



Tuesday, December 21, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE ADOPTS 2023 BUDGET

Status quo for utility rates; increase for municipal taxation revenue

The Town of Rocky Mountain House Council has adopted its balanced 2023 operating budget in the amount of \$23,873,507 and capital budget of \$16,328,359.

The approved budget includes a 1.29% increase in residential property tax revenue, 2.92% for non-residential commercial improved and 1.78% for non-residential large business assessment classes. This will be the first property tax revenue increase in five years.

“Similar to all municipalities in Alberta, Council faced rising inflation and other challenges with this budget,” said Mayor Debbie Baich. “During the service level review and budget deliberations we had lengthy discussions on how to keep both residential and non-residential rates as low as possible. We reviewed provincial averages and feel that a modest increase was reasonable when faced with 6.8 per cent inflation.”

Council approved the 2023 budget at its December 20, 2022 regular Council meeting. It provides Council’s direction on spending for the coming and future years and allows administration to implement Council’s directed service levels for the municipality.

Actual property tax rates will be set in the spring after the Town receives its 2023 property assessment roll.

While property tax revenue has increased, Council has made no changes to existing utility rates. Residences with municipal solid waste collection will also receive blue bins in 2023, to manage mixed recycling materials for curbside collection. This decision was informed by the pre-budget public engagement survey and the many public requests for blue bins.

The 2023 operating budget includes revenues of \$9.3 million from property taxation (and increase of \$220,000 over 2022) and \$2.9 million in operating grants. Service and user fees (including utilities), permits and licenses, leases and rentals make up the balance of revenue.

Operating expense highlights include \$3.8 million for protective services, \$4.7 million for utilities, \$2.2 million for engineering and operations and \$4.9 million for recreation, parks culture and social services.

The cost of governance (Council) is budgeted at \$379,938 or 1.6 per cent of the operating budget.

Capital projects

Capital projects for the year total \$16,328,359. More than \$10 million will be spent in utilities, including 1.9 million for deep utility rehabilitation of 57 St Close/52A Ave) and \$7.6 million for construction of the new wastewater treatment plant.

Other capital funding includes:

- \$1.2 million for infrastructure and equipment, including a new vac truck and sewer flusher;
- \$2.4 million for recreation projects including sand filters and HVAC upgrades at the Credit Union Co-op Aquatic Centre and washrooms for the splash park;
- \$1 million for protective services equipment and Regional Fire Services vehicles including an aerial fire truck and a certified bush engine; and
- \$250,000 for the purchase of residential curbside blue bins.

Public input and future planning

Council continues to refer to its [Strategic Plan](#) to inform its decision-making process.

The 2023 operating and capital budgets have been prepared through a collaborative process that began in the summer of 2022:

- August 17 through September 16: pre-budget public engagement survey (217 responses).
- September 6: [Regular Council meeting agenda item](#) regarding budget assumptions and goals.
- October 14-16: Service Level Review.
- October-November: Administration prepares draft budget.
- December 8 and 9: Draft budget presented to Council for review and amendments.

A five-year operating, and ten-year capital plan has also been developed and included as part of the budget document. This long-range planning ensures that the municipality is financially viable and that financing requirements are addressed for the long term.

Related media and documents

[2023 Operating budget by department](#)

[2023 Capital Projects summary](#) and [funding sources](#)

[Administrative Budget Report](#)

[Budget meeting Day 1](#) (video)

[Budget meeting Day 2](#) (video)

[Council 2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#)

For more information, please contact:

Laura Button, *Communications Coordinator*

Town of Rocky Mountain House

lbutton@rockymtnhouse.com

Main office: 403-845-2866

Direct line: 403-846-4257

Cell phone: 403-322-0491