

2017-2018

# MUNICIPAL BUDGET



As usual, the Municipality's strategic priorities are aggressive and reinforce its position as one of the most progressive municipal units in Nova Scotia in terms of sustainability and self-reliant interests.

This year's Budgets focus on long-term financial strategies, building reserves, enhancing service levels, and investing in key capital projects.

The budget figures look a little different this year as we are implementing a new accounting practice and separating our Operating and Capital budgets. Capital projects (listed below with our strategic priorities) total over \$9 million this year.

We are available to discuss the Budget in more detail anytime during working hours, or you can view the "official" budget online at [www.chester.ca](http://www.chester.ca)

## Our Priorities

This year, many of the multi-phase projects initiated last fiscal year are continued as well as a number of new service enhancements are introduced. Of note are inroads for a new wind power project; introduction of a by-law where residents can borrow money from the Municipality to install home efficiency systems and upgrades; a new website; changes to winter road maintenance; demolition of Gold River-Western Shore School and site work to maintain the property as a public space; and the introduction of a new staff position: Strategic Projects Coordinator to assist in moving forward an aggressive Strategic Plan.

Continued initiatives are multiple central sewer system upgrades, trail infrastructure improvements, electronic tax billing, the Municipal Plan Review, flood plain modelling for emergency management and planning, and land acquisition for a business industrial park.

With \$3.3 million transferred to Reserves, the Municipality is stepping up its game in terms of planning for future capital spending to address aging infrastructure and new infrastructure needs, and lessening future debt repayment costs, which is forecast to peak within the next

couple of years.

These areas of focus are the reason for the 5% increase in overall expenditures this fiscal year. A 2¢ increase to the residential property tax per \$100 of assessment, a 0.005¢ per \$100 increase to waste collection and disposal area rates, and a flat \$50 increase per year in the universal sewer charge have contributed to a 4% increase in revenue to support the Municipality's 2017-18 priorities.

Except for those mentioned, all other rates, the commercial tax rate, and service fees - like deed transfer rates - remain the same as last year. When comparing property tax rates for similar municipal units in Nova Scotia, the Municipality of Chester holds one of the lowest.

Other budgetary items to note are an additional \$45K in grants for Canada 150 community celebrations; a financial commitment of \$50,000 towards broadband (highspeed internet) design, and continuation of a needs analysis for a water supply in the Village of Chester (\$500K).

Major capital projects are listed on the right. The total budget is \$9,027,100.

### Major 2017-18 Capital Projects

Trail upgrades	\$ 72,800
Parks	180,000
Wind project	100,000
Landfill - Cell 4A	3,130,000
Landfill - 2nd tower site	200,000
Landfill - system upgrades	419,800
Flood plain modelling	100,000
Backbone - broadband design	50,000
Permit tracking software	60,000
Sewer system upgrades	3,372,500
Potential water system design	500,000
Fire protection systems (Mill Cove)	220,000