

Corporation of the  
**City of Welland**

2019  
**ANNUAL**  
REPORT





## WELLAND AT A GLANCE

Welland is changing and adopting smart city initiatives to better suit the needs of residents, investors, and its thriving business community. Home to Niagara College, one of Canada's most respected and admired leading research institutions, and located in the heart of the Niagara Peninsula; our amazing city offers first-rate education and investment opportunities.

Just 135 km from Toronto Pearson Airport, 70 km from Hamilton International Airport, 48 km from Buffalo International Airport, and 8 km from Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport: Welland is easy enough to find, and a great place to explore.



Population: 52,293

Land Area: 81.04 km<sup>2</sup>

272 Acres of Waterway

24 kilometres of trails

400+ acres of parks

11% of the population speaks French

3.64% 2019 Tax Rate increase

\$24 million in 2019 capital spending

790 Building Permits



2019 Annual Report Photo Credits:  
City of Welland and Mr. Anthony Gallaccio

## CONTENTS

4 Messages from the Mayor, City Council and the Chief Administrative Officer

10 Technology: Smarter Cities Connect and Create Efficient Services

12 Recreation & Culture: Civic Pride Begins with Community Support

16 Communications: Inspiring People to Join the Conversation

17 Prevention is Key to Emergency Services Bylaw: Committed to Safer Communities

18 Welland Transit: Always Going Your Way

19 Welland Public Library; Welland Museum

20 Engineering and Planning: Investing in Infrastructure for a Healthy Future

22 Economic Development: Connecting Investors, Creating Vision

24 Finance: Stretching Your Tax Dollars

26 2020 Vision: Solutions for a Thriving Community

## A COLLABORATIVE TEAM APPROACH TO ENHANCING SERVICES

2019 was a continuation of record breaking growth, development and investment (both internal and external) in all sectors.

Welland City Council can look back at the year's many achievements with pride and satisfaction as they can see the positive results of a focused approach to strategic priorities and initiatives. These were executed by expert, dedicated staff which is indicative of a collaborative team approach throughout the organization. As you read through this Annual Report of 2019 you will see multiple examples of our successes.

In December we announced that Welland City Council passed the 2020 budget with a 0.65 per cent tax decrease along with a record \$62 million in capital spending for 2020.

Welland City Council also approved a responsible Water/Wastewater operating and Capital Budgets for 2020.

This sound financial plan will result in improvements to all classes of infrastructure. This includes investments in new Fire Stations, a new Transit Facility, waterfront redevelopment, and in the hard infrastructure we depend on now and into the future.

As well, social infrastructure initiatives such

as the Hometown Hockey event, Canada Day event, free summer concerts on the canal, boat rental program all combine to enhance the quality of life in our municipality.

There are several economic development projects that carry forward from 2019 into 2020 such as a \$14.5 million 80 room Holiday Inn, a new truss manufacturer and new commercial development on Niagara Street to name just a few.

In closing, we had a very good 2019 and all indicators point to even more success and prosperity for the City of Welland in 2020.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners who work together to make Welland a great place to be ... including our residents, city staff, local business and council.



Frank Campion, Mayor



This sound financial plan will result in improvements to all classes of infrastructure."

~Frank Campion, Mayor



Welland City Council is committed to governing the city towards a productive and successful future. Preparing for future generations, Council is focused on managing residential growth and building an economic landscape that includes new industry and stimulates the job market.

*Seated from left are Councillors: Mary Ann Grimaldi, Leo Van Vliet, Tony DiMarco, Bonnie Fokkens and John Chiocchio. Standing from left are Councillors: Adam Moote, David McLeod, Graham Speck, Claudette Richard, Bryan Green, Mayor Frank Campion, Jim Larouche and Lucas Spinosa*

## **WELLAND CITY COUNCIL**



**Our Mission:**  
To plan for, and provide a vibrant, safe community that promotes healthy living and supports business growth. To respond to the diverse needs of our community in a timely, innovative, and effective manner through teamwork and partnerships.



There is a strategic focus to position Welland as one of the fastest growing small cities in Canada.”

~Gary Long,  
Chief Administrative Officer



## SHIFTING FOCUS TO LEAD CHANGE AND PLAN FOR WELLAND'S FUTURE

On behalf of City staff, thank you for reading our Annual Report and for your continued support. We tell our story through our corporate communications and publications such as this and it's a story we're proud to share.

2019 was another banner year for the City in terms of residential growth, private and public sector investment, and opening our 5th industrial park. This economic activity speaks to the confidence that builders, developers, and entrepreneurs have in our City and we truly appreciate their investment. This also reflects the hard work of City staff who want to ensure that our service levels and processes are aligned with business objectives and timelines.

There is a strategic focus to position Welland as one of the fastest growing small cities in Canada. Based on independent forecasts, supported by our own planning and building data, Welland's population is expected to increase from 52,293 residents to over 80,000 residents by 2041.

We're also focused on being a leading public sector organization committed to continuous improvement, open mindedness, innovation, implementing new ideas and best practices, and promoting a team culture to manage issues

and projects, and capitalize on opportunities. Delivering public programs and services and maintaining public facilities, roads, and parks is what we do best. City staff are to be commended for their dedication in creating a quality of place for our residents and future residents that is second to none.

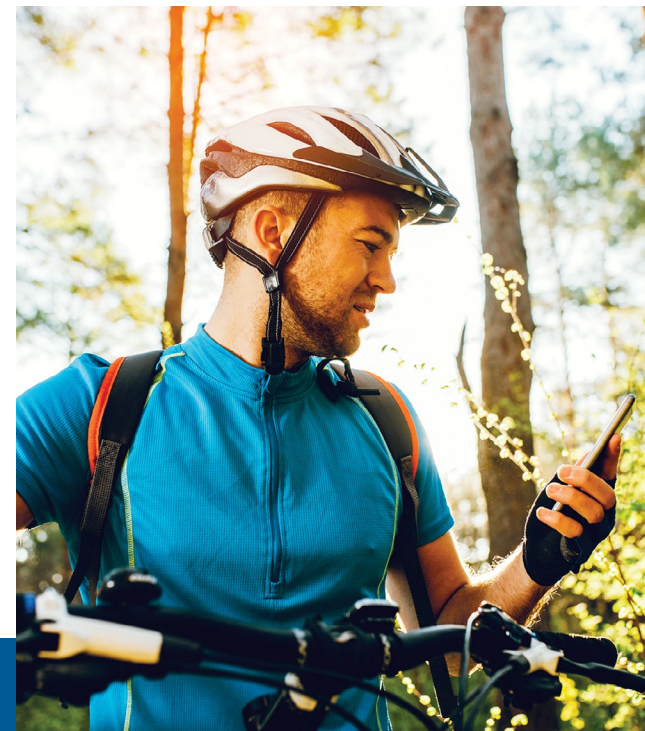
The positive momentum from 2019 is continuing into 2020 with a Council approved capital budget of \$62 million – a record amount for our City. There will also be significant public and private sector investment along the City's waterfront in 2020 and over the next several years that will be bold and transformative.

It's an honour and a privilege for City staff and I to work with Council, residents, and key stakeholders and we look forward to working with all of you to make a meaningful difference in our community. Stay tuned throughout 2020 for progress updates.

Gary Long, CAO

## SMARTER CITIES CONNECT & CREATE EFFICIENT SERVICES

The city implemented more Smart City initiatives in 2019 and embraced a holistic approach to creating, providing, and delivering public services. Through collaboration and creative thinking, Welland is achieving sustainable change through the Internet of Things, and creating partnerships that enrich the quality of life for citizens.



A Smart City is a journey that connects communities to technology, and technology to the economy.

### A Smart City isn't bigger: it's better

Smart Cities are not designed to confuse people or to make living more complex. Smart Cities actually make life easier and provide autonomy to citizens and business owners. A smarter city finds efficient strategies to deliver services with sustainability and affordability at the forefront. With data and technology, Welland is striving to improve the

livability for everyone by modernizing public services. The City of Welland is committed to embracing collaboration and thinking bigger to create a better, smarter city that connects its citizens to opportunities.



## 2019 Smart City Initiatives

The city also secured a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with neighbouring municipalities to work together on joint purchasing and shared services initiatives. Procuring goods and services in bulk will ultimately save tax-payers money.

For the second consecutive year, Welland received a platinum level of ISO 37120 Sustainable Development of Communities: Indicators for City Services and Quality of Life Certification from World Council on City Data. Making open data a priority paid off in 2019. Welland also climbed the ranks on the Top 20 Most Open Cities of Canada according to Public Sector Digest's Open Cities Index. Welland moved from 20 in 2018 to 16 in 2019. Having a broad range of open data that's accessible to staff and stakeholders also assists in developing capital projects.

Welland started using a high-accuracy LiDAR 3D surface model mapping tool last year. Having a 3D map of Dain City assisted Engineering staff with creating a detailed Storm Water Study. City staff are excited to integrate this new tool into future projects.

# CIVIC PRIDE BEGINS WITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The City of Welland is reinventing and revitalizing community connection through healthy programs and service delivery. A collaborative approach to creating public place-making spaces that support social interaction is one of the many goals in the Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan. City staff are excited to take the master plan document and bring it to fruition over the next ten years.



## Readers' Choice Awards

Diamond Award Winner: Welland Community Wellness Complex – Recreation Facility

Diamond Award Winner: Welland Community Wellness Complex – Indoor Game/Play Centre

Diamond Award Winner: Amphitheatre at Merritt Park – Best Concert Venue

Gold Award Winner: Welland International Flatwater Centre – Facility/Venue

## Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce Ruby Awards

Age Friendly – Welland Community Wellness Complex



## Creating Citizen-Friendly Spaces

### Connecting People through Provincial and Federal Grants

\$1,500 Niagara Community Foundation – Summer Camp

\$500,000 Canadian Experience Fund

\$5,000 Celebration and Commemoration Program, Celebrate Canada Component

\$51,700 Seniors Active Living Centre Funding

### The City's Outdoor Swimming Pools are Free to the Public

276 swim lesson registrations

120 dogs attended the 3rd Annual Dog Paddle

41,453 public swimming visits

34 camp swims

### Empowering Children with Play

230 daily camp registration taken

92% occupancy rate

\$6,950 in donations to sponsor campers

15 Children sent to camp through donations / grant money

Introduced new sensory programming area for those who require sensory stimulation





### Building Spirit and Growing Connections

75 Special Events hosted in Welland

Rogers Hometown Hockey brought thousands of people to the weekend-long celebrations

7,500 people attended Canada Day Celebrations

1,500 people attended New Year's Eve Childrens' Celebration

2,900 hours of community hall rentals

### Linking People to Active Transportation

8,000 hours of waterway rentals

325 hours of paddle tank rentals (December-March)

4,791 rentals in canoe, kayak, stand up paddle board and/or pedal boat through Boat Rental Program

28.5 hours of group rentals through Boat Rental Program

Introduced evening Kayak Club through Boat Rental Program

20+ events from May to September

\$3,240 donated to not for profit organizations through volunteer stipends

### Bringing People to Greenspaces

4,440 hours of baseball field rentals

282 hours of volleyball court rentals

270 hours of soccer field rentals

1,200 kids participated in Pop-Up-in-the-Park

200 Pavilion rentals



### Connecting People to Places

29 aquatic and therapeutic programs

47 health and fitness programs

30 drop-in programs

13 swim lessons for toddlers

6 general interest programs

12 open therapy timeslots

3 open bike timeslots

18 new recreational programs

### Your Arenas

575 visits for Shinny Hockey and All Ages Skate programs

44 paid public skate days

12 free public skate days

10% of Welland population attended public skating

### Your Market

150+ visitors per hour (May – September)

63 yearly vendors – 64% Farmers

11 daily stall rentals

18 not-for-profit rentals

80% occupancy

1,778 followers on social media



# INSPIRING PEOPLE TO JOIN THE CONVERSATION

City of Welland staff are finding new ways to connect with citizens and gather public feedback. People are always changing, and their needs are evolving; therefore, our team is constantly looking for new channels to reach and communicate with a broader audience. We believe that listening is the essence to better communication.



- 8,300+ Followers on Twitter
- 4,000+ Followers on Facebook
- 930+ Participants on YourChannel
- 660+ Voice of Welland Radio Messages
- 575 Followers on Linked-in
- 54 Media Releases
- 26 Welland E-Bulletin Blasts

# PREVENTION IS KEY TO EMERGENCY SERVICES

The City's Welland Fire and Emergency Services delivered outstanding services while a demand for education, prevention, and on-site services persisted. Fire staff continued with an aggressive public education campaign on the importance of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Welland Fire and Emergency Services saw a slight reduction in call volume for 2019 due to the implementation of a more efficient and prioritized medical response program.

The New Fire and Emergency Services Headquarters and Training Center grew from a plan in 2019 to a construction site in 2020. The new facility will improve turnout and response times for emergencies across the city.



## Welland Fire and Emergency Services Response

2019	2705 Emergency Responses
2018	2911 Emergency Responses

# COMMITTED TO SAFER COMMUNITIES

The By-law Division re-located its by-law offences from the Provincial Court House to Welland Civic Square. Holding the arbitration process at Civic Square reduces administration costs and simplifies the arbitration process.

### Parking

10,584 parking tickets issued

\$372,630 total revenue

3,142 Honk Mobile Transactions

### By-law Enforcement

1,243 By-Law Enforcement Investigations

42 pool permits issued

## WELLAND: A CITY ON THE MOVE

Welland Transit continued to provide exceptional service to Niagara's residents in 2019. Welland Transit expanded the number of service hours provided to progress the inter-municipal public transportation service and connect people to more places. Welland Transit staff committed 30,000 hours of service to Niagara Region Transit. Due to the city's transit services expanding, the transit yard grew to accommodate an additional ten buses. The Transit Team is looking forward to the Federal Road Transit facility also growing over the next few years.



### Welland Transit is always Going Your Way

989,000 trips were provided to our customers going to school, work, appointments – wherever

827,000 litres of fuel per year to provide municipal, inter-municipal, and WellTrans services

70,000 hours of service to provide municipal, inter-municipal, and WellTrans routes

54% increase in customer usage of the 10 day and 31 day passes since the new fareboxes were initiated in 2017



## WELLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

The three branches of the Welland Public Library are committed to providing a wide variety of lifelong learning resources to both residents and visitors. The Library is continually working to build and maintain its reputation as a relevant and integral hub within our evolving and dynamic community. In 2019, the Library renovated its Main Branch to replace ageing flooring/furniture, enhance services to patrons, and modernize workflows for staff. The Library also began circulating non-traditional items such as technology and board games, and obtained a new e-lending platform (CloudLibrary) to improve access for users. The Library continues to work with community partners, and provides regular services to seniors' residences, daycares, and schools.

- 11,872 Active users
- 189,658 Visitors
- 130,715 Items in collection
- 280,073 Items borrowed
- 75,576 Database/digital resource retrievals
- 23,592 In-library use of materials
- 80,986 Internet/Wi-Fi sessions
- 304,468 Visits to the website/catalog

## MUSÉE DE WELLAND MUSEUM

The Musée de Welland Museum continued to provide heritage preservation of the history of Welland and the surrounding area. The Museum offers relevant exhibits, educational programs, cultural events, and guest speakers. In 2019 Museum visitors enjoyed the Atlas Steel: Memories Forged in Steel exhibit, which showcased the workforce of this once thriving industry and its global influence on the steel industry. An annual month-long community art exhibit that featured local artists' work delighted visitors last June. A variety of cultural programs, March Break programs, visits to seniors' residences, and successful school partnerships completed a very successful year. The Museum experienced an increase in community partnerships and donations and was delighted to receive several community recognition awards.

- 6,055 Attendance
- 19,509 Website visits
- 6,273 Social media followers
- 87 Research requests
- 53 Artifact donations
- 21,143 Items in collection(s)



# INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

Infrastructure and Development Services put a significant amount of teamwork into building smarter infrastructure to enrich lives. Building better roads that take people to public spaces is essential to healthy communities. We believe that hard and soft services must work together for optimal results.



6 Kilometres Urban Roads Reconstructed/Resurfaced

6.25 Kilometres Sidewalks Replaced

7.9 Kilometres Curbs Replaced

18,900 Tonnes Asphalt Laid on Roadways

340 Kilometres Sidewalk, Canal Trail Inspection

82 Lead Water Pipes Replaced

1.6 Km Sanitary Sewer Constructed/Replaced

2.2 Km Cast Iron Watermain Replaced

240 Utility Cuts (Water/Sewer) Reinstated



## Infrastructure is essential to building a vibrant economy and enriching lives

**\$4.5 Million**

**Road Resurfacing/  
Reconstruction Program**

The city prioritized safe roads in 2019. A variety of neighbourhoods received resurfaced streets and sidewalk repairs.

**\$5,500,000**

**Edgar/Elgin Street  
Sewer Separation (Phase I)**

Wastewater infrastructure lacks glamour, but it is essential to healthy cities and is worth the investment for future generations. *(\$12 million Municipal/Provincial/Federal Government Investment)*

**\$300,000**

**Library Renovation**

The Welland Public Library's main branch undertook a renovation that brought new offices and an aesthetically pleasing design.

**\$400,000**

**Arena Steam Boiler Replacement**

Investments into the arenas brought two high efficiency heating models.

# CONNECTING INVESTORS, CREATING VISION

The city's economic development success depends on a goal-oriented approach to securing relationships and supporting business. Welland is privileged to house one of the most admired research colleges in the country, which also offers exceptional training and manufacturing intelligence. The city's economic development team put efficiency on the forefront in 2019 to create connections and secure partnerships.



## Welland Enterprise Centre

Provides the information, resources and tools entrepreneurs need to start and grow a business. Assisted with 28 new start-ups, which created 48 new jobs.

## Gateway Economic Zone CIP

Provides financial incentives to property owners who revitalize, strengthen, and diversify the economy. Promotes private sector investment, development, redevelopment, and construction activity on employment lands in the Gateway CIP Project Area.

## Development Team Approach

Combines building, planning, engineering, and utility representatives into one development team. This allows investors and developers to work with all service providers and obtain site plan approvals easier.

## Brownfield Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Provides a framework of financial incentive programs, strategies, and actions to encourage and promote remediation and redevelopment of brownfield properties within the defined project area.

## Downtown and Health and Wellness Cluster CIP

Financial incentive programs stimulate revitalization, reinforces diversity in downtown as a transit supportive area, and encourages vitality in the Health and Wellness Cluster.

## Foreign Trade Zone Designation

Niagara is designated as a Foreign Trade Zone point, which allows companies to take advantage of incentives that simplify the financial administration of importing and exporting products.



We have a solution focused agenda and create clear-cut pathways to accomplish goals."

~Dan Degazio, General Manager of Economic Development



## Business is evolving, and so are we

Opened new 38 acres of shovel-ready industrial park

Sold Louise Street and Sauer Avenue land assembly for residential development

Last lot in Enterprise Industrial Subdivision sold to build a 20,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility

2 Gateway Economic Zone CIP submitted in 2019 with a total private sector investment of approximately \$33 million

**Downtown and Health and Wellness Cluster CIP**

17 applications approved

\$3,476,885 project costs

\$690,595 grant amounts

**Brownfield CIP**

5 applications approved

\$16,309,511 study/project costs

\$1,837,214 grant amounts

**Building More Business and Better Neighbourhoods**

\$131,045,023 Construction Value

795 building Permits Issued

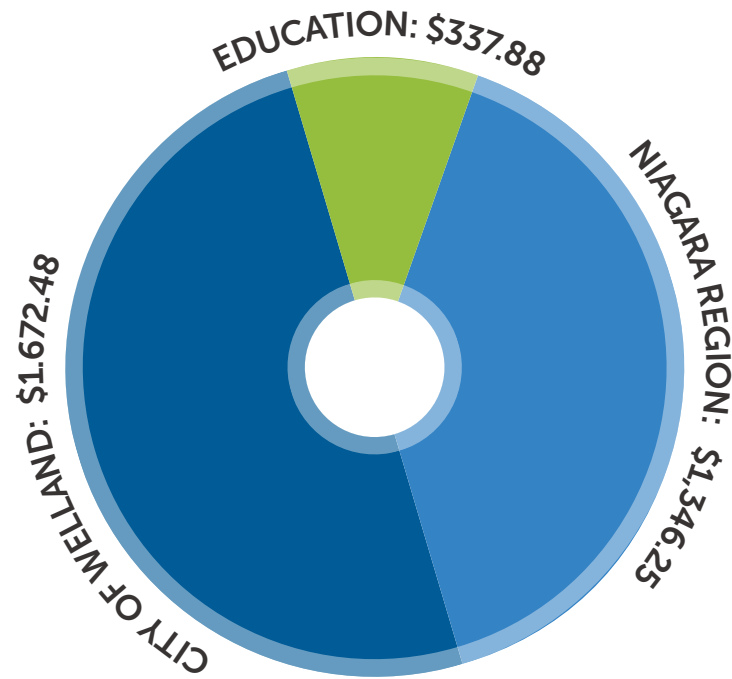
473 New Dwelling Units

# STRETCHING YOUR TAX DOLLARS

The Finance Department is focused on stretching tax dollars so the city can continue with quality programs and services to the public.

**Distribution of Tax Dollars:** An example based on an average residential property with an assessment value of \$209,864

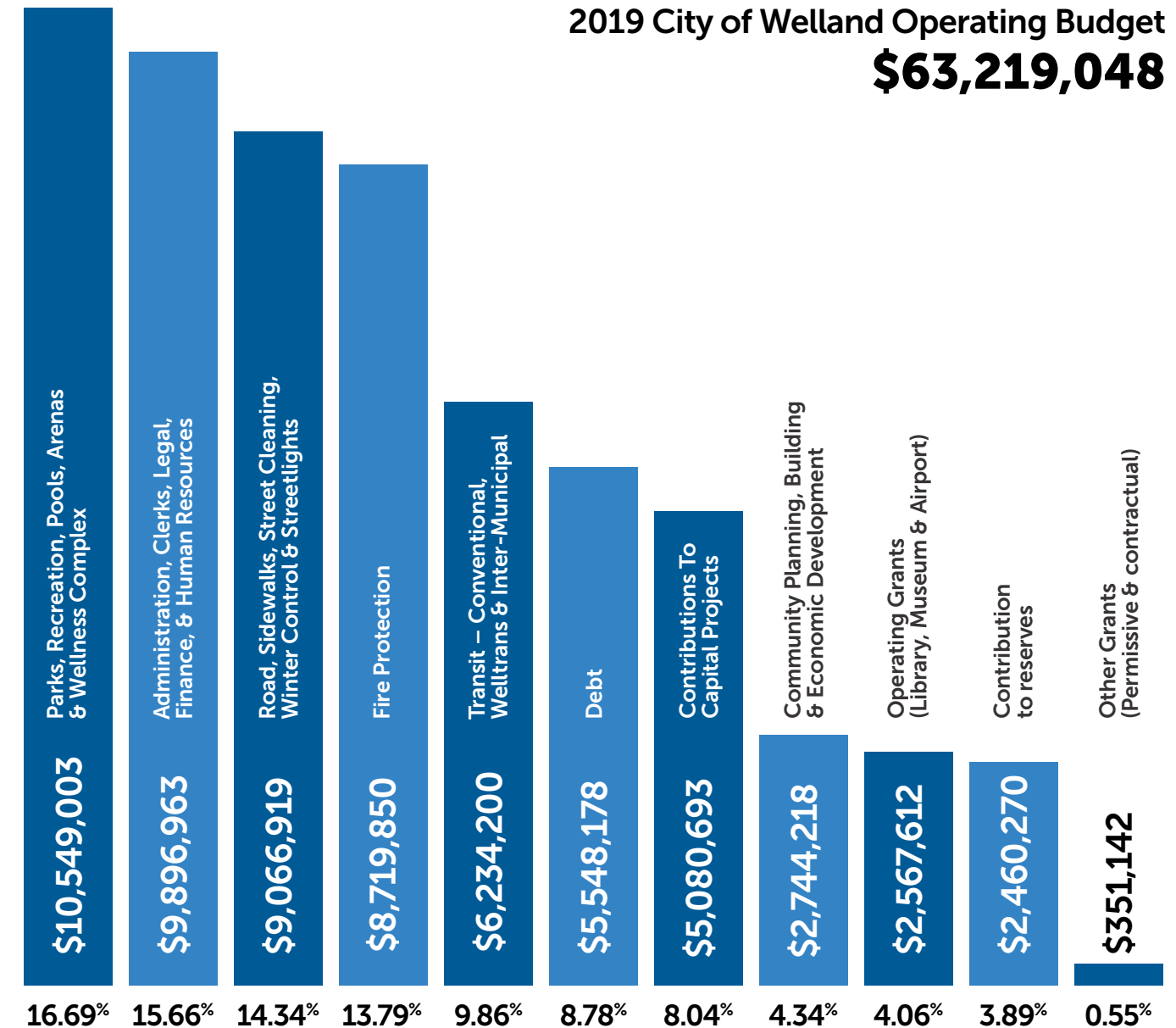
**Annual Property Tax: \$3,356.61**



Balancing the demands of a growing economy while supporting sustainable infrastructure is a priority”

~Steve Zorbas,  
Chief Financial Officer

## 2019 City of Welland Operating Budget \$63,219,048



# 2020 SOLUTIONS FOR A THRIVING COMMUNITY

2020 is an exciting year on the waterway. The Welland Boat Rental Program is relocating to the Lincoln Street Docks area and joining the Rotary Club of Welland Park.

Welland's youth will see some changes at Youth Innovations, which will undergo upgrades and embark on a community engagement strategy.



Successful cities require creative thinking, clever solutions to current municipal concerns, and a solid vision of a thriving tomorrow.



\$18,039,000 investment in Fire and Emergency Services. The city is building an all new Fire Hall Headquarters on the former Atlas site, and replacing the King Street Fire Hall.

\$200,000 Investment for a new playground structure at Summerlea Park.

\$350,000 investment in replacing the Memorial Park Splash Pad.

\$350,000 investment for a new Maple Park Splash Pad.

\$4,000,000 investment into the city's sewer & watermain improvement program.





[www.welland.ca](http://www.welland.ca)