



Hawk Beach – Brandon Blades



The budget is one of the most crucial documents of our municipality, reflecting our vision of providing an ocean of opportunity for all residents. As stewards of public funds, we recognize the vital importance of striking a delicate balance between meeting the evolving needs of our community and ensuring fiscal prudence mandated by provincial regulations.

The operating and capital budgets have been developed with a dual focus: to uphold and enhance current municipal services while strategically investing in projects aimed at addressing the evolving needs of our community.

The Municipality begins working on the upcoming fiscal year's budget several months before the start of the fiscal year to allow sufficient time for data collection, detailed review of financial data, and public input. The process includes:



Strategic Plan



Public Input



Service Review



Financial Planning

Each year, the Municipality updates its Capital Investment Plan (CIP), in accordance with the Municipal Government Act. Again this year, a detailed review of the current and future projects was completed with a goal of planning appropriately for the next five years.

Each year presents us with the challenge of aligning expenditures with revenues, navigating the intricate landscape of budgeting to ensure that every dollar is allocated efficiently and transparently. From essential day-to-day operations to strategic investments in infrastructure and services, this document serves as a beacon of clarity, empowering our residents with a deeper understanding of our budgeting process and our collective vision for a thriving municipality.



As your Warden, I am proud to present the municipal budget highlights for the 2025/2026 fiscal year. This budget is more than just numbers - it represents our shared priorities and our ongoing commitment to building a strong, resilient, and thriving community.

With a total of \$11.8 million allocated for operating expenses and \$7.1 million for capital investments, this year's budget reflects thoughtful planning and collaboration to maintain and enhance essential services, while preparing responsibly for the future.

This year, the operating budget includes a modest increase to property tax rates. While this was a difficult decision, it was necessary to address the rising costs of service delivery and infrastructure upkeep amidst rising costs. We remain committed to fiscal responsibility, transparency, and ensuring that the municipality continues to meet the needs of residents today and in the years ahead.

Building on major investments made in recent years - including wastewater treatment, recreation, and infrastructure upgrades, we are advancing key initiatives such as completing the new Recreation Centre, finalizing the design of a new Community Health Centre, extending the sidewalk in Barrington Passage, upgrading the Brass Hill Treatment Plant, and enhancing Stoney Island Beach with new washrooms, change rooms, and a boardwalk. Additional facility repairs and renovations are also planned.

Our budget is shaped with all residents in mind, including our most vulnerable, and is guided by long-term planning and responsible stewardship of resources. We hope you find this document informative and hope it offers valuable insight into the thoughtful decisions behind this year's budget.

Shaun Hatfield

Warden Shaun Hatfield

Revenue

Municipalities use a variety of revenue sources to pay for a wide range of services that residents and businesses depend on and use regularly. The major revenue sources that are typically used to pay for day-to-day services include:

- Property Taxes
- Utility User Fees (Sewer)
- Other User Fees (i.e. recreation, landfill, permits)

Municipalities also have access to other forms of funding which are generally used for capital projects:

- Grants from the Provincial and Federal governments and their agencies
- Proceeds from borrowing
- Reserve Funds (funds saved up over time for large projects)

Part of Council's decision-making process each year is to determine what levels of funding for services should come from the various sources of revenue.

	2024/2025 Actuals (Jan. 2025)	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Budget
TAXATION	9,112,010	9,034,699	9,466,765
GRANTS IN LIEU OF TAXES	49,841	174,928	179,011
SERVICES TO OTHER GOV.	135,751	147,971	220,469
SALES OF SERVICE			
ARENA	102,187	121,500	139,000
RECREATION & CULTURE	62,430	99,490	108,040
C&D SITE	156,822	166,200	243,200
OTHER REVENUE			
LICENSES & PERMITS	47,102	45,000	47,000
PROPERTY RENTALS	114,569	135,299	157,883
INTEREST ON REVENUE	446,945	355,000	250,000
FIRE SERVICES	116,470	180,766	406,355
WIND TURBINE	-	50,000	60,000
ADMIN REVENUE	58,000	28,000	41,000
UNCONDITIONAL GRANTS	138,699	192,204	197,204
CONDITIONAL GRANTS	2,647,781	7,051,600	3,056,085
TRANSFERS FROM RESERVES	-	5,155,450	4,365,822
TOTAL REVNEUE	<u>13,188,609</u>	<u>22,938,107</u>	<u>18,937,834</u>

Expenses

Municipalities are tasked with providing a broad array of services to their residents, balancing this with fiscal responsibility. A significant portion of our budget is allocated to other public authorities, mandated by law. It's important to clarify which services fall under municipal control versus those managed by other levels of government. Municipalities oversee services like waste collection, RCMP, fire service, parks, streetlights, and sewers, while education, healthcare, road maintenance, justice, and community services are typically handled by other government levels.

	2024/2025 Actuals (Jan. 2025)	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Budget
GENERAL SERVICES			
LEGISLATIVE (COUNCIL)	128,376	165,682	162,872
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	779,319	1,023,138	1,066,815
PROPERTY SERVICES	426,092	496,598	532,143
TAXATION	292,160	308,435	314,195
OTHER SERVICES	132,815	152,000	129,500
PROTECTIVE SERVICES			
POLICE PROTECTION	967,235	1,292,053	1,356,631
BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT	15,045	19,000	18,000
FIRE PROTECTION	937,367	1,000,322	1,256,840
EMERGENCY MGMT.	11,880	14,470	56,740
BUILDING INSPECTION	167,022	224,405	257,841
FIRE SERVICES COOR.	69,650	87,034	73,688
TRANSPORTATION			
ROADS	142,701	106,850	209,120
STREETLIGHTS	148,599	180,000	182,000
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH			
WASTEWATER SERVICES	413,656	406,924	421,210
SOLID WASTE	1,352,830	1,458,959	1,551,462
PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLNESS	69,820	104,000	82,000
ENVIRONMENTAL DEV.	412,608	473,112	490,657
RECREATION & CULTURE	1,088,408	1,095,895	1,253,924
EDUCATION	1,393,031	1,672,000	1,807,572
FINANCING	4,862,595	12,657,228	7,714,624
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>13,811,209</u>	<u>22,938,107</u>	<u>18,937,834</u>

New Recreation Centre**\$4,791,477**

This investment will see the completion of the new Centre connected to the arena that will include an indoor track, a program kitchen and program rooms for community use.

Brass Hill Treatment Plant Upgrades**\$1,137,000**

This project involves installing a high-capacity stainless-steel dewatering centrifuge and supporting systems to improve sludge treatment and significantly reduce offsite hauling costs. The upgrade includes a new building to house the equipment, a sludge conveyor, polymer system, and feed pumps to streamline the dewatering process.

Community Health Centre**\$238,000**

This investment represents the completion of the design phase and the beginning of the tender phase.

Sidewalk Extension**\$474,303**

This project will see the existing sidewalk in Barrington Passage extended by approximately 350 m to connect the current sidewalk to the property on Highway 3 onto which the Community Health Centre is intended to be built.

Recreation & Beach Infrastructure Renewal**\$365,000**

This year's recreation and beach infrastructure upgrades include a rebuild of the compressor at the curling rink, the replacement of the pool circulation system, and the addition of a new fire suppression reservoir at the arena. At Stoney Island Beach, new washrooms, change rooms, and a boardwalk will enhance the visitor experience and accessibility.



DID YOU KNOW?

Only two-thirds of the property taxes you pay each year go towards municipal services. Each year, the Municipality is mandated to contribute to provincial services such as education, roads, corrections, housing, and libraries.

How much will I pay in property taxes on my home?

Property taxes are calculated based on the assessed value of your property and the tax rate set by the municipality. The assessed value is determined by the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) and usually takes into account factors such as property size, location, and market value. The tax rate is set annually by Council and is applied to the assessed value to determine the amount owed.

A homeowner with an assessed home value of \$100,000 will pay \$1,100 per year (\$91.67 per month) in municipal property tax (not including fire rates). For every \$100,000 in assessment, the increase multiplies by that factor (i.e. \$200,000 of assessment = \$2,200/year, \$300,000 of assessment = \$3,300/year, etc.).

What do I get for my taxes?

Property taxes fund a wide range of services essential for community well-being, including but not limited to public safety (police and fire departments), municipal road maintenance, garbage collection, parks and recreation facilities, public transportation, and education.

Why did our property tax rates increase?

Property tax rates increased this year to help us keep pace with rising costs for essential services like waste collection and disposal, emergency services, education and infrastructure upkeep. For example, just education alone has increased \$420,000 over the last 5 years. While we've worked hard to find efficiencies and maintain responsible spending, inflationary pressures have made it necessary to adjust the tax rate to ensure we can continue to deliver the level of service residents expect and deserve. It's important to note that the tax rate had been reduced in the past and had remained virtually unchanged since 2009. Nonetheless, this decision was made with careful consideration and a strong commitment to maintaining a vibrant, well-served community now and into the future.

What happens if I can't afford to pay my municipal taxes? Are there any assistance programs available?

We offer a property tax exemption for low-income earners who are residents of the Municipality. The province also offers a property tax rebated program for Seniors. More information on both of these programs can be found on our municipal website.

How does Barrington's residential tax rate compare to other similar municipalities?

It is difficult to compare tax rates as each municipality includes different services within their general rate. For example, our general rate includes all but fire protection whereas the Municipality of Digby's general rate does not include fire protection, sidewalks or streetlights. After including all rates and charges, here is a summary of the rates of similar municipalities:

Municipality	Rate*
DIGBY	\$1.44-\$1.54
SHELBURNE	\$1.26
BARRINGTON	\$1.22-\$1.28
CLARE	\$1.26
ARGYLE	\$1.14-\$1.24
YARMOUTH	\$1.26-\$1.35

*Per \$100 of assessment and depending on fire district.

Why do I pay for fire services separately and what is the capital rate for?

The Municipality's fire services are funded through area rates within each of our three fire districts. The revenues generated from the rates are provided to each respective fire department to operate their department throughout the year. We also have a fire capital rate which is the same throughout the municipality and is used to fund each department's capital purchases.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Municipality of Barrington has over 1,174 streetlights throughout the Municipality at a total cost each year of approximately \$182,000. This represents about 1.5% of our operating budget which equals approx. \$16.50 per year for a homeowner with an assessed home value of \$100,000.