

2018 Budget Summary

Prince Albert City Council has approved the 2018 municipal budget for all operations including general, utility (water and sewer), sanitation, airport and land. The City of Prince Albert faced an enormous challenge again this year following deep provincial cuts to cities funding. The cuts meant that the City faced a \$3.0 million funding shortfall going into 2018.

How did the City deal with the shortfall?

The shortfall was dealt with through a combination of increases to revenues and decreases to operating expenses.

Revenues were up \$2.2 million for the upcoming year largely due to changes in the assessed value of property in Prince Albert (new construction, corrections to assessment errors, etc.) and increased revenues from a new impound lot in 2018.

Expenses are down overall following efforts of Administration and Council to control and reduce operating costs by looking at ways to do business differently and finding efficiencies in operations.

The city will realize a **surplus** in 2017, of which \$1 million will be used as a short term measure to offset the impact of the shortfall.

Property taxes will be relied upon to generate an additional \$443,000 to fund operations.

How will this affect City employees?

Through this budget City Council approved a recommendation to hold wage increases to 1 percent. There have been no new positions added for the 2018 year with four positions that will remain vacant as a short term measure. Four other positions have been reassigned or eliminated to find efficiencies.

A new Voluntary Day Off without Pay Program will also be implemented in 2018 to allow employees the opportunity to take additional time off where appropriate. This measure is expected to save the City an estimated \$83,000 depending on uptake from employees.

How will the budget impact property taxes?

The total approved general fund budget for 2018 is \$70.1 million which represents a \$2.2 million increase from 2017 and a 1.5% property tax increase for 2018. The property tax increase will generate an additional \$443,000 to fund city operations.

Will services or programs change?

There will be no reduction in city services or programs as a result of the 2018 budget decisions. There will be some changes to City rates and fees for services.

The City will be taking a new approach on rates for **recreational services** which focuses on keeping rates affordable for youth, seniors and families. Beginning in 2018, all youth and senior rates for admissions and memberships will be 60% of the adult rate and all children below the age of 6 will be free. This will result in a decrease in admission costs for youth and seniors and a small increase for adults. Family rates have also been implemented in all areas.

In addition to the admission rate changes, youth and senior rates for **facility bookings** will be 70% of the adult rate in 2018. This will result in youth and seniors rates remaining status quo while adult rates will be increased.

There will also be a change to the minimum fine for **parking ticket violations** from \$15 to \$20.

Finally, in 2018, water utility and sanitation rates will increase by approximately \$56/year for customers.

How has this budget impacted reserves?

Reserves are used by the City to set aside funds to finance future projects. Transfers to general fund reserves will be \$5.5 million in 2018. This amount restores reserve transfers reduced in 2017 to help offset the decreases in municipal funding from the provincial government.

How has this budget impacted debt?

No capital will be funded from new, external long-term debt in 2018.

Are there any new services, programs or projects?

In 2018, a number of projects will be completed that are either new, or carry-forward items from the 2017 budget.

- Little Red River Park River Bank Restoration
- Kinsmen Water Park Main Pool
- Cooke Municipal Golf Course renovations – Irrigation replacement, Pond Expansion, Tee Box reconstruction (11th, 17th, 18th holes), 5th Green reconstruction.
- Grand Opening of Crescent Acres Spray Park
- Crescent Acres Neighbourhood Park Development
- Grand Opening of Midtown Tennis Courts and Basketball Court
- Project Triple Play – New ball diamond and improvements to the existing diamonds. Fundraised by Project Triple Play in preparation for the 2018 World Junior Fastball Championship.
- River Street Reservoir
- 2nd Ave Pumphouse & Marquis Road Pumphouse Upgrades
- Paving Program
- Watermain Replacement Program
- New Landfill Compactor
- New Landfill Kiosk Building & Weigh Scales
- Sewer/Storm Main Replacement Program
- Water Treatment Plant Filter #4 Upgrade
- Art Hauser Parking Lot Paving
- Storm Pumping Station #4 Upgrade
- New Rosenbauer 65' Viper Quint Fire Truck
- West Hill Master Plan and Consultation
- Neighbourhood Planning Meetings
- Downtown Master Plan and Consultation
- 7 new Low Floor Transit Buses