Municipality of Inverness County

2026-2027 Budget

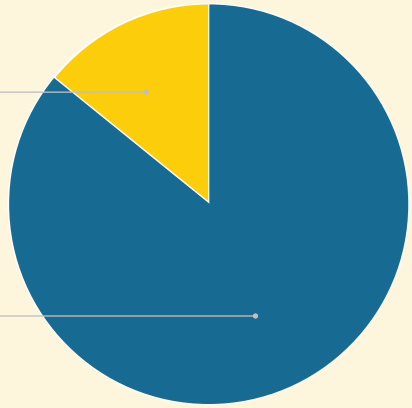
(April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027)

What is a Municipal Budget?

A municipal budget is a plan for how the municipality spends money. It helps pay for important services like education, policing, garbage pickup, community support programs, and emergency management.

Where the Money Comes From?

Property Taxes & Area Rates (sewer, fire department services) are the main source of revenue: 86% of all revenue, totalling: $26,781,907. Other revenue sources include grants, transfers and services from other governments, totalling: $4,422,470. Total revenue: $31,204,376



Total Operating Budget: $31,153,611

SERVICE AREA	EXAMPLES	PERCENTAGE	2026-2027 BUDGET
Mandatory Contributions	*Education, police, provincial roads, property assessments*	30.9%	$9,611,606
Environmental Health	*Wastewater, recycling, garbage collection*	22.8%	$7,091,453
Transportation	*Roads, transit, street lighting*	12.1%	$3,774,684
General Government	*Administration, taxes, municipal buildings, grants*	12.1%	$3,757,029
Protective Services	*Fire, water supply, emergency services*	9.0%	$2,798,473
Environmental Development	*Community development, tourism, housing*	6.1%	$1,887,320
Recreation & Culture	*Parks, libraries, literacy*	3.1%	$975,617
Financing	*Debt repayment and financial charges*	3.0%	$933,298
Other		1.0%	$324,131
Total		**100%**	**$31,153,611**

What are Mandatory Contributions?

These are payments the municipality must make to the Province of Nova Scotia or its agencies to help pay for services the province provides. *These include:*

SERVICE	2026-2027 COST	2023-2024 COST
Strait Regional Centre for Education	$5,045,077	$3,821,171
Police Protection (RCMP)	$3,776,310	$3,223,920
Property Valuation Services	$472,096	$410,998
Regional Libraries	$124,400	$124,400
Provincial Roads	$193,723	$175,534
Total	**$9,611,606**	**$7,756,023**

Over the past three years, mandatory provincial contributions have increased by more than $1.8 million, representing an overall increase of 19 per cent. Today, nearly one out of every three municipal tax dollars is directed toward these mandatory costs.

To continue investment in the infrastructure, programs and services residents rely on while addressing rising costs and planning for future growth, the approved operations budget included a $0.09 increase to both the residential and commercial property tax rates. The residential rate has increased from $1.05 to $1.14, and the commercial rate from $1.91 to $2.00, per $100 of assessed property value.

Most residential properties in the Municipality (71 per cent) are protected by Nova Scotia's Capped Assessment Program which limits annual assessment increases for eligible homeowners. As a result, many homeowners will not experience the full effect of market assessment increases.

Before approving the increase, Council:

Reviewed departmental budgets and staffing requirements, reduced or deferred projects and programming where possible, continued seeking provincial and federal funding and balanced maintaining service levels with affordability.

Property assessment increases do not provide enough sustainable revenue to offset rising costs. Municipal revenues must keep pace with increasing operating expenses, higher mandatory provincial contributions, increasing unplanned condition-based maintenance of critical infrastructure, inflation, and service demand.

Why is the Municipality increasing property tax rates?

THE TAX RATE INCREASE WILL HELP ADDRESS:

- Higher mandatory provincial contributions for services such as education, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Property Valuation Services Corporation, regional libraries and provincial roads.
- Provincial budget cuts have significantly reduced funding for municipal programs, including infrastructure projects and community organizations. As a result, many community organizations are now turning to the municipality to help offset the loss of provincial funding.
- Aging municipal infrastructure, including solid waste and recycling services, municipal buildings, and equipment.
- Rising workforce, and operating costs.
- Increased demands related to climate adaptation, emergency management, and disaster response.

The tax rate increase is expected to generate approximately $1.59 million in additional revenue, helping offset the approximately $1.8 million increase in mandatory provincial contributions.

While the increase represents a change for property owners, municipal tax rates have remained relatively stable over the long term. Residential tax rates have declined from $1.50 in 1978 to $1.05 in 2025, while commercial tax rates have decreased from $2.30 to $1.91 over the same period.

Even with the approved increase, Inverness County's property tax rates will remain well below the provincial average, 31 per cent lower for residential properties and 48 per cent lower for commercial properties.

RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE	COMMERCIAL TAX RATE
1978: **$1.50** per $100 of assessment	1978: **$2.30** per $100 of assessment
2025–2026: **$1.05**	2025–2026: **$1.91**
2026–2027: **$1.14**	2026–2027: **$2.00**

This tax rate realignment is not a standalone decision, it is part of a long-term financial strategy that will build strong reserve policies, explore revenue diversification opportunities, cut operational costs, undertake timely utility rate reviews, and continue to leverage external funding where and when possible.

Have questions?

The complete 2026–2027 budget, capital plan and supporting documents are available at **invernesscounty.ca/services/finance-taxation/budget-2026-2027**. You can also reach out to **info@invernesscounty.ca** or call **1-866-258-0223, option 5**.