



**TOWNSHIP OF  
EAST ZORRA-  
TAVISTOCK**

### Tax Instalment

Just a friendly reminder that the 1st instalment of interim taxes is due on

**February 28th**

If you do not have your tax bill that was mailed at the end of January, please contact the Township Office.

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### Landowner Workshop

Annual UTRCA

Landowner Workshop will be held this year at

St. Marys Pyramid

Recreation Centre, 317

James St. S., St. Marys on:

**Tues., March 21 from  
7:00-9:00 pm.**

# EaZy Talk

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2017

## Council Meetings Have Moved

For its February 1, 2017 meeting, Council met for the first time in the Oxford County Council Chambers. Council will continue to hold its bi-monthly meetings in the County Council Chambers until it determines a long-term strategy for a meeting location. The current Township Council Chambers at the Hickson Office are being temporarily



re-purposed for necessary staff workspaces and associated requirements. The Township has retained a design consultant to provide recommendations regarding best use of the current space at the Hickson Office, as well as potential renovation/expansion options on the current site. Council hopes to receive and review the report later this spring. The Oxford County Council Chambers are located in the Oxford County Administration Building, 21 Reeve Street, Woodstock. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday (starting at 9:00 a.m. as of March 1, 2017) and third Wednesday (starting at 7:00 p.m.) of each month, unless otherwise noted. All meetings are open to the public unless provided for otherwise under the legislation.

## Half Load Season Starts March 1st

Load Restrictions on Township roadways take effect **March 1st** and run until the **end of April**. In accordance with By-Law #2005-46, during this time most vehicles are restricted to 5 tonnes for each axle. Fuel and feed trucks are limited to 7.5 tonnes per axle and milk trucks are exempt. The reason for the load restriction is to minimize the deterioration of the road during the spring thaw. Equipment exceeding the weight restriction causes extensive damage to the roads, resulting in very high maintenance costs and increased liability.

Although farm equipment is not included in this by-law, we request local farmers to consider spring thaw conditions when scheduling movement of commodities, machinery, etc. This will help preserve our Township roads.

## Go Plant a Tree!

Planting trees, especially in our rural areas, has many benefits. Trees can act as wind breaks, help control soil erosion, buffer water courses and can be used to retire marginal production lands. The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) offers both seedlings and large stock trees to rural landowners who reside in the Upper Thames River watershed, and who may also be eligible to participate in tree planting projects on their property.

Landowners have the option of ordering and planting the trees on their own or employing conservation staff to carry out the planting and maintenance of the trees. Please contact John Enright at the UTRCA for more information: [enrightj@thamesriver.on.ca](mailto:enrightj@thamesriver.on.ca)

**THE FLASHING GREEN LIGHT**

All drivers in Ontario are familiar with the emergency red flashing lights and sirens on police cars, ambulances and fire trucks and know they are required by law to pull to the right and stop when they see or hear them coming. Not everyone is aware of the Volunteer Firefighter's "Green Flashing Light".

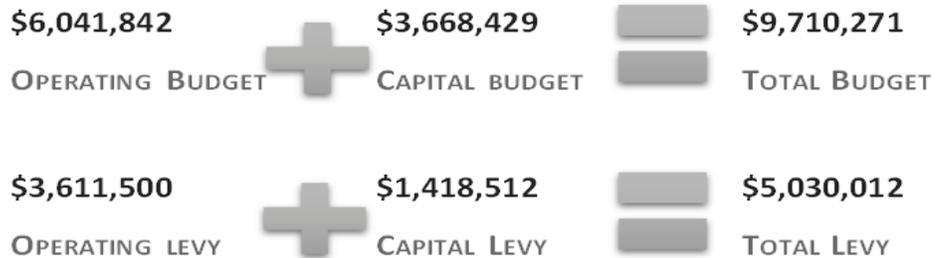
The Township's volunteer fire departments located in Hickson, Innerkip and Tavistock rely on individuals who work at other jobs and as such attend calls from places other than the firehall. Each firefighter is required to respond to the firehall in their own vehicle to get the equipment and trucks needed to deal with the situation. To help the public identify these firefighters, the Ministry of Transportation amended the Highway Traffic Act to allow volunteer firefighters responding to emergencies to use a light that flashes green. The lights are part of the department's emergency operation procedures and with the public's cooperation they can be very effective in keeping response times down.

If you see the "flashing green light", please pull over and let them pass - the quicker they can get to the call, the quicker they can respond to the situation.

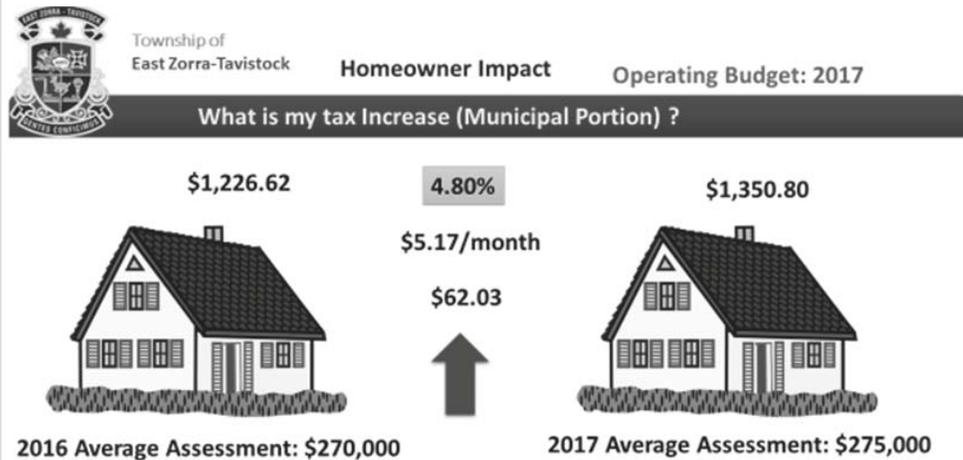
# Operating and Capital Budget 2017

As your municipal government, the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock is entrusted with the responsibility of managing and investing the tax dollars you pay to meet the needs of the community and ensure all of our strategic priorities are addressed. We are committed to striking a healthy balance between offering valued services and programs to residents, making strategic investments in community priorities, and keeping property taxes to a reasonable rate. Each year, the Township approves an annual budget, made up of two parts:

- 1. Operating Budget:** funded primarily through property taxes and user fees; used to operate Township facilities and provide municipal services and programs to residents. Some of the key operating budget drivers for 2017 includes:
  - Decrease in OMPF funding by 15%
  - Increase in overall operational wages by 1.5%
  - Increase in assessment growth by 1.38%
  - Decrease in policing cost by 2.78 %
- 2. Capital Budget:** funded through property taxes, development charges, debts and grants; used to either build or rehabilitate assets that will last for than one year. This year the Township rolled out its 10 year capital or asset management plan. The Township delivers many services that are crucial to our residents. Therefore maintaining our current service level is one of the guiding principles of the 10 year capital plan.



The overall net increase in tax levy from 2016 is \$465,174. However, due to assessment growth in 2016 this levy increase is adjusted to \$383,293 or 8.25%. Although this increase may seem high, the average residential impact may not be as substantial. For an average 2017 residential assessment at \$275,000 the proposed tax levy will result in an increase to the Township's share of the residential tax bill by \$62.03 or 4.80%.



**Note: Municipal property tax amount is subject to 2017 tax policy. Excludes the Education tax as set by Province and County Tax portion as set by Oxford County.**

# Message from the Mayor



I recently listened to a talk by Simon Sinek entitled "Love Your Work." I believe he has hit the nail on the head with his message that could just as easily be entitled "Love Your Community." Simon Sinek suggests that loving your job is not about the work you perform but rather about the interaction of the people you work with. Fulfillment comes from doing good for others. We are social beings that are wired to care and to be cared for. To try and find satisfaction and accomplishment aside from caring for each other is truly a fool's errand.

Sinek explains that caring in its simplest form is exerting energy and time for the betterment of others. He explains that doing good for others triggers a biological response and oxytocin is released in our bodies. Growing up on a dairy farm oxytocin came in a bottle and you would give it to a cow to help let down her milk. Nursing mothers know all about it too. However, we all produce oxytocin (yes even men) that creates a feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction. It is the "connecting" hormone. It inspires and energizes us to do good and be helpful

toward others. Please do not run out to the vet clinic to get a bottle but rather pull the trigger that starts the natural release. The trigger is small acts of kindness. Try it and discover your natural biological response. Do a little, get a lot!

We can be foolish people and have come to think that money and digital gadgetry will bring happiness and fulfillment. You cannot text an act of charity nor buy a gesture of kindness. We need to consider how we can take time and invest energy to care for one another. Doing good for others will inspire those around you to do likewise and it will transform your work place and our community.

If you have time and energy this spring and summer I would invite you to get in touch with the Hickson Trail Committee as they embark on an ambitious venture to open up the old rail line between Hickson and the Braemar Road. I recall there being 3124 railroad ties between the farm I grew up on and the old two room school in Hickson. It will likely take that many acts of kindness and generosity to see this project through to completion but I am confident that we can do it together, one step at a time. Do a little, get a lot! Thank you for caring for our community and making it a great place to call home.

# Budget Continued...



For in depth analysis of 2017 budget and budget presentations please visit our website at <http://ezt.ca/budget>. The 2017 budget page will contain all budget documents considered by Council during deliberation for the 2017 budget. The budget process is public and Council encourages feedback from our residents. The main forum for the Public comment is the Public Meeting which is scheduled for the **March 1st, 2017**. In addition to the public meeting, residents can contact a Council member, submit a written comment or email to [budget@ezt.ca](mailto:budget@ezt.ca).

# Council

Mayor & County Councillor

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**Jeremy Smith**

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Council meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month at 9:00 am and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm. All meetings are open to the public.

## Hickson Trail is Expanding

The Hickson Trail Committee, in cooperation with the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and local landowners, are working to open up the final section of the "Hickson Trail", which runs between the village of Hickson and the City of Woodstock. This final section, between Braemar Sideroad and Hickson, is also located on the old railway line property, which has not been used in over 50 years. The project involves constructing two bridges, clearing the brush and trees that have grown up on the rail bed, and smoothing the trail surface. Once the work is complete, the entire length of the Hickson Trail will be open and free to use for all and will provide a variety of year-round uses for all age groups, including walking, cycling, cross country skiing, snow shoeing and other outdoor and nature activities.

The estimated cost for all of the required work is \$95,000. To date, there has already been over \$20,000 committed and the Hickson Trail Committee is actively fundraising for the remaining funds, in order to make the project happen.



Donations to the project are greatly appreciated. Please make donations payable to the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock and indicate that it is for the "Hickson Trail". Cheques can be mailed to the Township at Box 100, 90 Loveys St. Hickson, ON N0J 1L0. Donations by debit can also be accommodated at the Township office. Charitable tax receipts will be issued from the Township for all donations over \$20. Donations of \$100 or more will be recognized on the EZT web site, with the donor's permission.

For more information, or to volunteer with the Hickson Trail Committee, please contact:

Ross Campbell (Chair): ross014@execulink.com  
Markley Bond (Secretary): bond.markley@gmail.com

## Office and Facility Contacts

### Township Office

90 Loveys Street  
Box 100  
Hickson ON N0J 1L0  
Phone: 519.462.2697  
Fax: 519.462.2961  
Email: ezt@ezt.ca  
Website: www.ezt.ca  
Office Hours: Mon - Fri  
8:30 - 12:00 & 1:00 - 4:30

### County of Oxford

Phone: 519.539.9800

### Tavistock & District Recreation Centre

Phone: 519.655.2102  
Fax: 519.655.3560

### Tavistock & District Memorial Hall

Phone: 519.655.9992  
For Bookings: 519.655.2102

### Innerkip Community Centre

Phone: 519.539.1340  
For Bookings: 519.469.3889

### Stay Informed



Join "Keep Me Informed"