

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Tillsonburg's Proposed 2026 Municipal Budget Released

Tillsonburg, ON – Significant investments in infrastructure and community improvements headline Tillsonburg's proposed 2026 Municipal Budget, which will be presented to Town Council on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

If approved as presented, the budget would result in a 1.8 per cent increase plus the retroactive court mandated policing increase of 1.84 per cent for a total of a 3.64 per cent tax rate increase. This overall increase is 1.12 per cent lower than in 2025. For an average home assessed at \$243,000, this means an increase of approximately \$ 22.36 quarterly or \$89.42 on the Town portion of the annual tax bill.

"Our goal is to always balance affordability for residents with the need to invest in critical infrastructure and services," says Mayor Deb Gilvesy. "This proposed increase reflects higher policing costs (1.84% of the 3.64%), mainly due to court mandated retroactive pay." OPP costs are still extremely efficient compared to municipal forces. The services that the OPP provide such as 'no borders', investigative support, intelligence support and specialized response teams are a benefit to the community at no additional cost.

The Town's initial draft called for an 8 per cent increase, but staff worked diligently with the Mayor to identify \$1.43 million in changes to reduce the impact on taxpayers while continuing to meet obligations for the Town's infrastructure needs. Rising statutory cost increases including CPP and EI continue to place additional pressure on the municipal operating budget, outpacing the rate of inflation.

"We know residents expect value for their tax dollars however it is still important that our infrastructure is renewed at time of renewal to avoid large tax increases in the future," adds Gilvesy. "This budget positions Tillsonburg competitively within the region and ensures we can deliver essential services and strategic projects."

CAO Kyle Pratt emphasizes the importance of long-term planning:

“Municipalities across Ontario are facing rising costs and aging infrastructure,” says Pratt. “This budget reflects our commitment to responsible investment and operational excellence, ensuring Tillsonburg remains a vibrant and sustainable community.”

The proposed 2026 municipal budget totals \$43.5 million, with \$9.8 million allocated to capital projects

Highlights of the 2026 capital budget include:

- Cranberry Line – reconstruction completion
- Rokeby Road – reconstruction completion
- Completion of Kinsmen Pedestrian Bridge rehabilitation
- Significant investment to Lake Lisgar including Hawkins Bridge, silt removal, repairs and new decking at Gibson House as well as a new perimeter fence at the Water Park
- Annandale House upgrades, new elevator and kitchen
- Park and sports field updates and refurbishments
- Clock Tower refurbishment
- Aging critical equipment replacement at the Tillsonburg Community Centre
- 3 new pickleball courts (funded 90 per cent from Development Charges)
- Phase 1 of Customer Service Centre renovations

“This budget reflects a balanced approach, investing in infrastructure, and ensuring we have the resources to meet evolving needs while staying aligned with our strategic plan” adds Pratt.

Departmental business plan highlights include:

- Continued implementation of the 2021–2030 Community Strategic Plan
- Advancing the Infrastructure Renewal Program
- Ongoing healthcare and physician recruitment efforts
- Strengthened asset management practices
- Supporting economic growth through strategic land sales to build on recent industrial investment and help fund the final phase of the VIP Phase II lands

Residents are encouraged to review the proposed 2026 budget and watch the upcoming Council meeting on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be available in person and virtually via livestream, making it easy for the community to stay informed about how tax dollars are being invested.

“We want residents to have access to clear information and see the decision-making process firsthand,” says Mayor Gilvesy. “Your awareness and understanding help strengthen transparency and trust in local government.”

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