

## **Town of Erin**

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### **Reflections on our Community An Open Letter to the Residents of the Town of Erin**

As we enter the summer months it's a wonderful time to reflect on where we are today and where we are heading as a community. The Town of Erin is on the cusp of a new era that will ensure our success for generations to come. This Council is moving positively forward together – to do anything less places us in jeopardy. With the conclusion of the Wastewater Environmental Assessment we will begin a new chapter that will truly make Erin the ideal place to live, work and raise our families.

To achieve this end - over the past 14-months we have undergone several changes to improve operations at Town Hall. We have a renewed emphasis on customer service, and innovating to save taxpayers' dollars. Business processes have been streamlined, and unnecessary layers of bureaucracy have been removed. We have also held the tax rate to the rate of inflation, and we are embarking on new programs that establish Erin as a leading municipality across Wellington County and southern Ontario. In fact, just in the past year we have delivered a number of positive results for our residents, including: new multi-year budget forecasts which were never done before and allows Council to better plan for the future; becoming the first municipality in Ontario to incorporate Cornerstone Certification into our procurement policy; launching comprehensive Operational Reviews of our departments which has never been done in the history of the corporation; we are one of the first municipalities to take progressive action on plastic bottle recycling by partnering with the Canadian Beverage Association on a pilot project that is intended to be used as a model across Ontario; we have launched customer satisfaction surveys; we will be beginning the process of developing a Parks & Recreation Master Plan which is a first for the Town; we have moved to formalize our relationships with stakeholder groups like the Tennis Club and Ballinafad Community Centre to ensure everyone knows what is expected and to better provide services and manage financial resources; we successfully entered into a long-term stable funding arrangement with the Town of Halton Hills to provide funding for the Ballinafad Community Center which has never before been accomplished in the Town; with support from our provincial and federal partners, significant reinvestments have been made into new playground equipment in Victoria Park; we are moving to outsource our water operations which will save the Town \$1.5M over the course of five years allowing us to invest in our aged and failing water infrastructure; we are launching a new Community Improvement Plan to help bolster our business community and provide them with a hand-up; after 18 years of existence, the Town finally has an agreement relating to operations of Centre 2000; a new Riverwalk Trail is under construction; we will be announcing a Citizen Engagement Charter in the coming months; later this year we will be initiating the process to create a new long-term Strategic Plan which will set the vision for us moving forward into the future; we have engaged the youth in our community by establishing a Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee which is a first for Erin, and also took the extra step of appointing a student Councillor; public consultation has increased significantly and Council has proactively sought and responded to the views of residents on matters like gravel pits and wastewater treatment; later this year we expect to begin the process of reviewing our Official Plan which is over 14-years old and long overdue; we are implementing a plan to make all of our public spaces fully accessible; and these are only a few things that are top of mind and don't begin to cover all the improvements over the past 14-months.

Looking at how far we have come in the past four years I am proud of what this Council has achieved together. We are not done yet – there is still much to do to secure the future we all want for our children and grandchildren. My commitment has and will continue to be to work with the public and Council to build upon our successes and make Erin prosper.

Sincerely,

Mayor Allan Ails