



Mayor's Message:

It's hard to believe that the first quarter of my term for 2021 has already passed us by. I am happy to share that it has been a positive and productive quarter for the Town of Birch Hills with good news on a few fronts. We are experiencing a very trying and challenging time in our history. The Covid 19 pandemic has shaken the globe, and our province for the past year now. The impact to our economy and our daily lives it will take some time to recover with new vaccines rolling out and a more positive outlook to recovery. As the Town of Birch Hills we are doing our very best to provide a safe community but continue to press forward with governing Birch Hills with a few on going matters and projects we have. Things are ever changing, and we can assure you that we will do our best to make good decisions for our community and for our citizens as we all do our best to get through this together. That is enough of the boring stuff here are a few of the action items we are looking forward to kick off.

- 1.) **Water Treatment Plant:** Council met with **Catterall & Wright** in regards of moving forward with providing a new water supply for the Town of Birch Hills. **Catterall & Wright** proposed 3 options **Option 1:** Drill wells down by the riverbank at three separate locations in search of adequate water supply to be pumped back to town. With that said we are seeking water analysis reports from **Muskoday First Nations** on their drilling efforts of what quality and quantity of water discovered. **Option 2:** Was to use our existing line we have buried from the river in effort to establish a pumphouse from the riverbank to the town's holding cell area. In having said this the 2 options would be to develop an access roadway to these areas and also as well power would need to be brought to both sites. **Option 3:** Is to drill deep bore wells in a couple or three areas in the town to try hit a water supply to be adequate for the town. This and the two options above are risky and expensive adventures. Council will have to decide rather quickly on which direction we want to go with this for the grant money that was awarded to the town maybe lost. Mayor and council are working hard in making the right decision and will be

seeking out to the citizens for your ideas to bring water into our town not for today but for the future.

2.) **Fiber Optic Internet Service:** This is a very exciting adventure for the Town of Birch Hills on Feb.24/21 regular town council meeting was held on the agenda was a delegation from Blaine Mulligan. Blaine had brought to council's attention about a company willing to adventure into high-speed internet to the Town of Birch Hills, this what he had to say.

Personal Info:

My family have been long-time residents of Birch Hills (my parents moved here in the late 90's, my wife's family has lived in the area for a couple of generations). I have worked in the Information Technology Services Department of Saskatchewan Polytechnic for 15 years, most recently as a Senior Network Analyst, but am currently transitioning to a new role as a Solution Architect. In this role I help the organization find technology solutions to business problems. What we are doing in the Town of Birch Hills is **Krate Distributed Information Systems** is wanting to use Birch Hills as a site to build the WORLD'S FIRST fully working, proof of concept, distributed datacenter that utilizes an ultra-secure, low/no maintenance design. The datacenter is also planning to be carbon neutral/negative, by utilizing both solar power and hydrothermal liquefaction (via a partnership with **VDQ-NRG**). Not only will the datacenter provide resources worldwide, but a core focus of **Krate** is community improvement. To this end, they are designing technology services that will enable residents to extend the life of old/slow computers instead of having to replace them, connections to federal education and research networks, increased access to innovative technologies for our school, caching abilities to enable quicker access to web services like Netflix, Microsoft, Facebook, etc., and much more as the service evolves. To enable the full capabilities of the new datacenter, plans are being made to modernize the internet infrastructure in town, by moving from the antiquated DSL technology to a much newer fiber-optic one. Which will provide connectivity even faster than in the city, possibly even the COUNTRY'S FIRST 2.5 gigabit or 10 gigabit residential connection (for comparison, this is 200 times faster than the current maximum speed in the town on DSL Technology). Not only will this benefit current residents,

but by being a technology leader in this area, the improvements will stimulate economic and residential growth to the community, which will bring in new businesses, families, and opportunities to the surrounding area. In addition to the above, the projects will be of a very minimal cost to the town and residents, if any, and may create new jobs, as contractors in the area could be leveraged for the construction and ongoing maintenance.

Just to finish Town council has appointed Blaine and a growing committee to lead this into a forward direction also this being said it is going to take community interest. **NO INTEREST!!** will lay this project down and just send it down the road to another community. Meetings with **Krate Distributed** and **VDQ-NRG** are going to be happening in the weeks to come so more information will be out to the community on this exciting infrastructure that the Town of Birch Hills was chosen for. Feel free to go on the Canadian Fiber Optics Survey(<https://canadianfiberoptics.ca/survey/>) as this could help the penetration of the project.



3.) **Paving of Taylor Ave.:** Just to touch base on this project was approved by previous council resolution. The project will cost in the excess amount of \$420,000. There is some provincial funding that has been allocated for this project to move forward. The remainder will be funded by the Town of Birch Hills, the project will begin in first weeks of May. Also just moving forward projects will be paid for in fair manner to the benefited property ratepayers.

4.) **Taxable Assessed Value Loss:** 2021 was a revaluation year for the Town of Birch Hills. All property owners should have received your new tax assessment value in the mail. This new value tax assessment was quite shocking to council with a drop in assessed value of \$6,242,955 from the last assessment. This meaning that we will need to tighten our budget up for 2021 year. Please see attached graph.

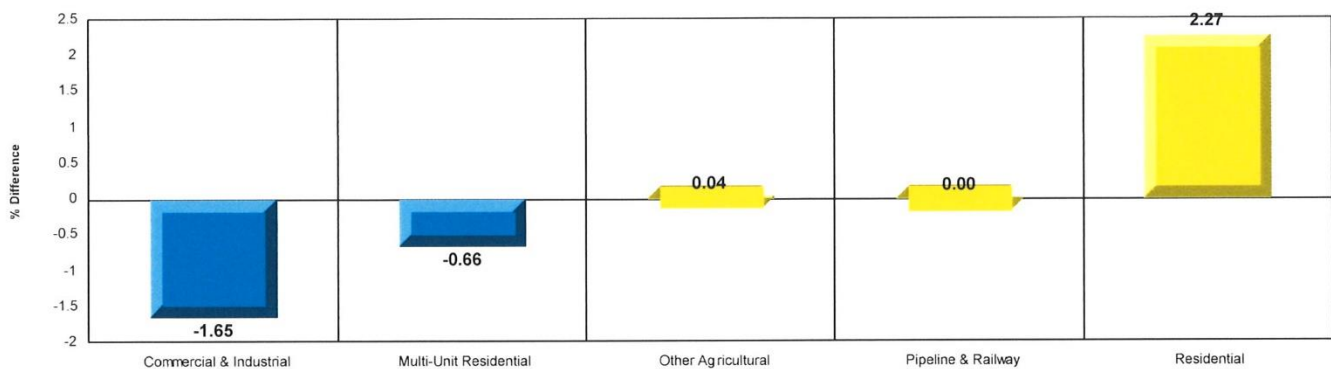


2021 Revaluation Taxable Assessed Value Trend Report for BIRCH - BIRCH HILLS

March 3, 2021

Tax Class (as defined in Regulations)	2020 Taxable Assessed Value	2020 293 Exempt Assessed Value	2020 Taxable % of Total Value	2021 Taxable Assessed Value	2021 Estimated 293 Exempt Assessed Value	2021 Adjusted Taxable Assessed Value	2021 Adjusted Taxable % of Total	See Chart Change of % 2020 to 2021
Commercial & Industrial	\$5,976,200	n/a	8.69%	\$4,402,150	n/a	\$4,402,150	7.04%	-1.65%
Multi-Unit Residential	\$4,067,200	n/a	5.91%	\$3,284,240	n/a	\$3,284,240	5.25%	-0.66%
Other Agricultural	\$160,435	n/a	0.23%	\$169,895	n/a	\$169,895	0.27%	0.04%
Pipeline & Railway	\$8,700	n/a	0.01%	\$8,415	n/a	\$8,415	0.01%	0.00%
Residential	\$58,575,440	n/a	85.15%	\$54,680,320	n/a	\$54,680,320	87.43%	2.27%
Total	\$68,787,975		100.00%	\$62,545,020		\$62,545,020	100.00%	

Change of % 2020 to 2021



5.) RCMP Boundary Change: On Mar.21/21 the RCMP have notified the Town office that the RCMP from Prince Albert will no longer be our main callout center. Our new service will be provided by the Melfort RCMP Detachment, this change is due to the high case file level in Prince Albert. The boundary changes will come into effect on Apr.30/21 the RCMP feel that we will get a better response time from Melfort being that the case file level is much lower. The RCMP will be sending the Town office more information on this matter and the Town of Birch Hills will inform the citizens as soon as we receive it.

Stay Safe

Mayor Randy Wojcichowsky

