



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Brazeau County Council Approves 2018 Final Budget and Tax Rate Bylaw**

Drayton Valley, Alberta, May 7, 2017 — At its May 4 regular meeting, Brazeau County Council passed the final budget for 2018, re-affirming Council's commitment to road and infrastructure improvements while maintaining the 30% reduction in residential taxes from 2015, and implementing a 30% tax rebate for some commercial property classes.

The budget has estimated revenues of \$61.56 million, operational expenses of \$46.55 million, plus estimated capital spending of \$32.46 million. Most of the capital budget is devoted to core infrastructure, of which \$23.68 million (73%) is dedicated to roads alone.

All departments found efficiencies and presented operating budgets reduced from 2017 levels. Administration presented Council with a budget that had an overall decrease in operations expenses of 3% compared to 2017. This is the third year in a row operating expenses have been decreased. In addition, Council invested \$17.85 million from restricted and unrestricted surplus accounts – the municipality's savings accounts – to fund both operating and capital requirements.

Council also gave all three readings to Tax Rate Bylaw 987-18, setting the tax rates for 2018. Utilizing grant funds and surplus (reserve) funds, administration was able to present a budget that will not increase the municipal tax rate.

"As a Council team, we're happy we approved an aggressive but balanced budget to stimulate the economy and create jobs," says Reeve Bart Guyon. "There is no change to the municipal tax rate despite a significant loss of linear revenue. What's more, we have invested heavily in road and infrastructure projects across the County."

The Tax Rate Bylaw includes a 30% rebate on certain commercial assessment classes. The rebate applies to municipal taxes only and will be applied at the time of complete payment of taxes (by June 30), or pro-rated through the Tax Instalment Payment Plan.

The rebate applies to:

202 - Commercial sites and improvements

203 - Industrial sites and improvements

252 - Vacant Commercial

253 - Vacant Industrial

In terms of total taxes, residential and farmland will see an increase of 6.12% solely due to the increase in the school levy. Non-residential properties will see a decrease of 3.77% also due solely to the school levy. This does not reflect the Designated Industrial Property (DIP) requisition into the percentage change as it is not applied to all non-residential properties. The seniors' tax rate remains unchanged for all categories. The Machinery and Equipment tax rate remains unchanged except for the properties that are subject to the DIP requisition.

All final budget documents will be available on the County website at [www.brazeau.ab.ca](http://www.brazeau.ab.ca) no later than May 11th.