

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Wednesday, April 29, 2026**

### **Council approves 2026/2027 Operating Budget investing in facilities, protective services, growth, and events; no increase in property tax rate in Queens County**

**Liverpool, NS:** Council for the Region of Queens Municipality approved the 2026/2027 Operating Budget on Tuesday night at the Regular Meeting of Council.

For the fifth year in a row, Council approved a budget with no base rate increase for residential, resource, and commercial property owners in the Region.

Total budgeted operating expenses for the coming year will amount to \$33,840,772.

In addition to maintaining current levels of service for residents and business owners, the budget includes a number of initiatives that will improve quality of life in Queens County, make the Region a more desirable location for investors and prospective new residents, and work toward meeting the Strategic Priorities outlined in Council's 2026-2029 Strategic Plan.

"Council worked hard with staff through a multi-month process to finalize a budget that meets the service expectations of our community and does so without a property tax rate increase," said Mayor Scott Christian.

"Residents are managing the increasing costs of essentials like food, power, and fuel, while the Municipality is also seeing increases to mandatory costs in our budget for things like education, RCMP, and waste collection," he added.

"Throughout the budget deliberation process, Council and staff worked together to find ways to strike a balance in providing needed services and programs for our residents without increasing the tax rates."



**Region of Queens Municipality**

249 White Point Road,  
P.O. Box 1264, Liverpool, NS,  
B0T 1K0  
[regionofqueens.com](http://regionofqueens.com)

P: 902-354-3453  
F: 902-354-7473  
E: [info@regionofqueens.com](mailto:info@regionofqueens.com)  
Toll Free: 1-800-655-5741

## **BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

- To keep the tax rate unchanged and to offset the increasing costs of providing the basic level of service to residents, Council directed that funds from the accumulated surplus reserve be used to ensure the budget is balanced.
- In addition to its required investment of \$2.2 million for RCMP services, Council has also budgeted an additional \$196,700 in support of a recommendation from the Police Advisory Board for a new RCMP staffing position that will focus on crime prevention in the Region.
- Council also made other significant investments in protective services, including an additional \$35,000 for planning and public education initiatives related to emergency management. Council continued its ongoing support for the five volunteer fire departments in the county, West Queens First Responders, Queens Ground Search and Rescue, and North Queens Ground Search and Rescue.
- About \$155,000 has been earmarked for staffing and equipment for the new outdoor pool on the grounds of Queens Place Emera Centre, which will be opening later this summer.
- Council continues to invest in the community through support of the Community Investment Fund (CIF), which provides financial assistance to eligible community organizations and programs. Council increased the allotment for the CIF in this year's budget from \$175,000 to \$275,000.
- Council also continues to invest in supporting residents and our local business community in other ways with funding for the Tax Exemption program which provides assistance to low income residents (\$167,200), the Utility Rebate Assistance Program (\$15,000), and the Business Façade Improvement Program (\$25,000).
- Pending approval of an Accommodation Levy, Council will be investing an additional \$50,000 in event and attraction development.
- \$30,000 has been set aside for electrical upgrades at Miriam Hunt Park in Caledonia and \$40,000 has been allocated for a parking lot to improve safe access to the Harmony Park ballfield.

## **TAX RATES AND BILLING DETAILS**

In Taxation Districts 1 to 12 (areas that prior to amalgamation were in the Municipality of the County of Queens), properties classed as Residential or

Resource have a tax rate set at \$1.07 per \$100 of assessed value, which includes a one cent increase in Roads area rate for J Class road improvement. The Commercial property tax rate in these districts will also increase one cent to \$2.17 per \$100 assessment value.

In District 13 (the former Town of Liverpool), Residential or Resource properties will continue to be taxed at a rate of \$1.80 per \$100 of assessed value, while Commercial properties in District 13 have a tax rate once again set at \$2.90 per \$100 of assessment.

The Hydrant rate, as determined by the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board, has increased to 11.5 cents.

Tax bills will be mailed to all property owners in the coming weeks and will be dated June 1, with no interest being applied if paid on or before June 30, 2026.

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**Media Enquiries, Please Contact:**

**Heather Cook, Communications Officer**

Email: [hcook@regionofqueens.com](mailto:hcook@regionofqueens.com)

Phone: 902-354-3453, ext. 2247