

## City Council approves series of financial measures to further support residents and businesses

**March 27, 2020** – St. Catharines City Council continues its efforts to support residents and businesses as they wrestle with the financial pressures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During a special meeting on Friday, March 27, Council approved a series of measures aimed at supporting residents and businesses with the costs of municipal taxes and services. The approved measures, which include some previously announced, are as follows:

- Deferring the April 30 interim tax instalment to June 30
- Waiving tax penalty and interest charges until June 30
- Waiving water and wastewater penalty and interest charges until June 30
- Waiving accounts receivable penalty and interest charges until June 30
- Waiving charges for any cheques or pre-authorized payments returned for non-sufficient funds or payments stopped by the payer
- Amending the 2020 final tax levy instalment dates to July 31 and October 30
- Deferring the 2020 water and wastewater increase from April 1 to July 1
- Limiting parking enforcement to safety-related issues (including but not limited to fire routes, accessible parking, no-parking areas and fire hydrants) until June 30.
- Waiving payment for on-street parking, municipal parking lots and garages
- Suspending any water service disconnections for non-payment of water and wastewater billings until June 30
- Waiving late fees for 2020 dog licences
- Waiving late fees for 2020 general business licences

Council has also requested the Region of Niagara defer payments required by 90 days, similar to the June and September school board tax payment deferrals that were announced earlier this week by the province.

“As we continue to navigate increasingly unprecedented times, the effects of COVID-19 are placing extreme challenges on our residents and the local business community,” said Mayor Walter Sendzik. “We know this is a stressful time for everyone and hope providing our community additional time to pay, without penalties or interest, will provide some relief. This is the right thing to do to support our community during this time.”

With City Hall currently closed, those residents and businesses who wish to continue to pay their taxes and water and wastewater fees on the original due dates have several options for payment, including by mail, online banking or via the City Hall drop box. Details are available at [www.stcatharines.ca/paymentoptions](http://www.stcatharines.ca/paymentoptions). Pre-authorized payments

for tax instalments have been deferred until June 30 but monthly pre-authorized payments will continue unless suspended in writing by the payer. The City will continue to process pre-authorized payments for water, unless suspended in writing by the payer.

Taxpayers can use the City's online e-bill portal to access water and tax information. A link to the portal, and information on how to register, is available at [www.stcatharines.ca/ebilling](http://www.stcatharines.ca/ebilling).

The City continues to monitor the situation as it evolves. To stay updated on the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit [www.stcatharines.ca/COVID19](http://www.stcatharines.ca/COVID19).

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