

## **INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ**

### **COUNCIL APPROVES UNPRECEDENTED RELIEF PLAN TO EASE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF COVID-19 ON PROPERTY AND BUSINESS TAXPAYERS**

**WINNIPEG, April 3, 2020** – At a Special Meeting of Council today, efforts to ease the financial burden of COVID-19 on Winnipeg homeowners and businesses were approved by Council.

On March 20, Mayor Brian Bowman and Councillor Scott Gillingham introduced an amending motion to the 2020-2023 Multi-Year Balanced Budgets for Council's consideration to look at ways the City could provide financial relief for property and business taxpayers. City Council voted 11-3 in favour of the Budgets which gave the public service the authority to develop the plan.

"This plan to provide financial relief for property and business taxpayers is unprecedented in our city's history," said Mayor Brian Bowman. "As Winnipeggers, we will get through the global COVID-19 pandemic by supporting each other. Providing immediate relief to Winnipeg homeowners and businesses who are not currently able to pay their taxes is one of the ways the City of Winnipeg can support our community."

Cities across Canada have either implemented or are in the process of implementing similar tax deferrals for property owners and business owners. This includes Toronto, Ottawa, Saskatoon and Edmonton.

"I have heard from residents and business owners that have already been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and they are concerned about their ability to pay their bills on time," said Councillor Gillingham. "On March 15, I asked City staff to begin preparing a plan to offer property and business owners relief by giving them more time to pay their taxes. The City of Winnipeg needs to continue to be sensitive on how COVID-19 is impacting household incomes and Winnipeg's economy."

For those who need it, the City will waive penalties for unpaid property and business taxes for up to three months following their due date. Property taxes that are due on June 30, 2020 will have fees waived until October 1, 2020. Business taxes that are due on May 29, 2020 will have fees waived until September 1, 2020.

The City will also waive Tax Instalment Payment Plan (TIPP) program fees on both property and business taxes until October 1, 2020. This means no enrolment fee for the

TIPP program and no penalty fee as a result of non-sufficient funds during that time. Residents will be allowed to remain enrolled in the program and make delayed TIPP payments without any late payment fees.

Taxes will still be owed and tax due dates have not changed. Those who are able to meet those due dates are encouraged to do so.

The City encourages Winnipeggers to consider the benefits of enrolling in the TIPP program. If residents are currently not enrolled, it allows residents to make regular monthly payments and avoid having to pay entire tax bills three months further down the road. Residents are encouraged to contact 311 to inquire about enrolment.

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For further information:

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