

# United Counties of Leeds and Grenville



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2009

Here are the highlights from the regular United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council meeting held April 23.

**Applying for Infrastructure Funds:** Council has authorized staff to apply for Building Canada funding for four infrastructure projects. Leslie Shepherd, director of works, planning services and asset management, noted the infrastructure stimulus fund is intended for projects that wouldn't have been undertaken in the next two years. "They are fairly sizeable, high value and easily deliverable," he said. The projects include a full rehabilitation and upgrade of the section of Cty. Rd. 2 between Mallorytown and Long Beach; the resurfacing and widening to standard width of a 30-kilometre section of Cty. Rd. 5; the construction of an emergency medical services station in Kemptville; and the construction of an interpretive centre for the Limerick Forest that could be used by community groups. "This gives a nice range of infrastructure projects," Mr. Shepherd said. "We have three kinds of projects and three scales of spending." Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer Nigel White outlined how the counties would produce its one-third share if the application for the full \$6.5 million were approved. Two-thirds would be provided by the provincial and federal governments, and the counties would consider borrowing its \$2 million share and financing it over 10 years. "We can't take the money from existing projects that are currently on the books," he said, noting this program "will free up more money for capital works in the future because it is two-thirds financed." Warden Mel Campbell complimented staff for compiling the information in a short time frame. For more information, contact Leslie Shepherd, Director of Works, Planning Services and Asset Management, at 613-342-3840, ext. 2412.

**Concerns about HST:** Due to concerns about the provincial government's proposal to harmonize the provincial sales tax and the federal goods and services tax, council has passed a motion at the initiation of North Grenville Mayor Bill Gooch requesting numerous exemptions be included. At a recent governance and finance committee meeting, Merrickville-Wolford Mayor Doug Struthers said the increased provincial revenue comes "on the backs of folks who have to procure a multitude of services." As of July 1, 2010 the combined tax would be 13 per cent and would add PST to a number of products and services currently exempt. Councillors say the one-time \$1,000 sales tax transition benefit offered by the province will not cover the longer term costs. On the list of requested exemptions for residents and municipalities are gasoline, electricity, home heating fuel, home renovations, audio service for the blind, funeral services, electrician services, real-estate transactions, energy-efficient appliances, furnace repairs and municipal services and fees. For more information, contact Steven Silver, Counties CAO, at 613-342-3840, ext. 2301.

**Emergency Services Week Proclaimed:** Council has proclaimed May 17 to 23 to be Emergency Medical Services Week in recognition of this vital public service. The proclamation notes EMS teams are ready to provide lifesaving at any time and access to quality emergency care "dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury." Support staff play an important role as well, and all the team members engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills. For more information, contact Steven Silver, Counties CAO, at 613-342-3840, ext. 2301.

**Development Charges Postponed:** In light of difficult economic times, council has deferred consideration of a development charges by-law for one year. The decision was made following a staff report at the recent public works committee meeting. A number of local municipalities and at least three counties in Ontario have this type of by-law, which levies a fee on new development when a building permit is issued to ensure certain costs are borne by the development and not by existing ratepayers through local property taxes. For more information, contact Leslie Shepherd, Director of Works, Planning Services and Asset Management, at 613-342-3840, ext. 2412.

**Upcoming Meetings –** Joint Services Sub-committee, May 5; Governance and Finance, May 6; Public Works, May 7; Joint Services Committee, May 20; Counties Council, May 21. All meetings begin at 9 a.m. in the council chambers, 25 Central Ave. W., Brockville, unless otherwise noted. *Please note: Non-emergency delegations are heard at committee meetings.* For more information contact 613-342-3840, ext. 2304.

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