



## **TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE ADOPTS 2025 BUDGET**

December 18, 2024, Town of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta – The Town of Rocky Mountain House Council has adopted its balanced 2025 operating budget in the amount of \$28,042,892 and capital budget of \$5,827,100.

The approved budget includes a 2% increase in property taxes.

“Similar to all municipalities in Alberta, Council faced steep inflation and other challenges with this budget,” said Acting Mayor Len Phillips. “In the operating budget, this is especially noticeable in the rising cost of utilities necessary to operate Town facilities, and materials for maintenance of our critical infrastructure.”

The Town of Rocky Mountain House consistently strives to be fiscally responsible to citizens.

### **Future-focused finances**

“Despite these challenges, it is important that we keep looking ahead to position the Town for opportunities,” said Phillips. “That’s why we are also investing capital funds in design work for a civic building, a recreation centre expansion and land use planning so we can act quickly when grant opportunities become available.”

Council approved the 2025 budget at its December 17, 2024, 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.

The 2025 operating and capital budgets will advance several of Council's Strategic Plan goals. Council's continued focus on economic growth is realized through its development incentives and rural renewal stream program.

Council also envisions enhancing the cultural capital of our community. To this end, a cultural centre will be part of the plans for a new civic building. These plans, and others, ensure the Town is well-positioned for funding and development opportunities of the future.

The 2025 operating budget includes revenues of \$9.9 million from property taxation (an increase of \$209,000 over 2024) and \$3.8 million in operating grants. Service and user fees (including utilities), permits and licenses, leases, rentals and returns on investments make up the balance of revenue.

Actual property tax rates will be set in the spring after the Town receives its 2024 property assessment roll. Each assessment class will see slightly different increases, with 1.91% for residential, 2.10% for non-residential commercial improved and 2.16% for non-residential large business properties.

Operating expense highlights include \$4.3 million for protective services, \$6.4 million for utilities, \$2.2 million for transportation, and \$4.6 million for recreation and culture.

The cost of governance (Council) is forecasted at \$373,871 or 1.3 per cent of the overall operating budget. This amount includes \$20,000 to administer the General Municipal Election on October 20, 2025.

### **Increased Expenses**

Expenditures will increase in protective services by \$282,083 due to increased rates for RCMP; transportation by \$177,256 due to higher costs for road and equipment repairs and supplies; utilities by \$736,730 due to the completion and operationalization of the mechanical wastewater treatment plant that was required by the Provincial government; and in recreation by \$163,713 due to the addition of another maintenance staff member and higher maintenance costs for the arena and pool.

### **New utility rates coming April 1**

Council also set 2025 fees, rates and charges that includes an increase to water and wastewater utility fees, and a decrease in residential solid waste fees.

New utility rates for water, wastewater and solid waste will take effect on April 1. The increases to water and wastewater are supported by a 2023 utility rate study, to ensure rates charged cover operating and capital costs for current and future operations of the municipal water treatment, distribution and collection system. Construction of a new Wastewater Treatment Plant began in 2023, to meet ever tightening provincial environmental regulations. The plant will be operational mid-year in 2025, and is expected to cost \$1 million annually to operate. Water and wastewater rates for the average residential property will increase by \$16.82 per month.

It should be noted that even with the increases to cover the costs for wastewater, the average utility bill for a Town residence will be \$142 per month, lower than the average of \$156 for comparable communities.

Utilities operate on a user-pay model, where only homes and businesses that are connected to municipal water and wastewater are charged for this service. Base rates are standard across all properties, while the consumption rate is calculated based on metered usage of water. As such, 2025 will also see an educational campaign to encourage water savings at home.

For properties that also pay for residential solid waste, this increase will be tempered by the decrease in solid waste fees, the result of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Legislation coming into effect in Alberta. EPR places the financial responsibility of recycling paper and packaging products on the producer, not the consumer or municipality. Rocky Mountain House has positioned itself for this transition, and there will be no impact to service when residential solid waste fees decrease by \$4.62 per month, effective April 1, 2025.

### **Capital projects**

Capital projects for the year total \$5,827,100.

One of the largest projects for 2025 will be \$800,000 for a watermain replacement at Hwy. 11A and 60 Street, in an area that has been prone to breaks and service disruptions.

Other large-ticket items include a new grader (\$825,000) and loader (\$140,000). Recreation and parks projects will total \$700,000, including a new disc golf course, trail expansions, playground and ball diamond #5 upgrades.

Work also continues on the \$30 Million wastewater treatment plant, as a carry-over project from 2023. The plant will come online in 2025, replacing the lagoon system that has served the Town since the 1980s.

### **Municipal budget process**

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

The 2025 operating and capital budgets have been prepared through a collaborative process that began in the summer of 2024:

- September 17: [Regular Council meeting agenda item](#) regarding budget assumptions and goals.
- October 9-11: [Service Level Review](#).
- October and November: Administration prepares draft budget.
- November 27: [Draft budget presented to Council](#) for review and amendments.

- December 17: Council approved final budget at [regular Council meeting](#).

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 in the long term.

### **Related media and documents**

[2025 Budget Summary](#)

[2025 Capital Projects summary and funding sources](#)

[2025 Operating and Capital budget](#)

[Capital Projects Highlights and Map](#)

[Administrative Budget Report](#)

[Budget meeting](#) (recorded livestream)

[Council 2024-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

For more information, please contact:

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# 2025 CAPITAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

## What are Capital projects?

Projects designed to have long-term impact on the community that typically have financial investment over \$10,000.



**\$2.12 million** for Transportation Capital Projects

**\$1.53 million** for Parks Capital Projects

**\$1.10 million** for Utilities Capital Projects

**\$697,800** for Recreation, Social Services and Culture Capital Projects



**\$875,600** for Watermain Replacement Program



**\$100,000** for Playground Upgrades and Management



**\$825,000** for Grader Lifecycle Replacement

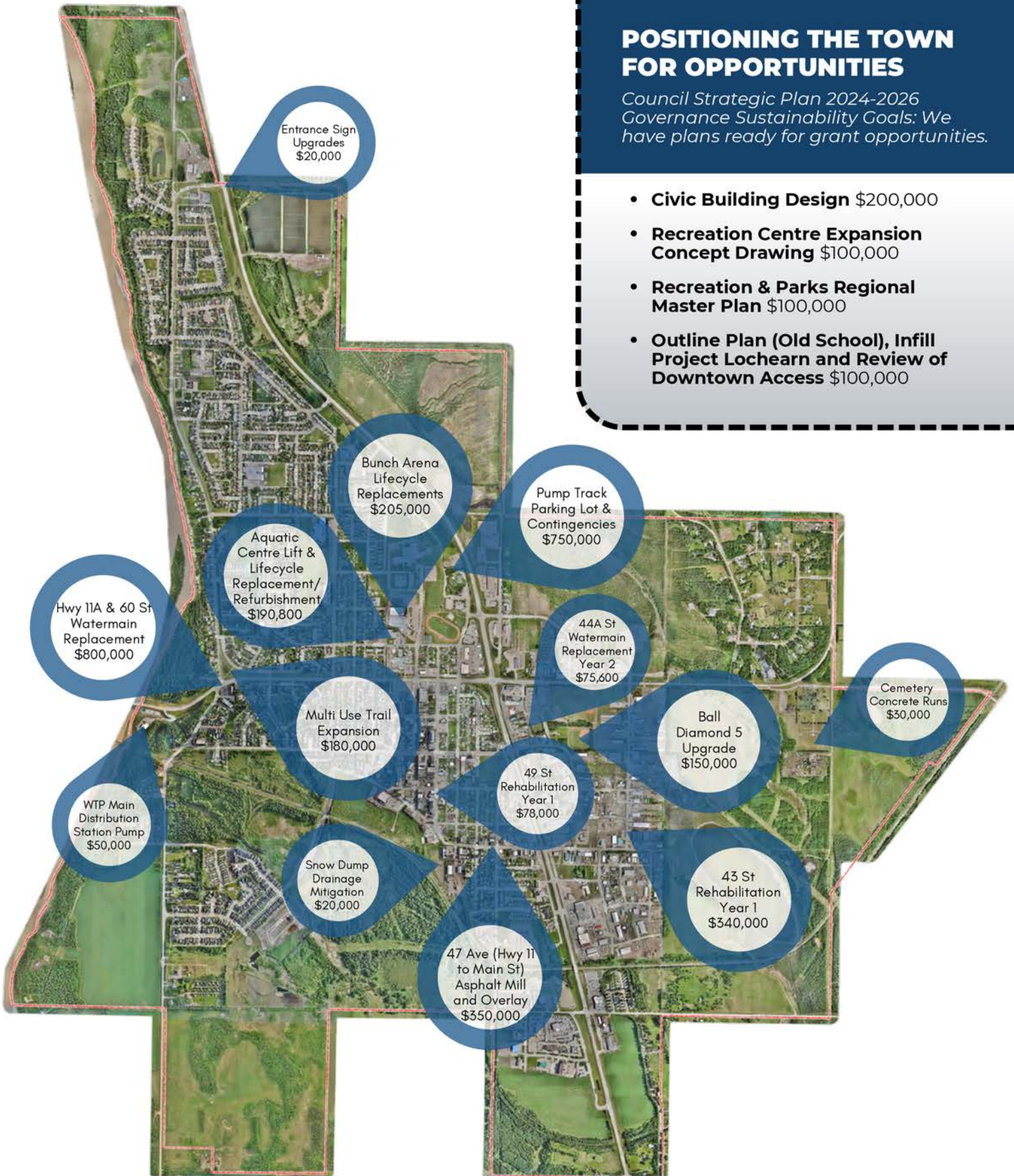
### 2025 Capital Projects Budget Total Funding \$5,827,100

Town Reserves	County Cost Share	Grants/Debts/Other
\$3,458,600	\$745,400	\$1,623,100

# POSITIONING THE TOWN FOR OPPORTUNITIES

Council Strategic Plan 2024-2026  
 Governance Sustainability Goals: We have plans ready for grant opportunities.

- **Civic Building Design** \$200,000
- **Recreation Centre Expansion Concept Drawing** \$100,000
- **Recreation & Parks Regional Master Plan** \$100,000
- **Outline Plan (Old School), Infill Project Lochearn and Review of Downtown Access** \$100,000



Playground Upgrades \$100,000

Grader Replacement \$825,000

Wayfinding Signage \$200,000

Disc Golf \$40,000

Loader Replacement \$140,000

NSRP Phase 3 Electricity \$50,000

Small Equipment \$345,000