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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Tuesday, December 7, 2021

"For Immediate Release"

### Statement from The City of Humboldt on APPROVED 2022 BUDGET

**Humboldt, SK** – The City of Humboldt’s proposed 2022 City Budget was presented to City Council in a Special Meeting of Council held on Monday, December 6, 2021. The Mayor led Council and Administration through the numerous budget cost centres and eleven capital projects. Following discussion on each topic, Council endorsed the budget proposed by Administration, making no changes.

In his closing remarks, Mayor Michael Behiel stated, “We are moving slow but steady as we move forward, which is the key to winning the race in the long run. I think we are seeing massive amounts of progress, and understated dedication and commitment by our administration and staff through their leadership and planning.”

The positive momentum that the City has been on is continuing. For 2022, administration recommended a 2% increase in general municipal property tax, and a 2% increase for water and sewer revenue. A recent compiling of tax increases for 2018 through 2021 saw Humboldt ranking as having the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest cumulative increase amongst the 16 cities in the province at only 8.2% over those four years.

“I am very pleased that Council supported the effort that all of Administration has put into preparing the 2022 budget,” said Joe Day, City Manager. “We are able to maintain a balance of the services that the City provides without sacrificing programs or placing a burden on taxpayers. Keeping the tax rate increase for the City of Humboldt at 2% while also limiting the increase on water and sewer charges at only 2% are significant decisions by Council to support both the residents and businesses in Humboldt.”

With the uncertainty of COVID-19 still among us and its potential impact on activities in 2022, there are no significant changes to the City’s budget for these unknowns at this point in time, but with an expectation that Administration will bring recommendations to Council at the time when the City must respond to Public Health orders.

With the 2022 budget, there will be a net contribution to reserves of approximately \$812,000. This money is being placed in reserves for the upcoming Wastewater System Upgrade project, a stormwater mitigation project, future fleet purchases, building replacement and refurbishments, and to the Parks reserve related to spending that was incurred on the Centennial Park project.



Notable cost drivers in the 2022 budget include increased policing costs, enhancing Emergency Management Operations, health and safety, and staffing levels for Parks. Offsetting these costs are the completion of the REACT Landfill debt payments, an increase in the Gas Tax Revenue, and the removal of one-time expenditures that occurred in 2021.

Administration did not propose any borrowing related to the Wastewater System Upgrade in the budget but will go back to Council at a later date once Administration has more information on the particulars and the funding needed. The 2022 budget does however include a contribution to reserve of approximately \$478,600 for the Wastewater System Upgrade.

The largest capital project approved is resurfacing Highway 5 at a total cost of \$2,567,000. The City anticipates receiving \$1,633,000 in funding from the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure under the "Urban Highway Connector Program", and the City will fund the remaining \$934,000.

Another notable capital project will be the rebuilding of Highway 20 South from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the City limits south of Rona. The cost for this project is estimated at \$726,200, which the City anticipates to also be partially funding by the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Many capital projects planned for 2022 will be funded by the City in combination with grant revenue that the City expects to receive. The City has budgeted for projected grant revenue from the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, 2021 Canada Community Revitalization Fund, and the 2021 Enabling Accessibility Fund. The City is pleased to also commit to funding 50% of improvements for the Bill Brecht Park play structure replacement in partnership with a neighbourhood group. Significantly, the City is able to maintain its annual Watermain Replacement Program and has approved the replacement of watermains on 14<sup>th</sup> Street between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in 2022.

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