

2025/26 Operating and Capital Budget Highlights

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 29, 2025

RE: Oxford Town Council approves Budgets

OXFORD, Nova Scotia –Town Council approved the General Operating Budget of \$3,322,978, a Water Operating Budget for \$821,550 and a Capital Budget for \$516,429.

Residential rate remains the same at \$1.7874/\$100 of property assessment

Commercial rate remains the same at \$4.2804/\$100 of property assessment

Resource rate remains the same at \$1.7874/\$100 of property assessment

Forest Taxable (under 50,000 acres) remains unchanged at \$0.25/acre

Deed Transfer Tax Rate: remains at 1.5%

The sewer rates (of which there are 26 different rates according to our bylaw) have remained the same as the prior year

There is an overall increase in tax revenue of 3.6 % for a total of \$94,590. The increase is due to changes in property valuations and new builds. The residential taxable property value has increased by 10%, the commercial taxable property value has decreased by 3% and the resource property has increased by 110%.

	2024/25	2025/26
Residential Revenue	1,084,689	1,195,756
Commercial Revenue	1,431,957	1,382,719
Resource Property Revenue	13,123	27,631
Forest (under 50,000 acres)	174	174
New build rebates and Debt Relief	-106,228	-88,626
Sewer	207,591	208,241
Total	2,631,306	2,725,896

The approved budget considered service levels, staffing, programming and tax rates. Most service levels are to be maintained at the current level with enhancements to several departments. General Administration hope to be more effective with dangerous and unsightly properties with the hire of a bylaw officer and enhance communications with constituents through Voyent Alert. The Town will enhance the protective services with security cameras at the skate park and transfer site depot and install digital speed signs. Improve the beauty of the Town by reviving the community gardens, planting trees at the cenotaph and purchase new Christmas decor for the poles. The town will acquire accessible theatre seating and portable washroom for the park and will consider accessibility in all new capital projects. The town is looking forward to enhanced recreational and cultural programming and a deep clean for the Theatre.

Public Works are continually replacing broken and expired water meters as well as supplying meters to new builds. Potholes repair will be maintained as necessary and other services at the current level. The Town is now required to set up groundwater monitoring and well investigations at the Transfer Site Depot.

The Town expects a deficit of \$70,000 in the Water Operating budget for 2024/25. For these reasons the town initiated a water rate study, the new rates will be brought to the UARB for approval on July 30, 2025. The water rates will likely increase on October 1, 2025 with gradual increases over the next 2 years, to sustain operations, ensure potable water, and to replace watermains.

Asset Management Plan

To make the best use of Oxford’s capital dollars, various roads may deteriorate over the next few years. Oxford’s Asset Management Plan affirms that to keep the tax rate at the current level, maintain the reserves and debt levels at an acceptable level, plan for watermain replacements, the road conditions and sidewalks may deteriorate until that road is due for watermain replacement. The life span of a paved road is generally 30 years and most of the watermain in the town requires replacement in the next 20 years. The goal is to replace the paved road at the same time as replacing a watermain, therefore public works is less likely to have to excavate new pavement for a water break service. To get further information about the Asset Management Plan, come to the information session on June 19 at 6pm in the Council Chambers at Town Hall (105 Lower Main Street).

Capital Budget Projects

Funding has been approved for the following capital projects in the amount of \$516,429, through capital reserve \$253,058, water reserve \$252,023, and grants of \$11,319. Staff will continue to investigate more grant opportunities:

General Capital

<i>Revenue Land Sale</i>	40,000
Update Asset Management Plan	12,000
Design Plans for Main Street- Road, Sewer & Storm Replacement (James to Hanlon)	60,000
Town Hall-Deck & Siding	75,000
6 AED (Town Hall, Theatre, MPAL (portable), Public Works (2) for Vehicles	20,086
Sidewalks	50,000
Sweeper & Bush pull for Trackless	10,000
Waste Water pump	10,000
Culvert for Birchwood Road	40,000

Water Utility

Land Survey / Costs to buy Wellfield Property	20,000
VFD & associated programming For Wells1,2,4	87,600
Fence for Wells	23,500
Trench Box for Public Works	15,000
Chlorine Doser Meter	8,000
Purchase & Replace temperature Gage at compliance point (Reservoir)	5,000
Maintenance of Little River water reservoir	40,000
Upgrade the HVAC in the Water Treatment Plant	15,000
Dry Hydrant for Black River Road	2,605
Across the Highway- remainder of PCAP Grant from 2024/25	22,638

