



Cape Sable Island Causeway – Jake Brenner



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 pleased to present the municipal budget highlight document for the upcoming fiscal year. Our municipality's budget is not merely a collection of numbers; it's a reflection of our commitment to you and our collective vision for a thriving community.

Through careful planning and collaboration, we have crafted a budget of \$10.7 million for operating expenses and \$12.3 million for capital investments in 2024/2025. These allocations have been thoughtfully designed to uphold and improve essential services while responsibly preparing for the future. We understand the importance of transparency and accountability, and this document serves as a tool to assist you in understanding our budgeting process and the priorities we've set forth.

Building upon the significant investments made in wastewater treatment, recreational services, and infrastructure improvements in the previous fiscal years, we've continued to emphasize a stronger commitment to future planning. Notable projects and investments in this year's budget include the construction of our new Recreation Centre, an enhanced low-income tax exemption program, a sidewalk extension in Barrington Passage and further repairs and renovations to a variety of facilities.

I am happy to announce that Council has approved the 2024/2025 operating budget with no increases to tax rates, fire rates, or wastewater (sewer) charges, recognizing the importance of maintaining the tax rate in light of increased assessments and the rising cost of living.

Our budgets are designed to support all residents, including the most vulnerable among us, while maintaining essential municipal services and making vital investments to meet the future needs of our municipality. Long-term planning and efficient resource utilization remain central to our growth and service delivery objectives.

Eddie Nickerson

Warden Eddie Nickerson

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.

	2023/2024 Actuals	2023/2024 Budget	2024/2025 Budget
TAXATION	8,415,991	8,365,324	9,034,699
GRANTS IN LIEU OF TAXES	54,097	149,046	174,928
SERVICES TO OTHER GOV.	161,306	161,849	147,971
SALES OF SERVICE			
ARENA	108,490	115,500	121,500
RECREATION & CULTURE	81,257	120,310	99,490
C&D SITE	157,011	141,200	166,200
OTHER REVENUE			
LICENSES & PERMITS	41,876	40,950	45,000
PROPERTY RENTALS	57,289	60,811	135,299
INTEREST ON REVENUE	506,804	180,000	355,000
FIRE SERVICES	476,439	96,421	180,766
WIND TURBINE	31,058	65,000	50,000
ADMIN REVENUE	29,749	32,000	28,000
UNCONDITIONAL GRANTS	117,248	190,235	192,204
CONDITIONAL GRANTS	335,343	7,628,858	7,051,600
TRANSFERS FROM RESERVES	-	3,520,000	5,155,450
TOTAL REVNEUE	<u>10,573,957</u>	<u>20,867,504</u>	<u>22,938,107</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.

	2023/2024 Actuals	2023/2024 Budget	2024/2025 Budget
GENERAL SERVICES			
LEGISLATIVE (COUNCIL)	115,623	156,276	165,682
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	768,426	918,363	991,138
PROPERTY SERVICES	360,383	428,047	496,598
TAXATION	276,668	296,193	308,435
OTHER SERVICES	169,664	179,500	152,000
PROTECTIVE SERVICES	947,882	1,253,359	1,349,311
POLICE PROTECTION	975,456	1,302,091	1,292,053
BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT	14,403	17,000	19,000
FIRE PROTECTION	1,251,511	855,682	1,000,322
EMERGENCY MGMT.	14,272	30,220	14,470
BUILDING INSPECTION	113,315	140,889	224,405
FIRE SERVICES COOR.	352,987	94,194	87,034
TRANSPORTATION			
ROADS	98,566	114,187	106,850
STREETLIGHTS	150,742	165,000	180,000
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH			
WASTEWATER SERVICES	292,984	363,068	406,924
SOLID WASTE	1,188,892	1,461,751	1,458,959
PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLNESS	94,532	128,000	104,000
ENVIRONMENTAL DEV.	368,674	416,504	473,112
RECREATION & CULTURE	907,452	1,050,017	1,095,895
EDUCATION	1,255,110	1,475,000	1,672,000
FINANCING	684,931	11,251,522	12,657,228
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>9,478,238</u>	<u>20,867,504</u>	<u>22,938,105</u>

New Recreation Centre**\$9,500,000**

This investment will see the replacement of the existing facility with a new centre connected to the arena that will include an indoor track and spaces for community use.

Community Health Centre**\$1,650,450**

This investment represents approximately 15% of the total project estimated project cost – which will include the completion of the design phase and the beginning of the construction 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 Infrastructure Renewal**\$211,000**

A variety of investments in recreation infrastructure is included in the capital budget. Most notably, a pool lift for the pool, heat pumps for the curling rink, the replacement of the boards at the arena, the replacement of the poles and lights at the Ralph "Creamer" Atwood Memorial Ball Field and washroom amenities at the Ralph "Creamer" Atwood Memorial Ball Field and Stoney Island Beach.

Administrative Centre Roof Replacement**\$165,000**

The roof at the Administrative Centre needs to be replaced as it has reached its original lifespan and begun to leak.



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 \$1,070 per year (\$89.17 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 = \$2,140/year, \$300,000 of assessment = \$3,210/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.

The residential tax rate didn't increase but my taxes went up. Why?

Property taxes are based on the assessed value of a property which is determined by PVSC. Our tax rates have not increased but if the assessed value of your property has, your tax bill will be higher. For any questions relating to assessments, please contact PVSC at 1-800-380-7775.

What has the municipality done to help residents with higher assessments and the increasing cost of living?

To alleviate the burden of higher assessments and the increasing cost of living on our residents, the municipality has taken several proactive measures. Firstly, we have maintained tax rates, fire rates, and wastewater (sewer) charges at current levels. Additionally, we have enhanced the low-income tax exemption program to provide greater relief for those who may be disproportionately affected by rising costs.

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:

Area	Rate*
DIGBY	\$1.44-\$1.54
SHELBURNE	\$1.26
BARRINGTON	\$1.19-\$1.25
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 \$180,000. This represents about 1.6% of our operating budget which equals approx. \$17 per year for a homeowner with an assessed home value of \$100,000.