewater services can apply for a credit of up to \$350 on their water bill.
- Qualifying home owners can apply for a credit of up to \$750 on their property tax account.
- In addition, Council directed staff to look at ways to provide a municipal financial relief grant to rural renters in 2024.

Other

I am continuing my 5 days a week community email. It has been modified to focus on Covid only in the Saturday edition. The rest of the week it includes timely notices, community events, etc. So if you are not already subscribed, just send me your email address and I will add you to the list of over 300 families.

I can be reached by phone, text and email.
jhirsch@pecounty.on.ca
613-846-0046

And don't forget, for immediate service the County help line is available:

613-476-2148 ext. 1023

For complaints, pothole requests, etc. Email: info@pecounty.on.ca

Or submit a request using the online form on the County website: www.thecounty.ca

Bylaw complaints: bylaw@pecounty.on.ca

For weekend or 24 hour situations go to the who to contact page: www.thecounty.ca/summer-hub/who-to-call/