



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

### **Mayor Kevin Davis' message on the 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**

The City of Brantford's 2024-2027 Budget reflects a strong, ongoing commitment by this Council to maintain and improve the services Brantford residents and businesses rely on, while at the same time respecting the taxpayer, many of whom are struggling in these difficult and challenging economic times. The dramatic increase in material, labour and supply costs has had a huge impact on the City's finances, just as I am sure it has impacted your own family or business.

For the past two years, we have been able to shield the taxpayer from these inflationary pressures. In 2022, the property tax increase of 1.98% was less than the inflation rate of 4.8% and, in 2023, we managed to hold the property tax increase to 2.73% when the inflation rate was 6.8%.

This was accomplished by a two-fold approach. First, and foremost, was an extensive reorganization of nearly every department within the City to help identify prudent cost-saving opportunities of every sharp and size. In concert with nominal user fee increases, we were able to protect the local taxpayer from undue financial pressures. However, there is a limit to increasing fees and the opportunity to achieve savings through organizational changes has been exhausted.

However, we were still able to prepare a budget that allows the City to continue to deliver vital services to ensure a smoothly run community, in conjunction with a modest tax increase that according to outside surveys, maintains our level of property taxes just below the average for municipalities of similar size. I want to assure residents that we will continue to be prudent with your tax dollars, investing it wisely and making every dollar count.

Growth happens, whether we want it or not. The only question then becomes, what steps will we take today to ensure we manage growth rather than growth managing us. The budget focuses on strategic investments to increase housing affordability and supports and to make improvements to the shelter system. It includes enhancing facilities, roads, transit and the necessary infrastructure to support future growth. Municipal budgets present both challenges and opportunities for cities of every shape and size across Canada. We must be prepared to meet the future head-on, with an equally strong emphasis on financial prudence.



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The budget continues our commitment to forward thinking, including saving for the City's share of the cost for a new hospital and building more recreational opportunities and transportation links, striving to create a community that is safer, more prosperous and vibrant for the residents of today, and tomorrow.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget including my fellow council members, interested City residents and especially City staff who spent hundreds of hours pouring over the City's finances and preparing, for the first time in our history, a multi-year budget.

A Special City Council meeting has been scheduled for February 20, 2024 to finalize the 2024-2027 multi-year budget, whereby members of Council will have the opportunity to make amendments to the Mayor's budget. Members of the public can also delegate at this meeting to share their input. For more information, residents are encouraged to visit [brantford.ca/CityBudget](http://brantford.ca/CityBudget). I look forward to finalizing the budget process with members of Council and residents during this additional review period in February.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Davis".

**Mayor Kevin Davis**