

2022-23 BUDGET



Investing in Communities,
Infrastructure, and Growth

2022-23 Municipal Budget

Investing in Communities, Infrastructure, and Growth



On Wednesday, June 1, Council passed its budget for 2022/2023 themed “Investing in Communities, Infrastructure and Growth.” In this climate of rising costs, we’ve made some difficult decisions regarding the long-term sustainability of our municipal services. The result is that we’re implementing a four-cent increase on residential and commercial tax rates. Although Richmond County continues to have one of the lowest tax rates in the province, we recognize this will be difficult for some people to bear.

About half of the tax increase is directly related to increases in mandatory costs that the municipality must pay to cover essential services such as policing and education; we have no control over what those costs will be. However, we recognize these types of services are critically important to ensuring the safety and quality of life of our residents.

Council has made some additional strategic investments with regards to personnel, adding critical resources to our public works staff and returning to a full-time emergency management and fire services officer. Through these investments, we’re committing to place a renewed focus on planning and preparation for emergency management and climate change.

This budget will be good news for the many, many community groups who pour hundreds of volunteer hours each year into making our County a better place. It includes significant investment in healthcare on items such as Physician Recruitment, Seniors Safety and Social Inclusion, Search and Rescue, Children’s Make a Wish, the Cape Breton Regional Cancer Centre, and Hospital Foundations. It also includes support for festivals and events, including a contribution to the Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq Summer Games which will attract approximately 2500 athletes from all the First Nation communities in Nova Scotia as well as across the Atlantic provinces! It’s also important to note that Council felt it was a priority to continue to make funds available for grant applications throughout the year, so we can fund projects as they arise (contact your local councillor to find out how to make an application for funding). We’ve used a transfer from our operating reserves to soften the blow of some of these pressures, but unfortunately even with this strategy the tax rate increase was necessary.

The practice of holding the line on our tax rate year after year is simply not a sustainable one as we face a triple threat of rising costs, aging infrastructure, and a declining population. That being said, we have been able to avoid increases on many user fees including recreation programming, Arena use, and fees at the Richmond Solid Waste Facility. We’ll continue to work hard to remain one of the lowest property tax regions in the province in order to maintain affordability and to position ourselves as desirable location for new people and businesses. With this budget, we’ve attempted to strike a balance.

I encourage constituents to reach out to your local councillor if you have any questions about the 2022/2023 “Investing in Communities, Infrastructure and Growth” budget. Our municipal staff is also ready to help if you have questions about your tax bill / payments.

Amanda Mombourquette
Warden, Richmond County

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On Wednesday, June 1, 2022, Richmond County Council unanimously approved the \$15,370,502 fiscal budget for 2022-2023.

The budget is based on **growth, fiscal responsibility** and **investing in the future** and consists of five key components for the municipality:

01

INCREASE IN MANDATORY CONTRIBUTIONS

Mandatory contributions are amounts that we must include in our budget for services, which include, among others policing and education. These contributions rose \$210,865 from last year, accounting for over half of the rate increase required this year.

02

INCREASED REVENUE

\$0.04 / \$100 of assessment Tax Rate increase for Residential, Resource, and Commercial accounts across the County. No increases in user fees for Recreation programming, including the Arena and no increases in fees at the Richmond Solid Waste Facility.

03

HEALTH, ACCESSIBILITY, AND WELLNESS

Consultations on a new recreation complex, investing in accessibility and trails plans, and supporting the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Summer Games in Potlotek.

04

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Investment of \$70,000 to the Regional Enterprise Network (REN) - managed by the Cape Breton Partnership, leveraged with matching funds from the provincial government. The Municipality has undertaken a Strategic Plan ReFRESH which should be complete in the summer of 2022.

05

COMMUNITY/INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Funding Contribution investments of \$349,898 which includes \$60,500 of Community based grants available through applications, and Canada Day Funding. By-Law Tax Exemptions of \$384,500 to Community Organizations as well as increases in Reserve Funding for Landfill Closure and Sewerage System.

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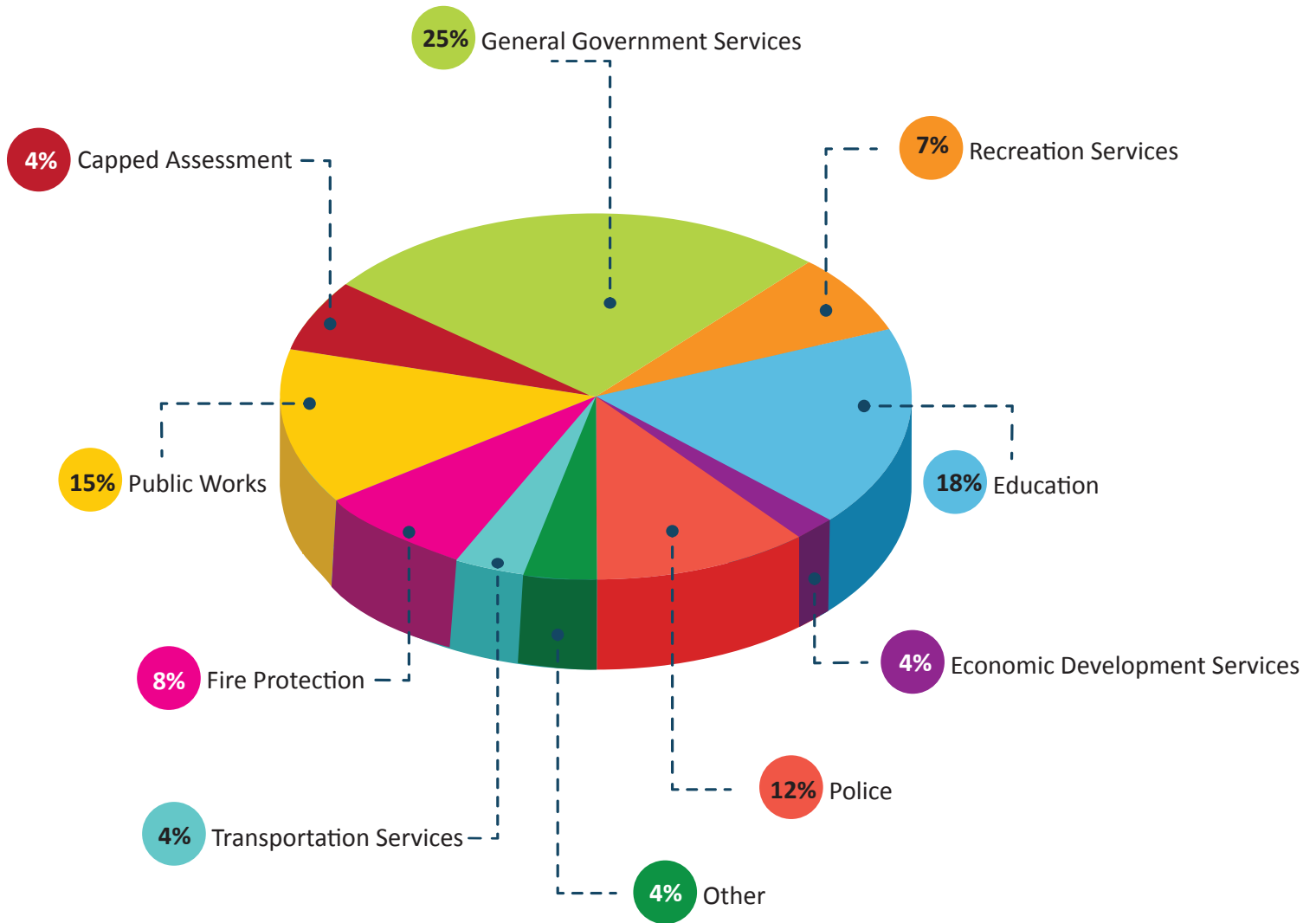
OPERATIONS BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Tax Rate increase of \$0.04/\$100 of assessment for a new residential tax rate of \$0.85/\$100 of assessment and a new commercial tax rate of \$2.15/\$100 of assessment. Richmond County's tax rates remain one of the lowest in the Province.
- Residential Tax Revenue will increase by \$608,423 from \$5,321,911 to \$5,930,334.
- Commercial Tax Revenue will decrease by \$109,955 from \$2,660,231 to \$2,550,276.
- Projected increase of Deed Transfer of \$194,697 from \$480,303 to \$675,000.
- Increase in Grants in-lieu of taxes from \$2,141,358 to \$2,232,860.
- Budgeted transfer from Operating Reserves of \$110,806 to balance budget.
- Boundary Review to be conducted in 2022/2023 fiscal (required by Province).
- Rick Hansen Certification of Municipal Buildings - Accessibility (\$17,500 with \$15,000 in external funding)
- Policing costs have increase by \$179,411 from \$1,625,734 to \$1,805,145.
- Investments of \$349,898 into Funding Contributions for Community Development & Health Care.
- Public Works expenditures have increased by \$416,037 from \$1,815,289 to \$2,231,326.
 - * New expenditures include \$167,000 for landfill closure reserve, replacement of a fleet vehicle, required repairs to the Richmond Arena, EV charging infrastructure as well as reinstatement of a technical position to improve asset management and long-term planning for the Municipality. The increase also includes a substantial increase in budgeted expenditures due to the impact of rising fuel costs.
- Recreation expenditures have increased by \$250,432 from \$764,498 to \$1,014,930.
 - * New expenditures include consultation and conceptual design work for a new Richmond County multi-purpose recreation Facility, a Recreation Master Plan, accessibility improvements at Point Michaud Beach and increases in contributions to libraries.

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BUDGET DISTRIBUTION



Mandatory contribution (50% - 55%)

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CAPITAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Richmond County Council has approved a 5 year capital investment plan in the amount of \$43,690,000 with a wide variety of investments.

Current-year approved capital expenditures:

- Langley Road Upgrades/Paving (\$160,000 - cost shared 50/50 with the Province)
- École Beau-Port Pedestrian Access/Sidewalk (\$153,000)
- Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations (\$25,000)
- Trail Rehabilitation and Improvement Funding (\$50,000)
- Council Chamber upgrades (\$60,000) to replace damaged, obsolete equipment and improve live streaming for better accessibility for residents.
- Waterfront developments (\$50,000)
- Closure of legacy landfills to protect residents and the environment. (Phase 1 - \$1,425,000)
- New recreation building at Point Michaud Beach to improve recreational offerings (\$40,000)

Other long-term capital projects under consideration and subject to approval:

- Broadband/Cellular Infrastructure - Dundee/West Bay area (\$450,000)
- Arichat/Petit-de-Grat Sewage Treatment Plant Replacement (\$14,731,000)
- New multi-purpose recreation complex - including ice surface (\$20,000,000)
- Landfill Closure Work (Phase 2 - \$1,341,000)