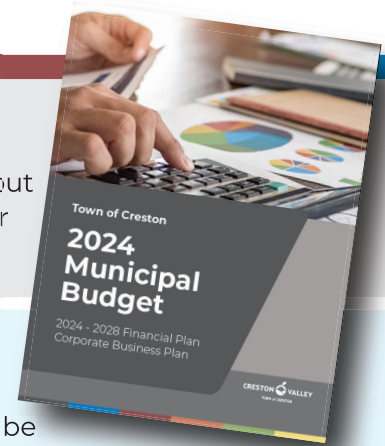


# 2024 Proposed Budget

## Information for Residents and Businesses

Council is getting ready to review the proposed 2024 - 2028 Financial and Business Plan and budget for the year. They will consider several factors in their decisions and would like to hear the views of the community. This handout includes the key information from the budget to assist you with sharing your feedback. You can review the complete plan at [letstalk.creston.ca](http://letstalk.creston.ca).



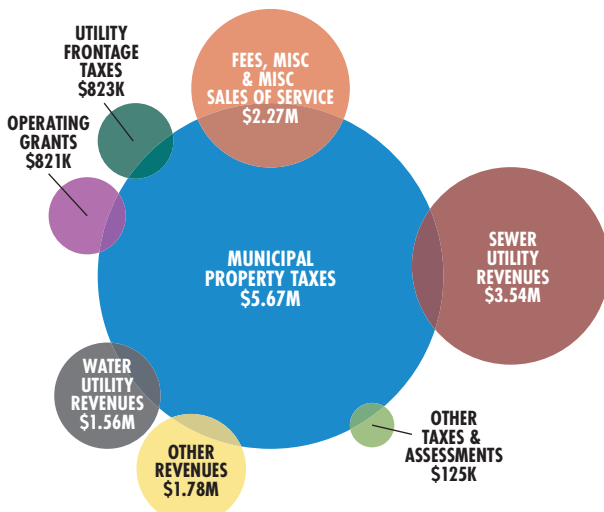
## In This Proposed Budget

This Financial and Corporate Business Plan shows that Creston continues to be an adaptable and resilient community as the economy, climate, and community changes. In addition to maintaining a **high level of service** in our parks, trails, roads, water, sewer, storm water, fire, bylaw, RCMP and more, here are some of the things this budget aims to deliver:

- Improved **community safety** with the addition of an emergency management program coordinator and a fire services coordinator using offsetting revenue from RDCK contracts and new contractual revenue from College of the Rockies.
- The development of a municipal housing corporation for the direct delivery of **attainable and affordable housing**, which capitalizes on federal and provincial grant funding.
- Building **reliable utilities** with continued investment in capital reserves for future repair or replacement of water, and sewer infrastructure.
- Governance improvements to **achieve savings, increase transparency and gain organizational efficiency** by implementing a centralized procurement program, including the addition of a procurement officer.

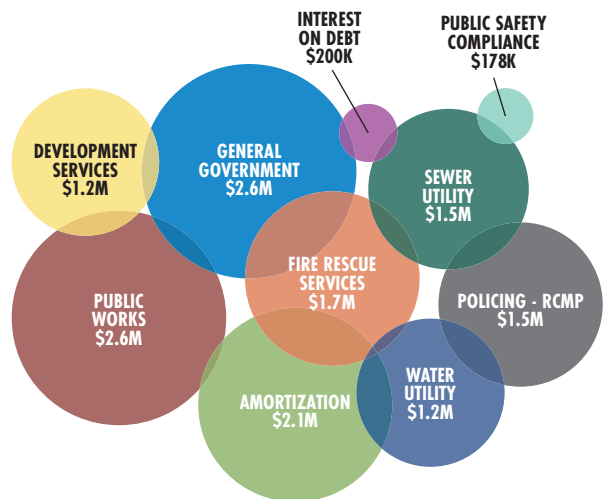
### Revenues

**\$16.6 Million\***



### Expenses

**\$14.6 Million\***

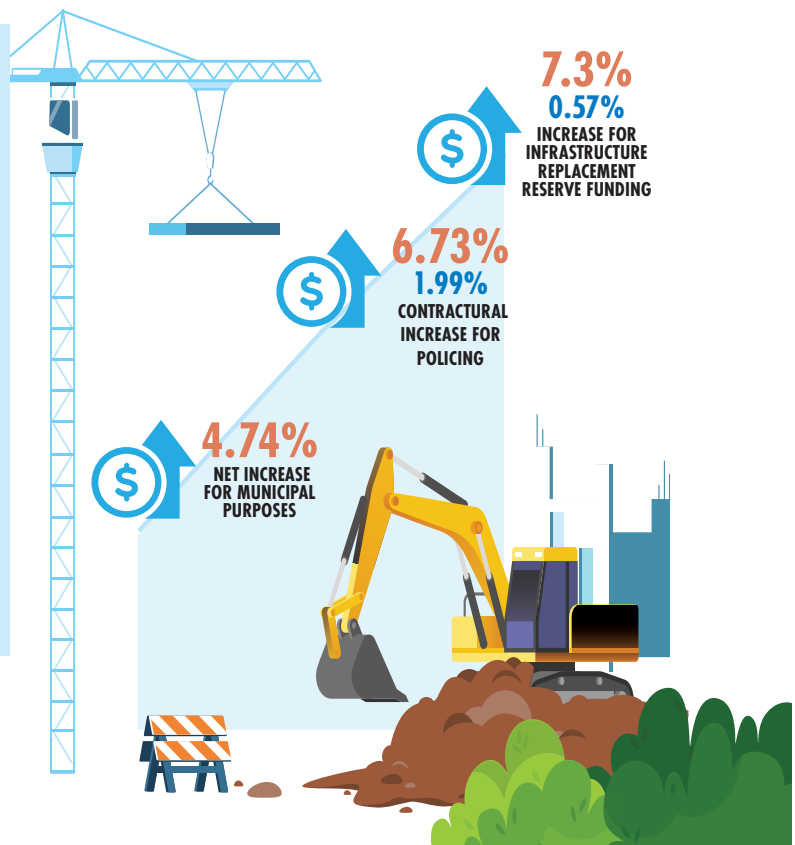
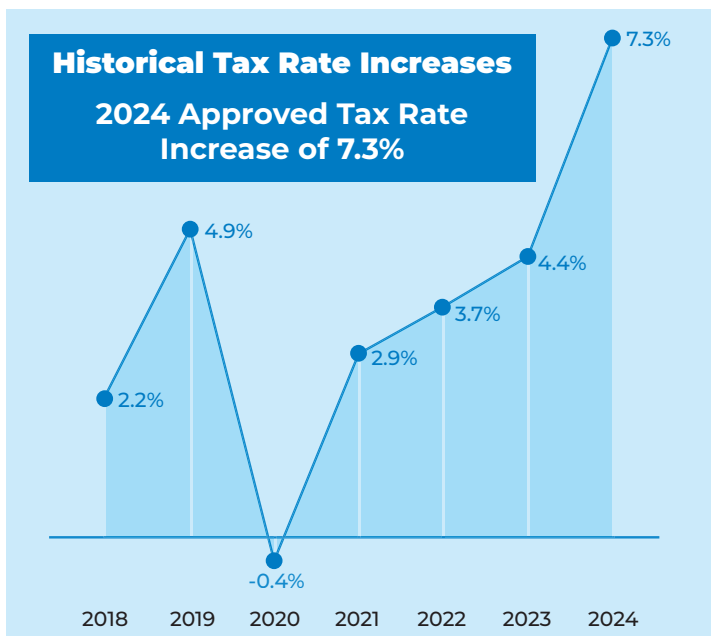


\*The above charts provide a summary of the key parts of this year's budget, showing all of the different sources of revenue that fund our services and where the bulk of the funds are spent. The difference between the two is transferred into our reserves to fund asset improvement and replacement.

# Proposed Municipal Tax Rate Increase

In order to maintain service levels, further investments in safety, and to advance priorities like planning for attainable and affordable housing, the Town has identified a tax increase range for Council to consider. This range includes:

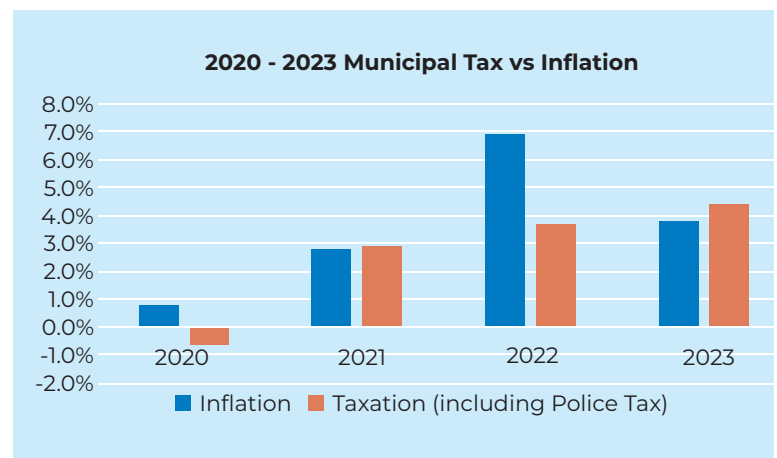
- 0.57% increase to fund investment into infrastructure reserves to continue building future savings for repair and replacement of roads, water, storm water, and sewer infrastructure.
- 2.77% increase to address operational increases associated with inflationary costs, and external pressures on Town services.
- 1.99% increase to address operational increases associated with inflationary costs on the RCMP municipal policing contract.
- 2.04% increase to fund Council's priorities including an emergency management program coordinator, fire services coordinator, workflow automation, implementing a procurement program, and tree planting.



## The Path to 2024

A main factor driving this year's proposed increase is sustained high inflation and public expectation for maintaining service levels. The total inflation between 2020 and 2023 was 16.63%. In efforts to keep taxation low, total taxation increases stayed below inflation with only 10.6% taxation increases over the same period.

Faced with the challenge of budgeting to maintain levels of service based on resident expectations while attempting to balance actual inflationary increases with taxation increases has created lean operational budgets. The operational budgets cannot absorb additional cost fluctuations throughout the year without ensuring some parity with inflation.



## 2024 Proposed Municipal Budget and You

The proposed 2024 - 2028 Financial and Corporate Business Plan includes a starting point tax rate of 7.3%. The following chart shows the estimated monthly increase for property taxes based on the average residential or commercial property. While the tax rate increase is 7.3%, the result is approximately 6.69% for residential and 8.43% for commercial.

### ESTIMATED TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES

#### Residents

**6.69% = \$8.98**

Residents average annual increase of 6.69% per year is based on average annual property assessment of \$426,339.

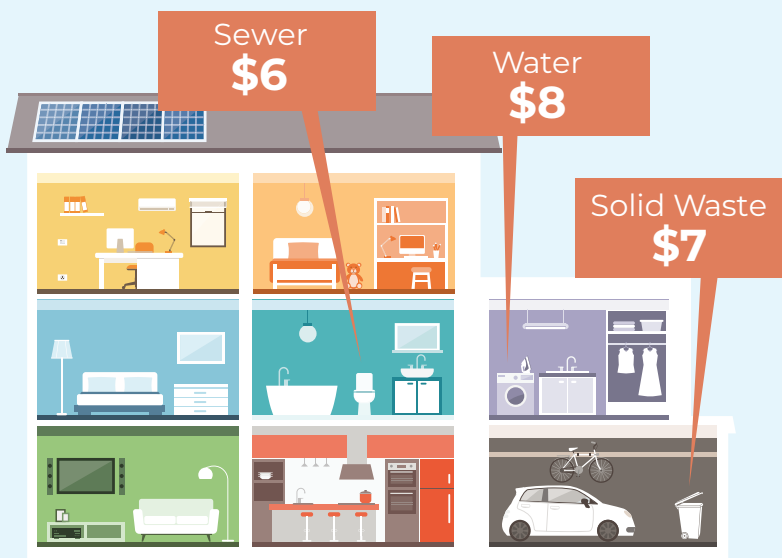
#### Businesses

**8.43% = \$22**

Businesses average annual increase of 8.43% per year is based on annual average property assessment of \$390,692.

The tax rate increase is in addition to the increases approved for utility rates in December 2023. The 2024 Utility Rate Review is currently in progress and will inform rate for 2025.

### INCREASE IN ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL UTILITY RATES



#### Residents

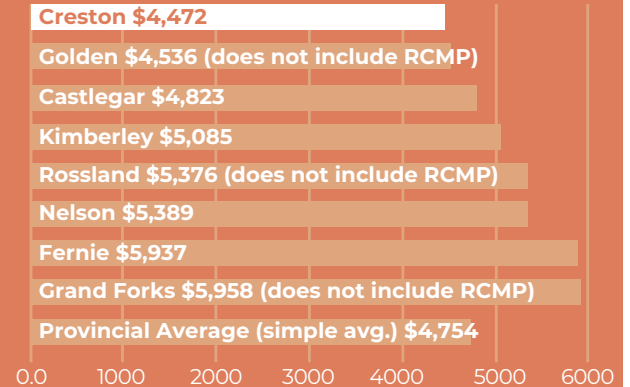
Average Residential Property will pay an estimated additional \$21 annually, approximately \$1.75 more per month.

### Resident Taxes

#### Residential Tax Competitiveness 2023

#### Total Residential Taxes & Charges Comparison

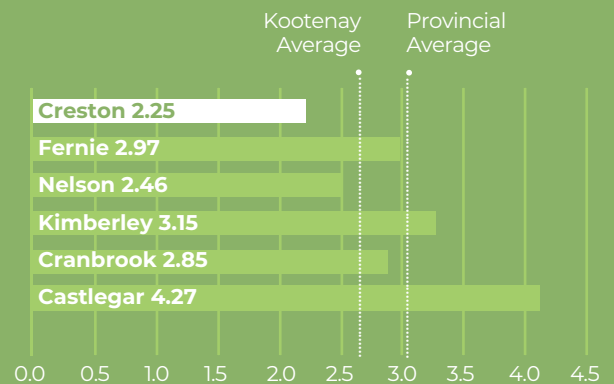
Creston continues to have one of the lowest total residential taxes and charges (comparable utilities) in the region.



### Business Taxes

#### Business Tax Multiplier 2023

The business taxpayer pays more than the residential taxpayer recognizing their greater use of Town assets and infrastructure.



### Can't we use our reserves?

It is not sustainable to borrow from reserves to lower a taxation increase. Just like if your monthly household expenses go up but your total income doesn't, you can dip into your savings for a while, but at some point you have to readjust. This budget maintains the level of service the public expects and ensures they remain affordable in the future.

## What's next?

The Town follows a multi-step process to develop the Business and Financial Plans. It combines community feedback with Council priorities and department needs to prepare the next 5-year Business and Financial Plan. Below are some of the key steps and dates in this year's budget cycle.



## Share Your Feedback

One of the most effective ways to have your voice heard in the budget process is to leave your comments on our budget project page at [letstalk.creston.ca](https://letstalk.creston.ca). Your feedback will be analyzed along with that of fellow residents and businesses and shared with Council. Alternatively, you can hand write your comments and drop them into the anonymous drop-box just inside the front door of Town Hall, or the yellow drop-box located at street level.

**Feedback will be collected through to end of day Feb 16, 2024.**