

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING (CAPITAL BUDGET) AGENDA
TOWN OF LUNENBURG**

January 12, 2026 | 6 pm

Lunenburg Town Hall - Council Chamber



Present Mayor Jamie Myra, Deputy Rachel Bailey, Councillors Alex Greek, Debbie Dauphinee, Renea Babineau, Gale Fullerton and Alison Strachan

Also present Paul Nopper, CAO
Tyson Joyce, Director of Public Works
Marc Kiely, Director of Community Development
Kayla Byrne, Municipal Clerk
Jamie Deans, Communications and Events Coordinator
Kristi Tibbo, Director of Recreation
Kathleen Rafuse, Deputy Director of Finance
Jacob McGuigan, Accountant

Call to Order The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Land Acknowledgment The Chair recognized Lunenburg's location on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Approval of Agenda Moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda for the January 12, 2026 Special Council meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously

2026/27 Draft Town Capital Budget Presentation Council reviewed the Water Utility capital budget.

Questions were raised about the Future Land Purchases reserve, with staff explaining that it is used to support the acquisition of land around the Town's water supply to protect long-term water quality.

Council also asked about the Transmission Main Renewal project and was advised that it is based on the Town's water system modelling, which identified the need to improve capacity and reliability of the main supply line.

Council inquired about the water modelling work, and staff noted that the study was completed in 2023 and can be brought forward to Council for review if requested. It was suggested this could be an item for a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

General comments were made in support of planned water infrastructure upgrades, including the Maple Avenue project and the water meter program.

Council reviewed the proposed Town capital budget and multi-year capital plan.

Members discussed the overall approach to capital planning, including the use of studies, designs, and reports to support long-term infrastructure decisions and to position the Town to apply for provincial and federal funding.

Council asked questions about several key areas, including street and sidewalk improvements, accessibility upgrades, building projects (Town Hall and the Old Fire Hall), fleet and equipment needs, and recreation facilities. Staff provided clarification on how projects are being phased and sequenced, noting that in some cases planning and interior assessments are being done before major exterior construction so that future investments align with the intended use of the facilities.

There was discussion about risk management and service sustainability, particularly in relation to sidewalk clearing equipment and the growing size of the Town's infrastructure network. Council also discussed the Recreation Master Plan and expressed interest in having an opportunity to further discuss recreation priorities and to review examples from other municipalities before advancing that work.

General support was expressed for continued capital planning and infrastructure investment, along with interest in exploring partnerships with neighbouring municipalities for recreation facilities that serve a broader regional population.

2026/27 Town
General Capital and
Operating Reserves

Council reviewed the proposed approach to strengthening the Town's capital reserves to support major infrastructure projects in future years.

Questions were raised about how potential tax rate increases and electricity rate changes could affect residents and businesses, and how those changes would interact with rising property assessments. Staff advised that tax rate modelling is still underway and will be refined as assessment and financial information becomes available.

Council members expressed concern about the impact of a large one-time tax rate increase, particularly on housing affordability and renters, and emphasized the need for further discussion once more detailed financial information is available. Several members indicated a preference for smaller, more incremental increases rather than a significant single-year change.

Council requested additional information, including comparisons with other municipalities and clarification of the Town's historical tax rate changes, to help inform future budget decisions.

It was noted that the budget and reserve strategy will continue to be refined through further strategic and financial discussions before final decisions are made.

Recess

The Chair called a recess from 7:25 p.m. to 7:28 p.m.

Public Input Session
on Proposed
Budgets

Members of the public provided a range of comments and questions on the proposed 2026/27 Capital Budgets for the Town and Water Utility.

Several questions focused on specific capital projects, including:

- Whether upgrades to the Council Chamber audio system were included or planned as part of the Town Hall work;
- The purpose of future land purchases in the Water Utility budget;
- The water meter rollout and whether it is provincially required;
- How design and engineering work for projects such as Maple Avenue, Pelham Street, and other street and sidewalk upgrades would be carried out;
- The scope and timing of Pelham Street road and sewer work;
- How the wastewater biofilter system fits with the ongoing wastewater treatment plant upgrade;
- The location and scale of the Tannery Road stormwater culvert project.

There was also discussion about long-term funding for capital projects, including interest in the proposed dedicated capital reserve fund and support for hiring a grants officer to help secure external funding. One speaker noted that the scale of upcoming infrastructure projects means the community will need to have ongoing conversations about how those investments are funded.

Additional comments included:

- Questions about traffic safety measures at the Montague and Duke Street intersection;
- Suggestions about lower-cost or alternative vehicles for By-law Enforcement;
- A request that future infrastructure and streetscape projects better reflect Lunenburg's UNESCO World Heritage character, rather than standard suburban design approaches.

One resident also expressed appreciation for the Town's responsiveness and coordination between departments in addressing a recent public safety issue involving a hazardous tree.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Minutes were read and approved.