

Understanding Lockeport's 2026–2027 Budget

Council has approved a balanced operating budget of approximately \$1.78 million for the 2026–2027 fiscal year. This summary is intended to provide residents with a clear and straightforward overview of the Town's budget, the major cost pressures, and the services and operations supported through municipal revenues.

This year's budget reflects a continued focus on maintaining essential services, supporting important community infrastructure, and planning responsibly for the future, while holding both the municipal tax rate and sewer/water rates steady.

Like many small rural communities across Nova Scotia, Lockeport continues to face rising costs related to policing, education, emergency services, infrastructure, and winter operations. A significant portion of the Town's operating budget supports essential services residents rely on every day.

The 2026–2027 budget reflects increased costs across several major service areas while continuing to operate with limited discretionary spending and lean staffing resources. Despite these pressures, Council worked to maintain important community services and hold municipal tax rates steady for residents.

2026–2027 Budget Highlights

- Municipal tax rates remain unchanged
- Sewer and water rates remain unchanged
- Revenue generated from Residential Tax increased by approximately 4 %
- Revenue generated from Commercial Tax increased by approximately 1%
- RCMP policing costs increased by approximately \$16,000 (7%)
- Education contributions increased by approximately \$40,000 (28%)
- Roads and street maintenance funding increased by approximately \$30,000. This reflects continued investment in road maintenance following difficult winter conditions over the past two years, along with rising costs related to snow removal, salt, and winter operations
- Fire services funding increased by approximately \$11,800 (20%) to support ongoing emergency response operations and rising service delivery costs
- Medical First Responders funding increased by approximately \$6,000 to support emergency response capacity
- Beach Centre maintenance and operations funding increased by approximately \$12,000
- Additional funding was allocated to Sou'West Nova Transit to support passenger fares and the addition of a vehicle serving Lockeport

Waste Diversion and garbage collection costs remain stable for the current fiscal year following a one-year extension of the current shared service agreement with the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (MODS). While this provided short-term budget stability,

municipalities across the region continue to face uncertainty and upward pressure related to future waste collection and disposal costs.

Continuing Work in the Community

While this is a lean operating budget focused primarily on maintaining core services and infrastructure, the Town continues to advance several important long-term initiatives.

This includes continued climate resiliency work in partnership with Clean Foundation, as well as funding toward a feasibility study examining the long-term future of the Lockeport Causeway. The study will help the Town better understand future infrastructure needs, climate-related risks, and long-term options for protecting this critical community connection. This work is being supported through funding assistance from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

Despite continued financial pressures, this year's budget continues to offer support for recreation programming, community events, parks, public spaces, and volunteer-led initiatives throughout the community. Funding requests and operational support for community led initiatives have been incorporated into this year's budget.

The Town is also entering the final year of the Make Your Move initiative in partnership with the Healthy Tomorrow Foundation. The purpose of the program is to encourage movement and support a healthier, more active community through infrastructure improvements, accessibility enhancements, programming, and community initiatives. Several projects are planned outside of the municipal operating budget, including repairs to the Brighton Road section of the Trestle Trail Loop, accessibility and infrastructure improvements, and continued support for community programming and events.

Looking Ahead

Council recognizes that rising costs related to infrastructure, emergency services, utilities, and other essential municipal operations continue to place increasing pressure on small rural municipalities. While this year's budget maintains current service levels and holds municipal tax rates steady, long-term financial sustainability remains an important priority for the Town.

With Lockeport already facing one of the highest property tax rates in Nova Scotia, Council recognizes the importance of exploring fair, sustainable, and effective approaches to funding municipal services in the future. As part of this work, Council will continue discussions around long-term financial planning and sustainable funding approaches.

Residents can view the full approved 2026–2027 Operating Budget at:

<https://www.lockeport.ns.ca/index.php/business/finance/budget/790-2026-2027-operating-budget/file>

