

Draft 2026 Budget

November 17, 2025

Agenda for Monday, November 17, 2025:

Welcome – Drew Hyndman

Understanding Cochrane's 2026 budget – Alvin Alim

Public Engagement– Kevin Blanchette

Update on staffing requirements – Kelly Dunsmore

Presentation on Town of Cochrane compensation plan – Kelly Dunsmore

Rate-based Budget & Capital Projects introduction – Shane Hubl

Overview of rate-based budget – Shawn Tooth

Overview of capital projects budget – Adam Sullo

Wrap Up and next steps – Drew Hyndman

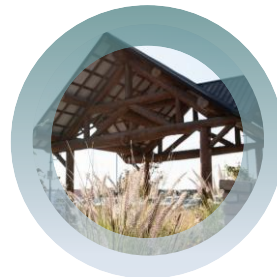
STRATEGIC PLAN FOUNDATIONS



FINANCIAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP



INTENTIONAL
RELATIONSHIPS



BUILT
ENVIRONMENT



ORGANIZATIONAL
RESILIENCY

ASPIRATIONS



IDENTITY



VIBRANT
ECONOMY



OPEN SPACES &
NATURAL AREAS



CONNECTIVITY

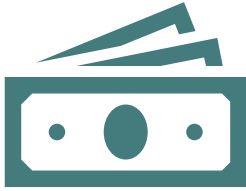


LIVABILITY

Annual Budget Process Overview



Budget Principles



Implementing a Fiscal
Framework



Passing the Baton



Infrastructure Lifecycle
Management

The Story Behind The Numbers







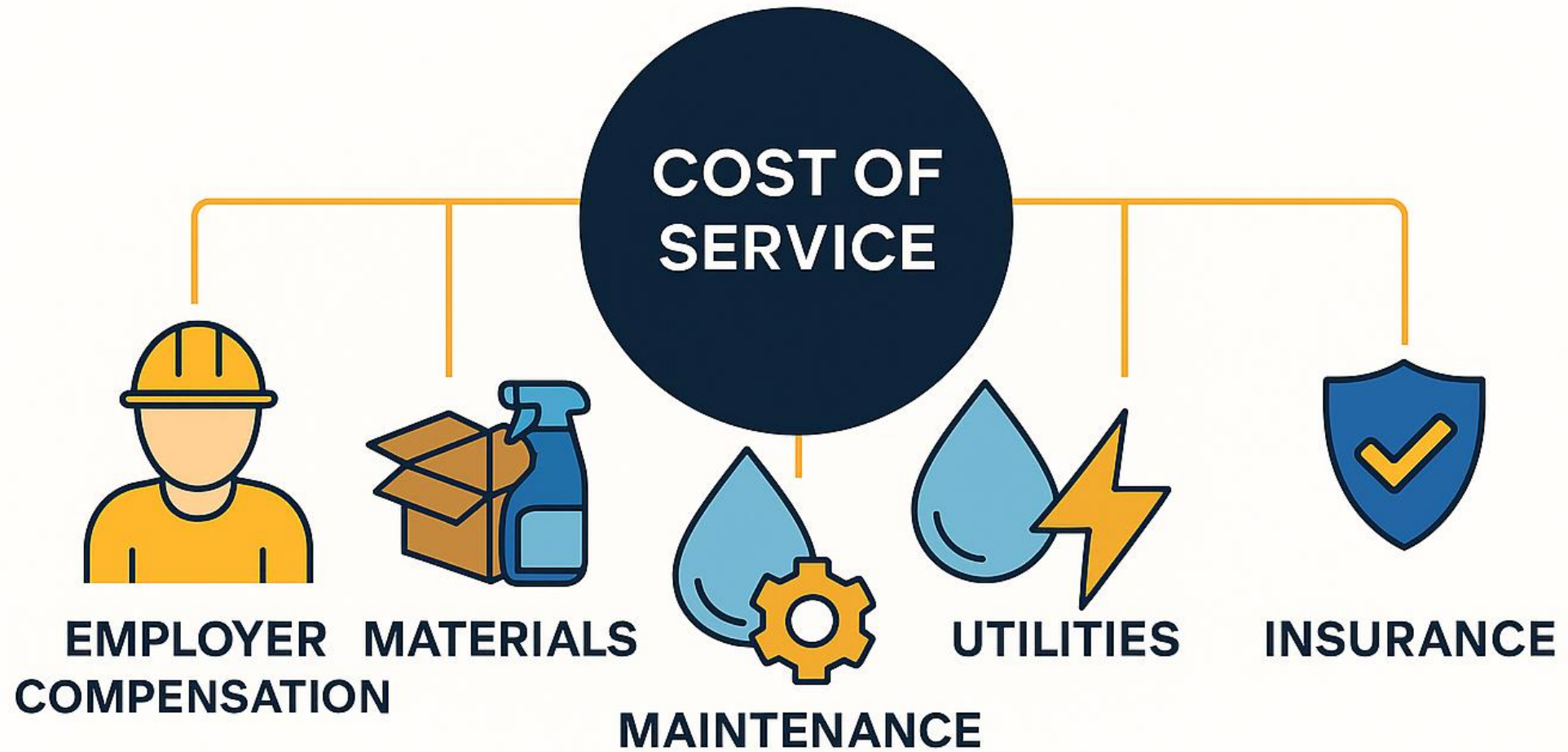


cochrane
HOW THE WEST IS NOW

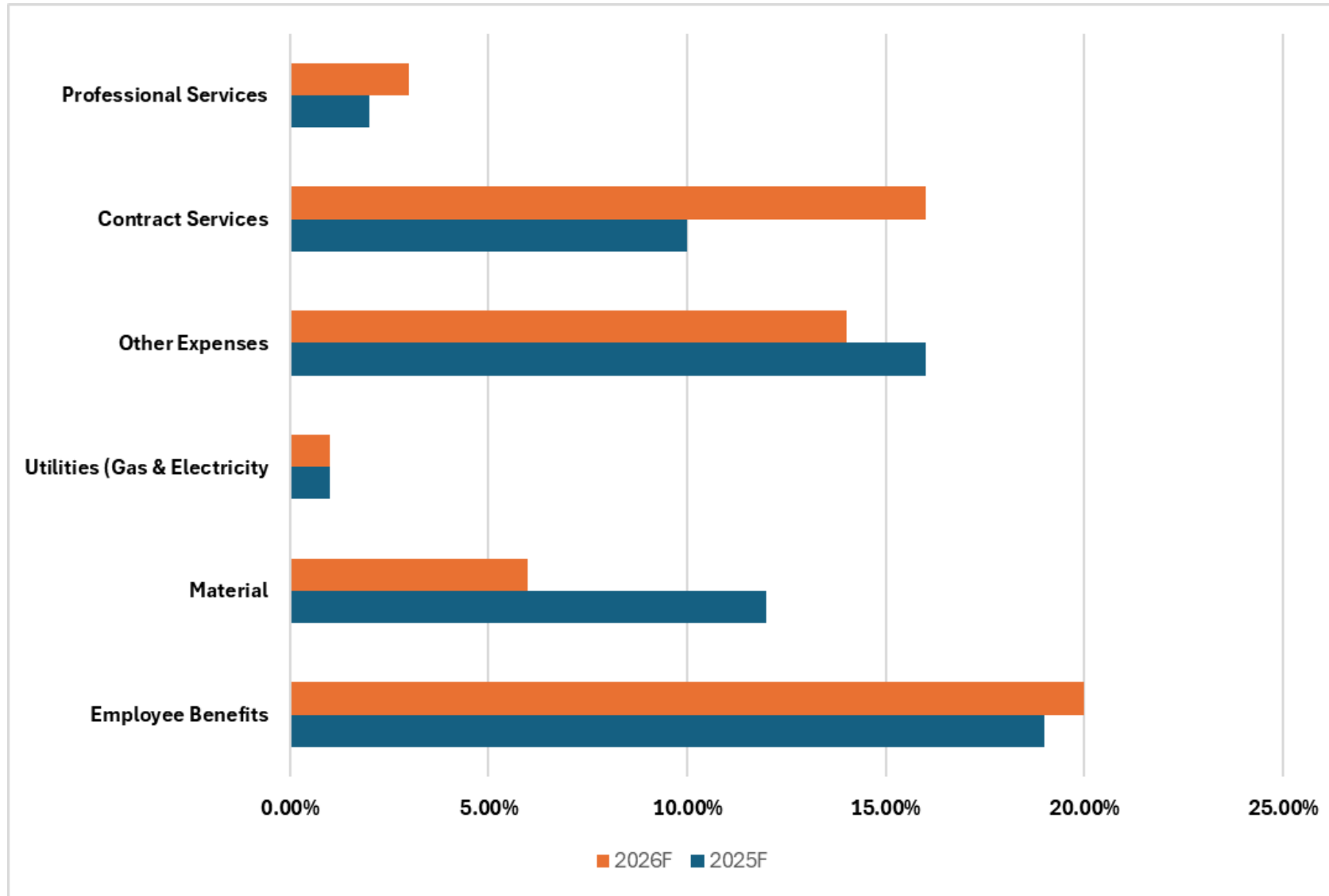


Level of Service



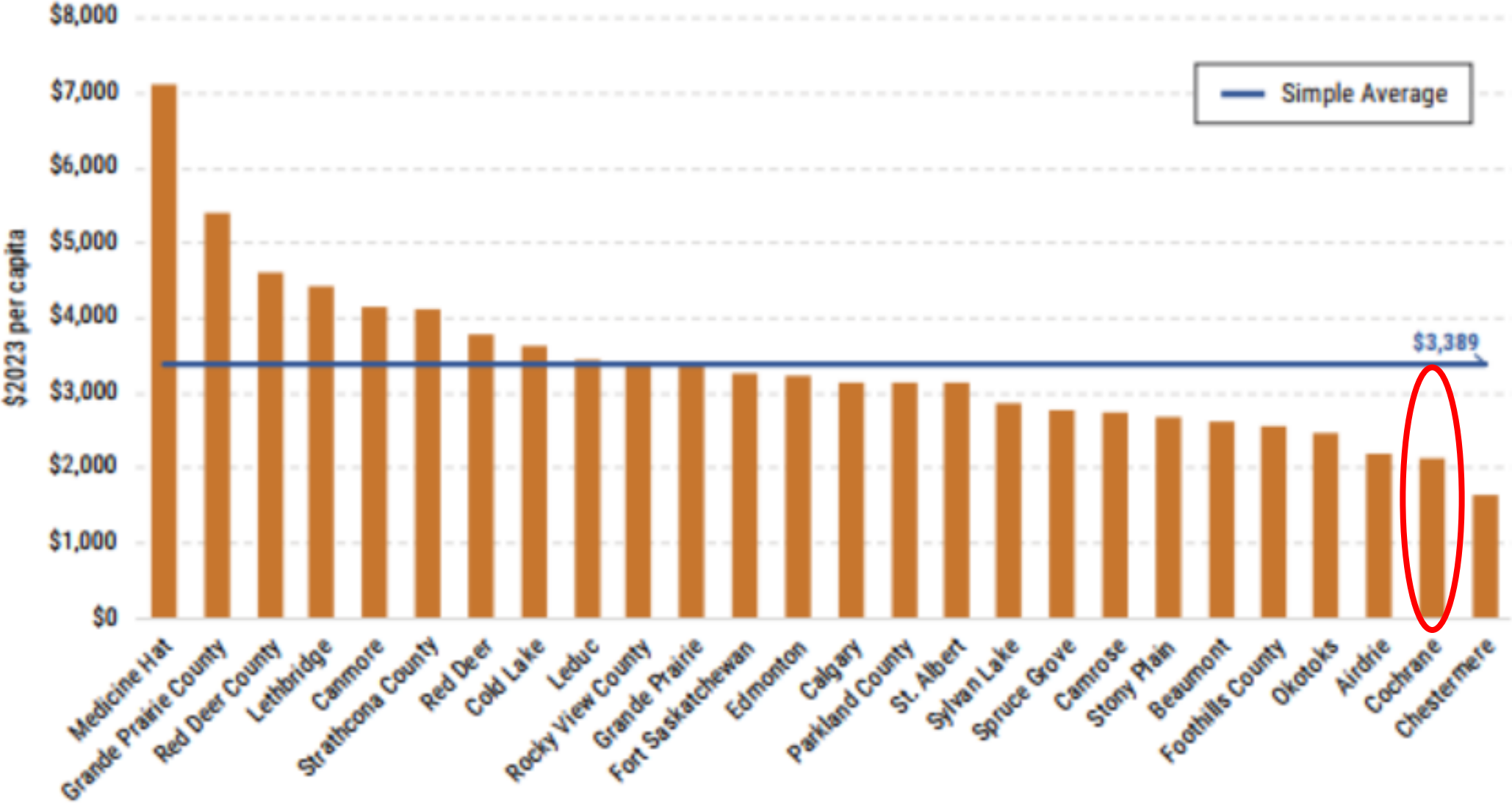


Expenditure Inflation – By Category



Source: Statistics Canada, Bank of Canada, Conference Board of Canada

Figure 3: Total Municipal Expenditure per Person, Major Municipalities, 2023



Sources: Alberta, Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development, 2023; Alberta, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 2024; calculations by author.

Proposed 2026 Revenue Requirement

Approved 2025 Budget

Level of Service (LoS)

	EXPENSE	REVENUE		Difference	
		General	Taxation		
Level of Service (LoS)	\$ 69,416,782	\$ (28,967,332)	\$ (39,460,752)	\$ (988,698)	2.63% Council approved
DRAFT 2026 Budget					
Note: Council approved maintaining LoS at 2025 level	\$ 69,416,782	\$ (29,940,392)	\$ (40,103,106)	\$ (626,716)	
Note: Council approved 2% inflation on operational expenditures	\$ 339,133			\$ 339,133	
Growth @ 3.75%			\$ (1,454,414)	\$ (1,454,414)	
Non-Discretionary expenditures increase > 2%	\$ 2,316,284			\$ 2,316,284	
Discretionary > 2%	\$ 727,987			\$ 727,987	
	\$ 72,800,186	\$ (29,940,392)	\$ (41,557,520)	\$ (1,302,274)	3.25% Proposed 2026 Budget

2026 **PROPOSED** Budget Tax Increases

Community	Tax Rate	Status
Canmore	7.10%	Proposed
Airdrie	6.60%	Proposed
Camrose	4.65%	Proposed
Spruce Grove	4.57%	Proposed
Okotoks	4.00%	Proposed
City of St. Albert	3.90%	Proposed
Cochrane	3.25%	Proposed
Average Tax Increase	4.87%	

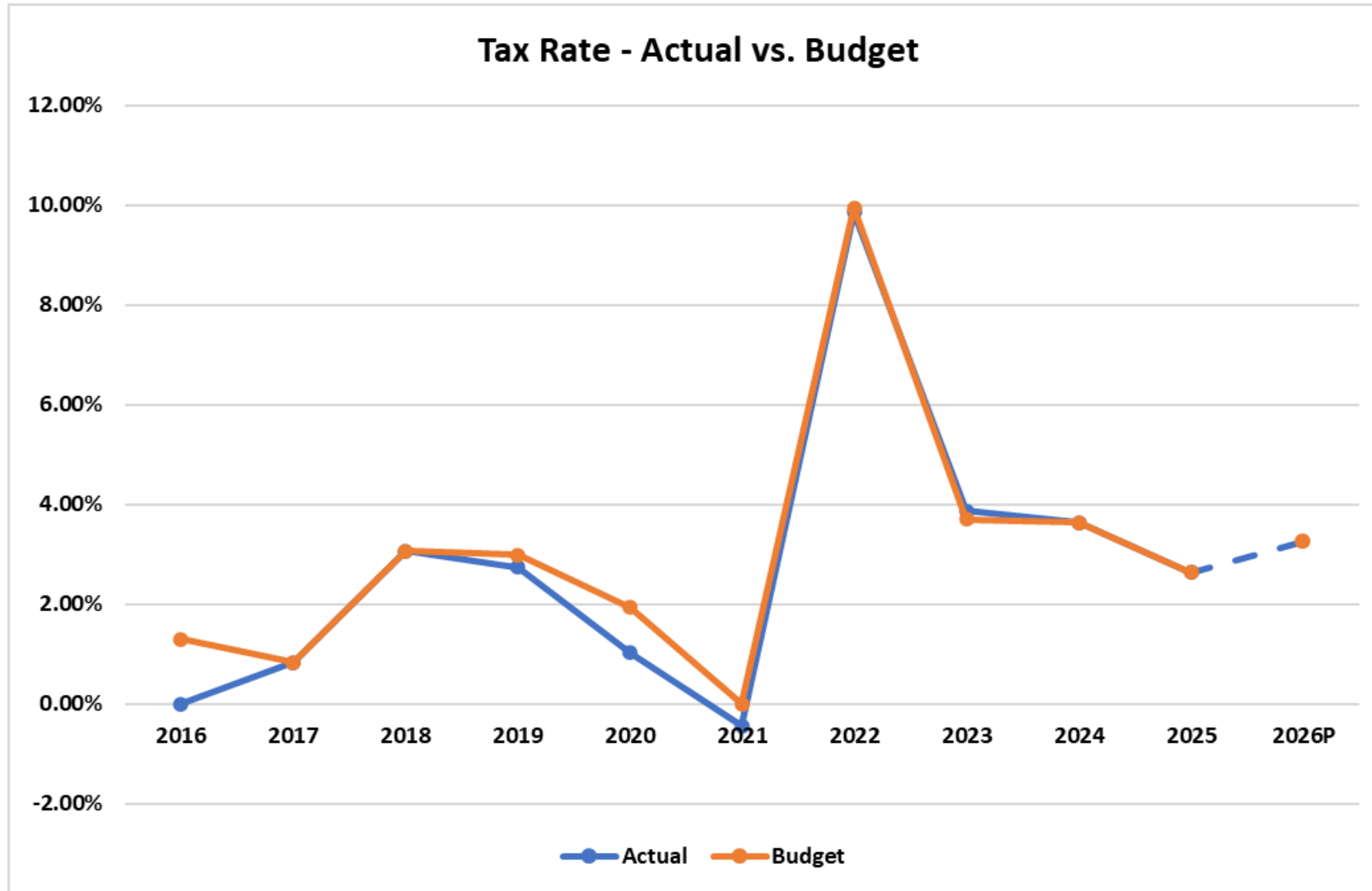
Large Cities

	Increase	Status
Edmonton	4.39%	Proposed
Calgary	5.40%	Proposed

Alberta cities with the lowest property tax rates for 2024

MUNICIPALITY		SAMPLE PROPERTY TAXES		
(RANKED BY LOWEST TO HIGHEST PROPERTY TAX RATE)	2024 PROPERTY TAX RATE	TAX ASSESSED ON A HOME AT \$250,000	TAX ASSESSED ON A HOME AT \$500,000	TAX ASSESSED ON A HOME AT \$750,000
1. CANMORE	0.461405%	\$1,154	\$2,307	\$3,461
2. CHESTERMERE	0.538075%	\$1,345	\$2,690	\$4,036
3. CALGARY	0.648610%	\$1,622	\$3,243	\$4,865
4. COCHRANE	0.649810%	\$1,625	\$3,249	\$4,874
5. AIRDRIE	0.652619%	\$1,632	\$3,263	\$4,895
6. OKOTOKS	0.697540%	\$1,744	\$3,488	\$5,232
7. FORT SASKATCHEWAN	0.7978091%	\$1,995	\$3,989	\$5,984
8. HIGH RIVER	0.808040%	\$2,020	\$4,040	\$6,060
9. STRATHMORE	0.843100%	\$2,108	\$4,216	\$6,323
10. STONY PLAIN	0.909300%	\$2,273	\$4,547	\$6,820

Historical tax increase





Engaging Our Community in the Budget Process

Cochrane's budget is built with community insight — ensuring residents understand how decisions are made and have opportunities to share their perspectives.

- Administration's Draft 2026 Budget was made available online on November 4th
- Administration hosted public forums:
 - Friday, November 14th and Saturday, November 15th
- Residents feedback will be listed on Let'sTalkCochrane.ca

Resident Tax Preferences

Advanis was contracted to conduct the 2026 Town of Cochrane Budget Planning Survey

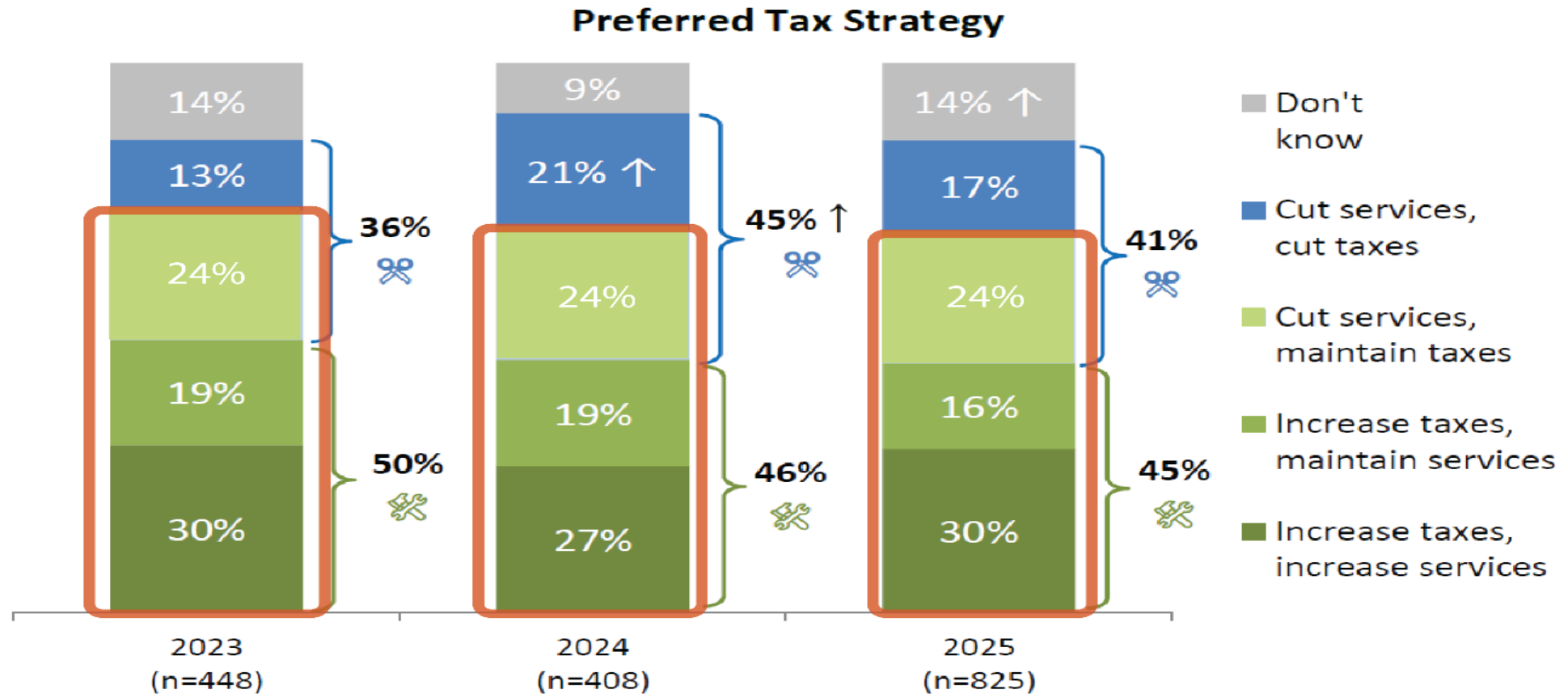
Margin of error $\approx \pm 3.5$ percentage points

Confidence Level: **64.9% to 73.1%**

Why this data is reliable:

- 825 responses provide **high statistical accuracy** for a population of 37,100
- Standard methodology used nationwide in municipal research
- Same confidence level as national polling

Overall property tax preference



Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

What the Data Means

Key Insights

46% of residents support some form of tax increase to maintain or expand services

24% want taxes held steady with corresponding service reductions

The remainder are neutral or unsure, which is typical in municipal finance surveys

Questions

Staffing & Compensation

2026 Staffing Requests

Office of the CAO	Corporate Services	Community Safety & Wellbeing	Development & Infrastructure Services
Grants & Funding Analyst (1 FTE)	Health & Safety Advisor (1 FTE)	Firefighters (1.4 FTE)	Automotive Mechanic (1 FTE)
Admin Assistant Communications (1 FTE)	Finance General Clerk (1 FTE)	Peace Officers (2 FTE)	Caretaker (0.4 FTE)
		Summer Students (0.6 FTE)	Admin Assistant Waste & Recycling (0.2 FTE)
• 2025 FTE Restated = 273.6 • 2026 FTE Requests = 14.6 • 2026 FTE if Approved = 288.2		Admin Assistant, Social Development (1 FTE)	Waste & Recycling Advisor (1 FTE)
			Development Inspector (1 FTE)
			Electrical Safety Codes Officer (1 FTE)
			Civil Land Technologist I (1 FTE)

Compensation Introduction

- **2025 Market Compensation Survey**
- Transitioning from **step model** → **market-based model** in 2026
- **Target: 60th percentile** of the market

Comparable municipalities	
Airdrie	Okotoks
Canmore	Rocky View County
Chestermere	Spruce Grove
Fort Saskatchewan	Stony Plain
Leduc	Strathmore



Thank you. Questions?

Rate Supported and Capital Budget



The background of the image is a close-up, artistic shot of numerous stacked copper pipes. The pipes are arranged in a way that creates a dense pattern of circular openings. The lighting is warm and directional, coming from the upper left, which highlights the metallic texture of the copper and creates strong highlights and shadows within the circular frames. The overall color palette is dominated by the golden-brown tones of the copper.

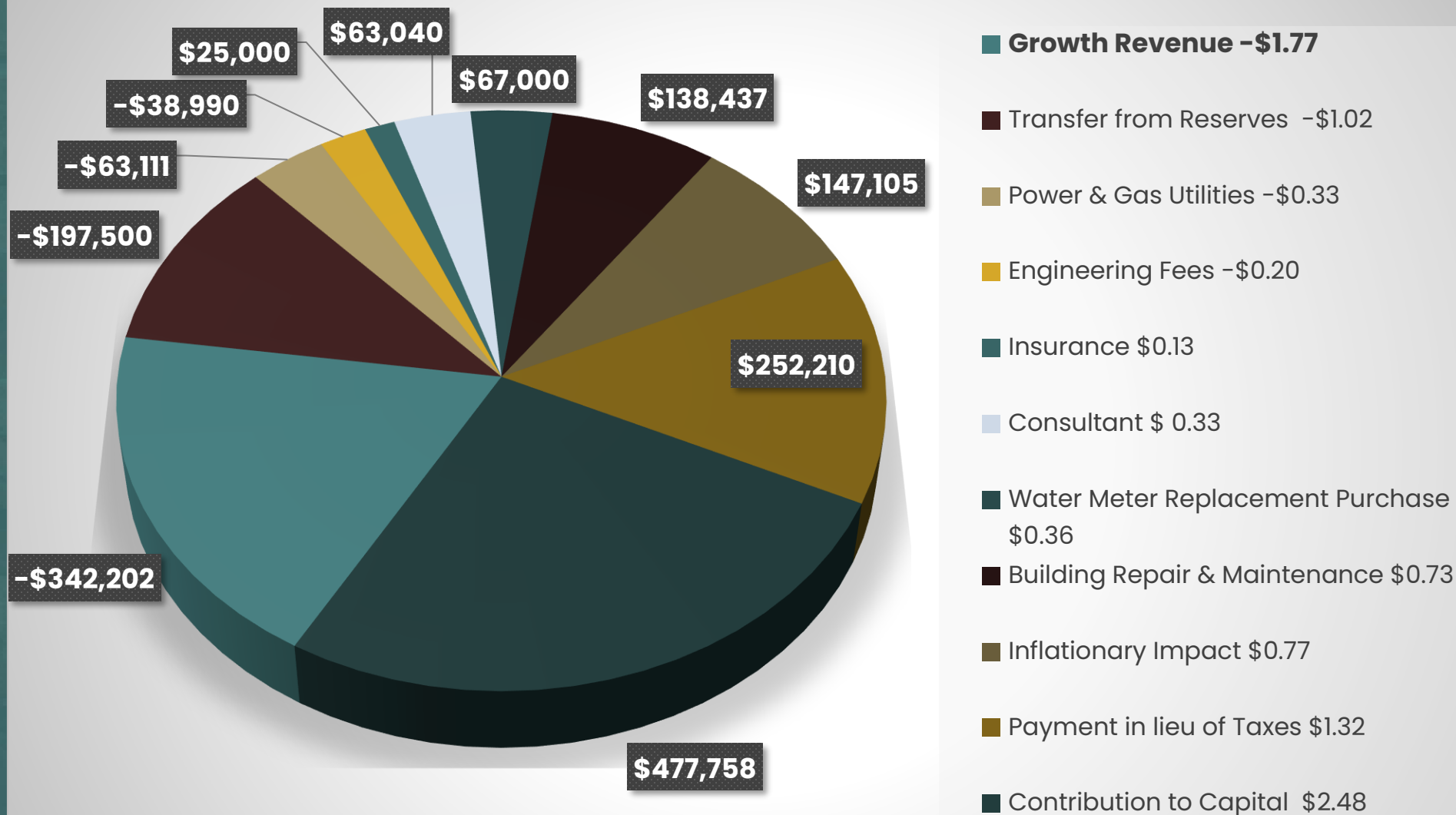
RATE SUPPORTED BUDGET

UTILITIES SECTION

Water utility

2026 Water Fees Utility Bill Net Impact

\$2.80 per
month, based
on 12m³



Water Rate External Comparison

Water 2026 Monthly Intermunicipal Comparison

*based on 13.5 cubic metres



Wastewater utility

Category	Amount
Growth Revenue	-\$2.56
Transfer from Reserves	-\$1.47
Power, Gas Utilities & Insurance	-\$0.11
Engineering Fees	-\$0.20
Contract	-\$0.36
Lift Station Repairs	-\$0.25
Calgary Wastewater Charges	\$1.37
Consultant	\$0.71
Water Meter Replacement Purchase	\$0.35
Building Repair & Maintenance	\$0.73
Inflation	\$0.61
Payment in lieu of Taxes	\$0.27

Wastewater Rate External Comparison

Wastewater 2026 Monthly Intermunicipal Comparison

*based on 13.5 cubic metres



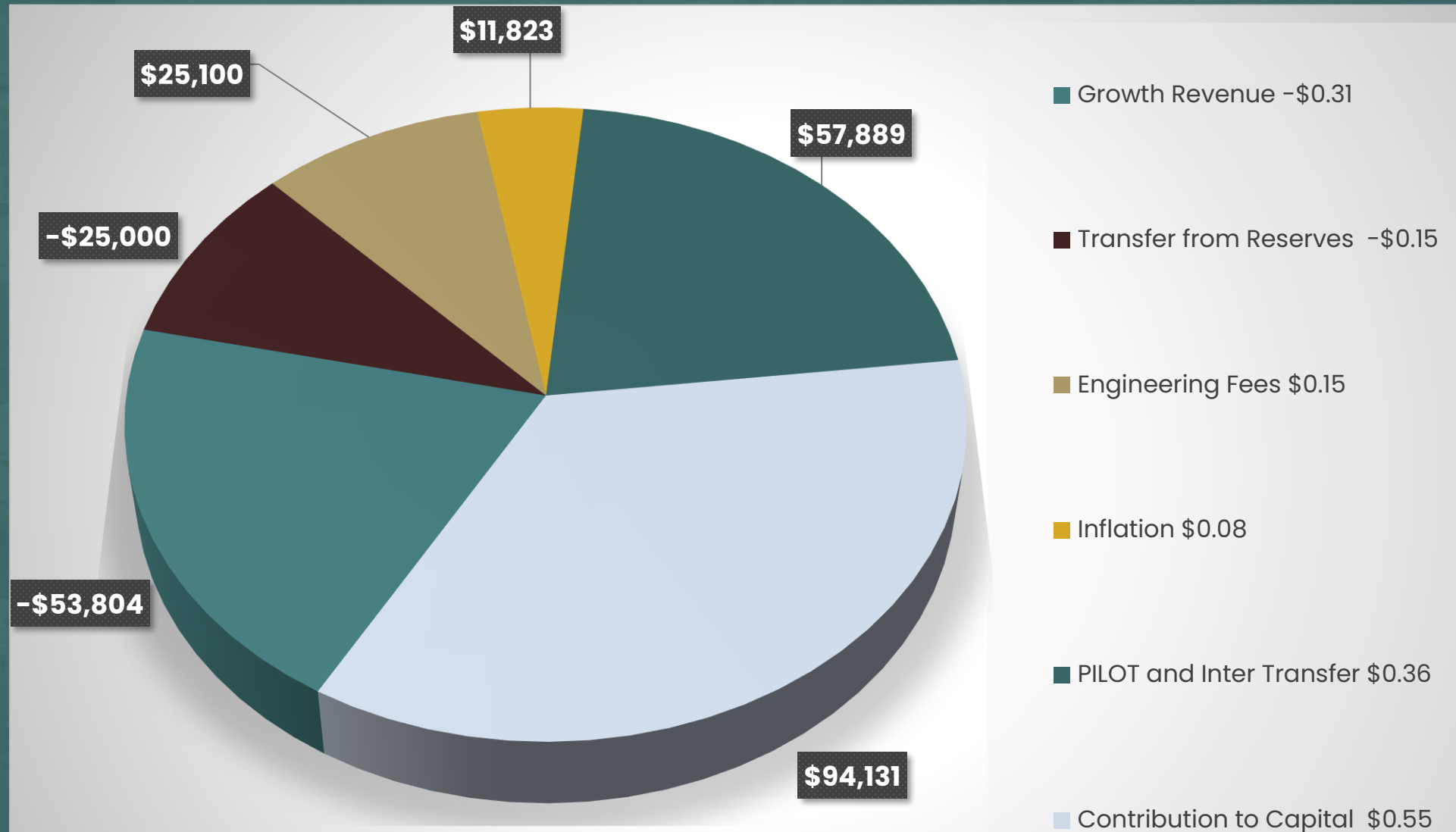
Stormwater utility





2026 Storm Sewer Fee Utility Bill Net Impact

\$0.68 per
month



Stormwater Rate External Comparison

Stormwater 2026 Monthly Intermunicipal Comparison



cochrane
HOW THE WEST IS NOW

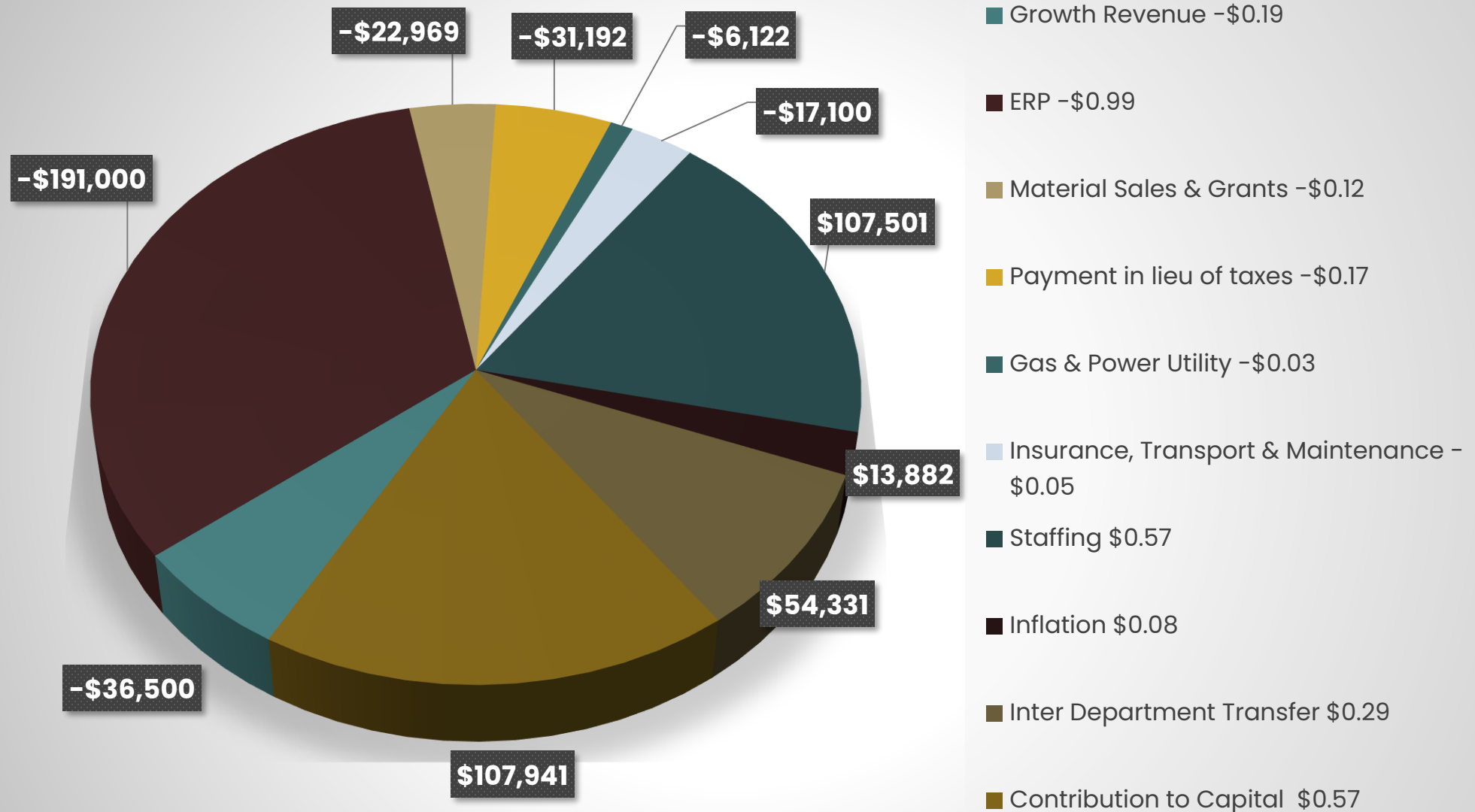


Waste collection & Eco Centre



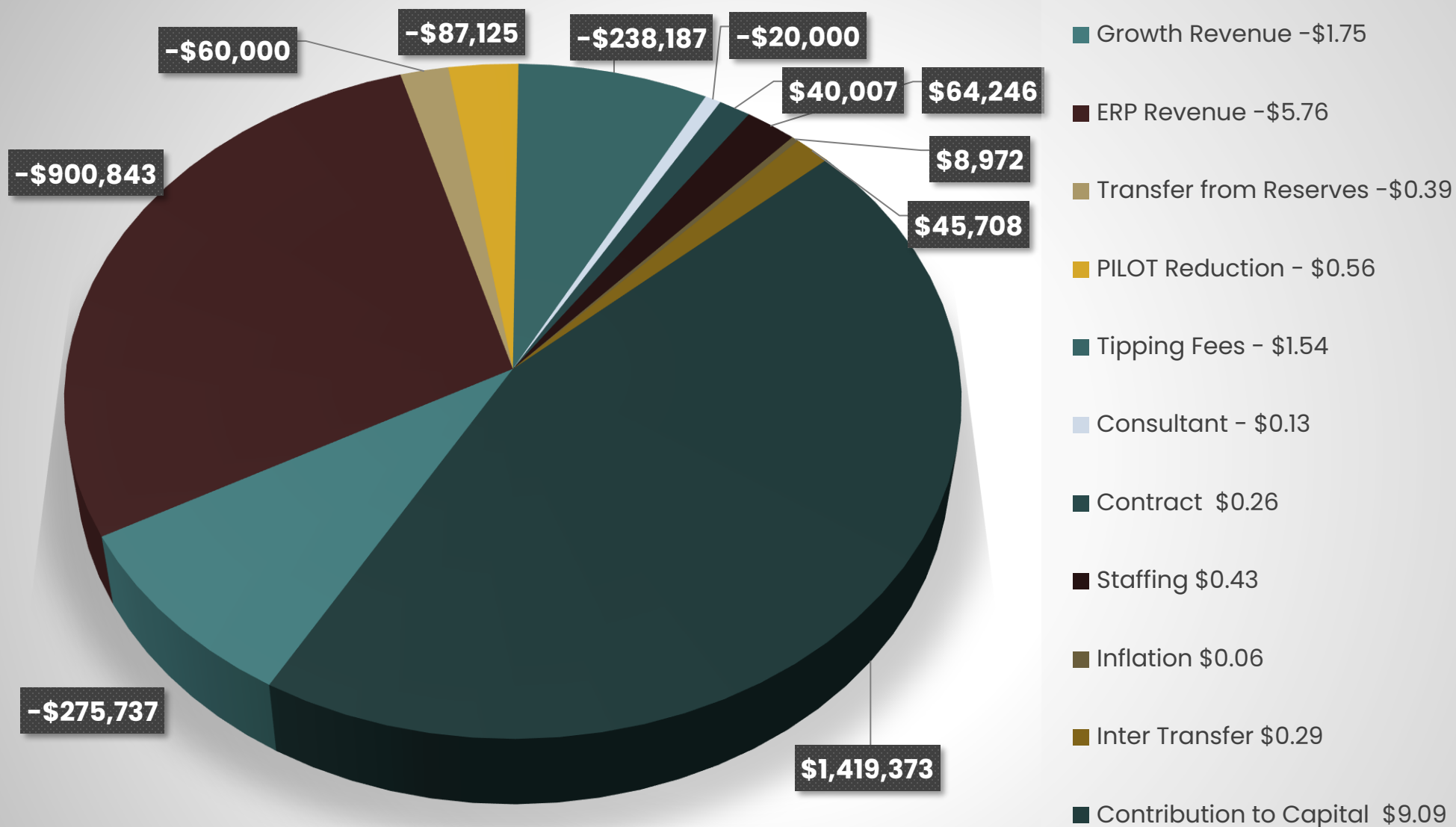
2026 Eco Centre Fee Utility Bill Net Impact

\$0.00 per month



2026 Waste & Recycling Fee Utility Bill Net Impact

\$0.00 per month



Waste & Recycling Rate External Comparison

2026 Monthly Intermunicipal Comparison





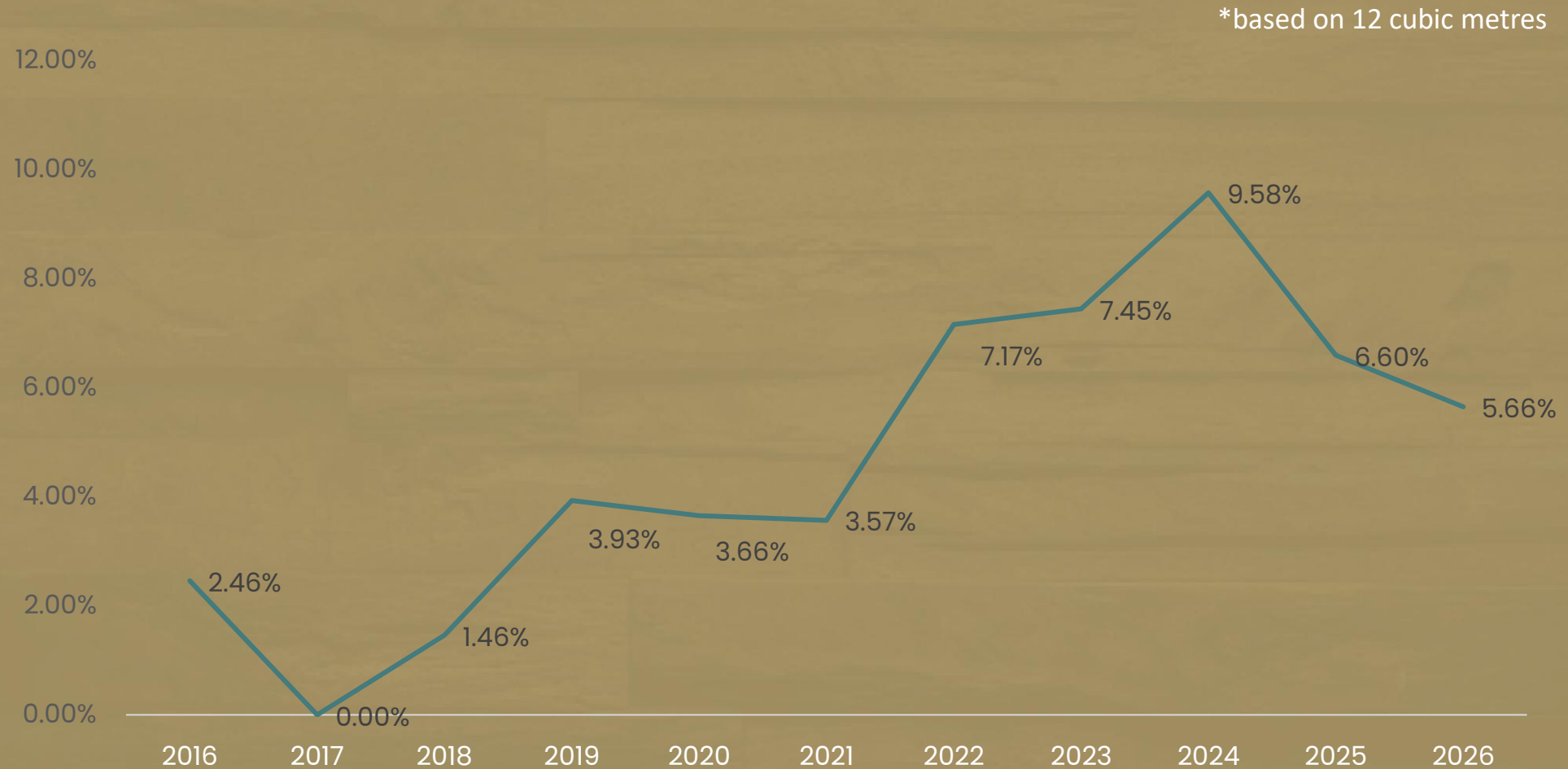
Complete Utility Bill External Comparison

2026 Monthly Intermunicipal Comparison

*based on 13.5 cubic metres



2016 to 2026 Utility Invoice Annual Increase



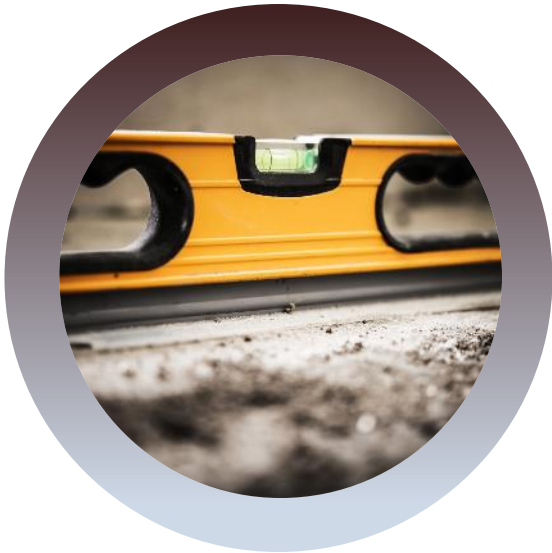


Thank you

Capital Budget



What is Capital Budget



Planning for the
future

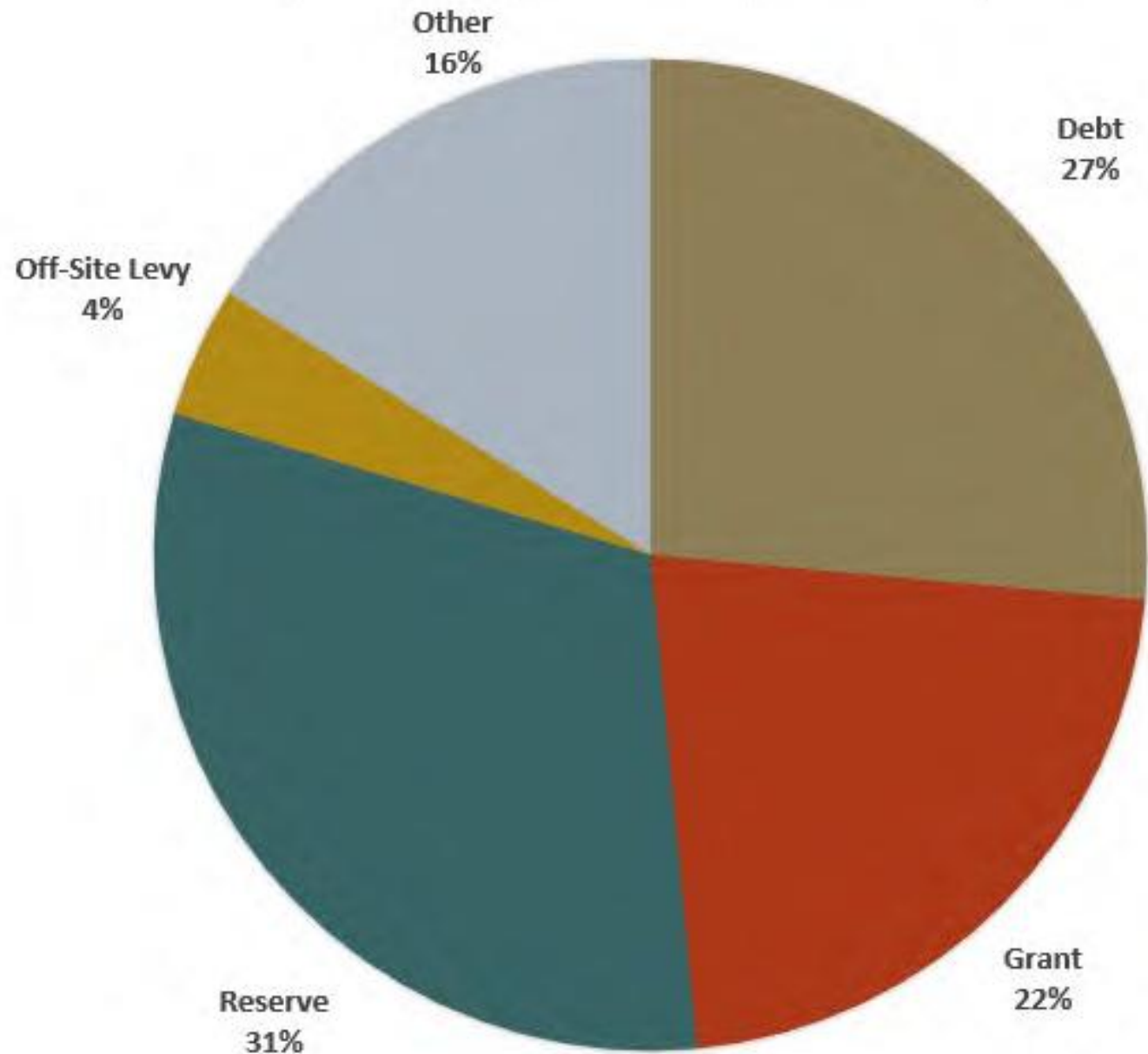


Building and
maintaining
infrastructure



Community
improvements

Capital Budget Funding



How the 2026 capital plan is funded

How Items are Identified

Asset Management

Long Range Master Planning

Community Needs



Capital Budget Cycle

Project Identification

Capital Budget Funding for
Investigation/Design (If Needed)

Investigate solution

Identify Costs

Capital Budget Funding for
Implementation



Projects are selected based on the following criteria:

Addressing failure
or imminent failure

Addressing
operational need
to maintain levels
of service

Growth related
need

Contractual
requirements with
third parties

Resources
available to deliver
project

Coordination with
other projects

Questions



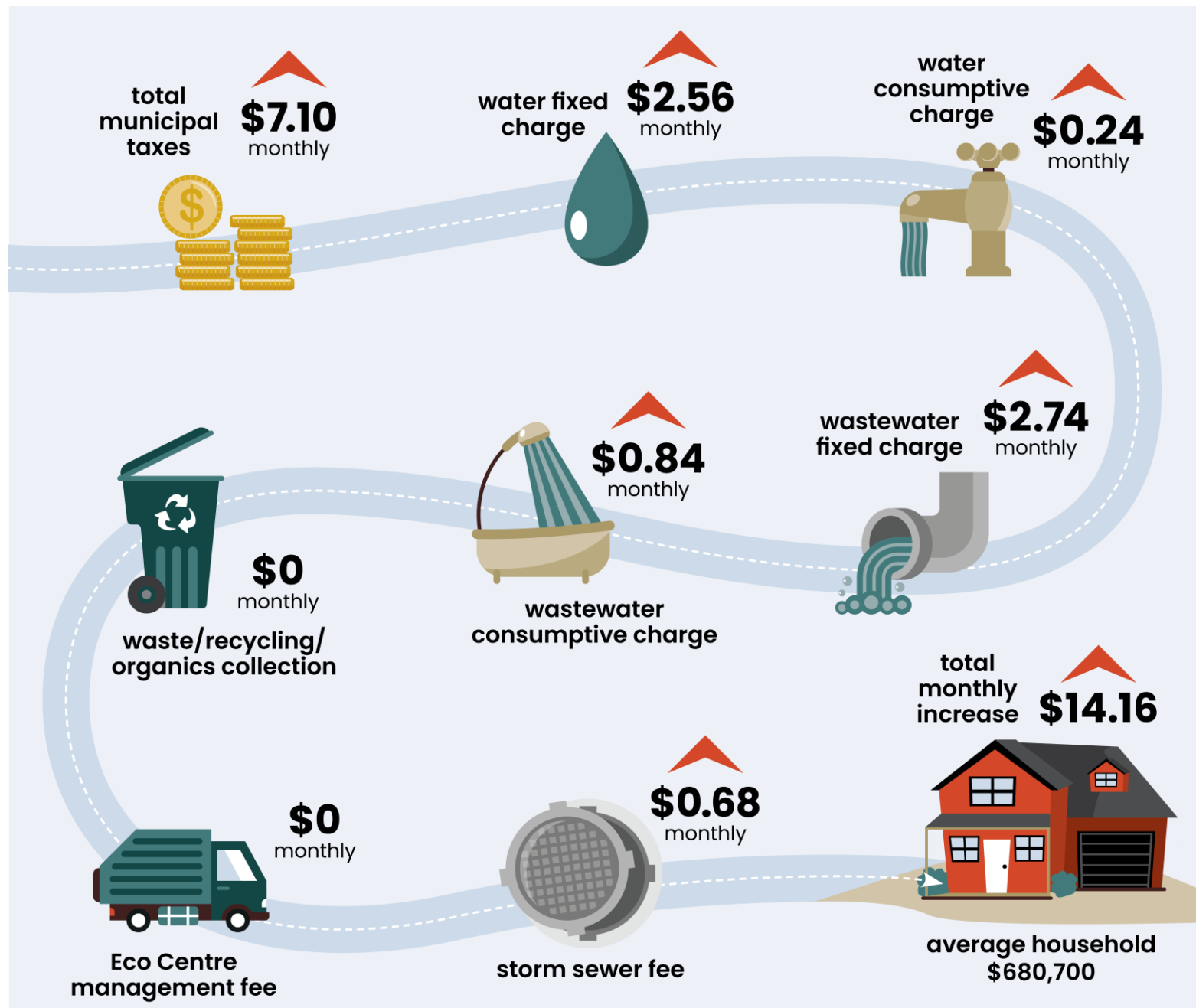
Total Bill Impact

Residential annual costs:**(Average Assessed at \$680,700)**

	Proposed			
	2025	2026	Monthly	Annual
Total municipal taxes	\$ 2,623.21	\$ 2,708.47	\$ 7.10	\$ 85.25
Water Fixed Charge	\$ 16.39	\$ 18.95	\$ 2.56	\$ 30.72
Water Consumptive Charge *	\$ 15.84	\$ 16.08	\$ 0.24	\$ 2.88
Wastewater Fixed Charge	\$ 23.25	\$ 25.99	\$ 2.74	\$ 32.88
Wastewater Consumptive Charge	\$ 30.36	\$ 31.20	\$ 0.84	\$ 10.08
Waste/Recycling/Organics Collection	\$ 26.65	\$ 26.65	\$ -	\$ -
Eco Centre Management Fee	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00	\$ -	\$ -
Storm Sewer Fee	\$ 7.31	\$ 7.99	\$ 0.68	\$ 8.16
Total	\$ 2,748.01	\$ 2,840.33	\$ 14.16	\$ 169.97

**12 cubic metres - Residential accounts 12 month rolling average*







RECEIPT

MUNICIPAL TAXES

Name	John Doe
Address	123 Oceanview Drive
Phone	(403)-123-4567
Email	John.Doe@example.com
Roll Number	000123456789
Assessment Year	2026
Property Assessment	\$680,700
MUNICIPAL TAXES	\$2,708.47

Detailed Breakdown of Charges:

Division	Service	Total
Development & Infrastructure	Parks (maintenance)	\$ 161.25
	Roads	\$ 289.45
	Permits & Planning	\$ 11.15
	Economic Development	\$ 70.69
	Operations	\$ 130.00
	Asset Services (engineering, GIS, capital projects)	\$ 29.05
Division	Service	
Community Safety & Wellness	Fire Services	\$ 417.76
	RCMP & Municipal Enforcement	\$ 326.29
	Recreation Facilities	\$ 206.26
	Events, Culture & Library	\$ 155.07
	Community & Social Development	\$ 118.07
	Transit	\$ 97.41
Division	Service	
Corporate Services	Finance & Assessment; Information Technology	\$ 299.61
	Human Resource; Health & Safety	\$ 86.56
	Legislative Services	\$ 91.70
	Customer & Administrative Services	\$ 63.21
Division	Service	
Office of the CAO	Council	\$ 37.06
	CAO	\$ 18.48
	Strategic Services	\$ 99.40
Subtotal - Development & Infrastructure		\$ 691.60
Subtotal - Community Safety & Wellness		\$ 1,320.86
Subtotal - Corporate Services		\$ 541.08
Subtotal - Office of the CAO		\$ 154.93
Total Amount Due		\$ 2,708.47
Total Amount Paid		\$ (2,708.47)
Balance		\$ -
Payment Method		Cash

Wrap Up and Next Steps:

Wednesday November 19, 2025

9am–4:30pm

Review and discuss the **2026 tax supported budget**

Thursday November 20, 2025

9am–4:30pm

Review and discuss the 2026:

- **Rate supported budget**
- **Capital project budget**
- **Service fees**
- **Reserves**
- **Long Term Debt**