

2026-2030 Financial Plan Update

Recommendation:

- 1) THAT Council direct staff to incorporate, into the Financial Plan Bylaw, a 3.5% property tax increase for 2026 and an annual 4.5% property tax increase for 2027 through 2030.**
- 2) THAT ongoing decision packages as listed in “Attachment A – Ongoing Decision Packages” to the report titled “2026-2030 Financial Plan Update” dated February 17, 2026 in the amount of \$706,940 be approved and included in the Financial Plan Bylaw.**
- 3) THAT staff be directed to undertake community engagement on the proposed 2026-2030 Financial Plan.**

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

This report advises Council of the proposed tax rate increase and updates to what was presented in early December. The updated increase factors growth in the city’s taxbase and staff’s effort to meet targets established in the 2026 Business Planning Guidelines.

Previous Council Action:

On July 29, 2025, Council approved the business planning guidelines for the 2026-2030 Financial Plan.

On December 8, 2025, Council received a budget overview. Presentations included a review of budget increase drivers and ongoing cost savings.

On December 9, 2025, Council approved the 2026-2030 Capital Program and one-time Decision Packages, allowing staff to proceed with infrastructure and planning initiatives.

On December 16, 2025, Council approved 2026-2030 water and sewer utility rates.

On January 27, 2026, staff presented Council with a 2025 departmental year in review and a summary of findings from community surveys completed in 2025.

Financial Impact:

The projected property tax increase identified in this report is about \$101 on the average home valued at \$1.044M. This equates to a 3.5% property tax increase for 2026. Per

Council's direction to staff this will enable the City to manage growth, address climate and economic change, and respond to evolving community needs while keeping the rate increase affordable for residents.

Funding Source:

The City's Financial Plan addresses all City funding sources including general revenue and reserves.

Strategic Alignment:

Liveable Community; Climate Leadership & Environmental Stewardship; Engaged, Healthy Community; Diversified, Thriving Economy; Governance & Corporate Excellence

Communications:

The City will be undertaking public engagement in advance of presenting the Financial Plan for Council adoption.

**Applicable Legislation/
Bylaw/Policy:**

The 2026-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw and 2026 Tax Rate Bylaws will result from this work.

To: Mayor and Council

File number:

2026-2030 Financial Plan Update

BACKGROUND:

On July 29, 2025, Council approved the Business and Financial Planning Guidelines, establishing the overall direction for the budget process.

In December, Council received a budget overview that reviewed key budget increase drivers and ongoing cost-saving measures. Council subsequently approved the 2026–2030 Capital Program and one-time Decision Packages, enabling infrastructure and planning initiatives to begin in the New Year. The 2026–2030 water and sewer utility rates were also approved later that month.

Most recently, in late January, Council received the 2025 departmental year-in-review, and findings of the Community Survey conducted in late 2025 that provide important context for the City's ongoing financial planning. Survey findings showed that residents want the City to focus on providing essential services while ensuring our infrastructure is keeping up with rapid growth. Concerns expressed by residents about the value they receive for their tax dollars demonstrate that the City must continue efforts to keep property taxes affordable as we continue to deliver core services our community relies on.

This report provides an update on 2026 financial planning and includes a proposed property tax increase of 3.5%, developed with a strong focus on affordability. The proposed increase reflects updated assessment growth, additional cost savings, and improved clarity from preliminary 2025 year-end results, while balancing service delivery and financial sustainability.

The contents of this report will form the basis for community engagement on the 2026–2030 Financial Plan.

ANALYSIS:

Discussion:

In December, staff presented Council with an update on the financial planning process and the work underway to reduce the previously approved 6.3% property tax increase to a target of 3.5%. For comparison, both the previously approved 2025-2029 and proposed 2026-2030 financial plans are shown below:

Previously Approved 2025-2029 Financial Plan

Property Tax Increases	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
General Purpose	2.45%	3.35%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%
Police/Fire	1.35%	1.35%	1.8%	-	-
Infrastructure	0.80%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Parks, Rec. & Culture Levy	0.30%	0.60%	0.6%	-	-
Property Tax Increase	4.90%	6.30%	6.30%	3.90%	3.90%

Proposed 2026-2030 Financial Plan

Property Tax Increases		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
General Purpose		2.15%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%
Police/Fire		1.35%	0.60%	0.60%	0.60%	0.60%
Infrastructure		-	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Property Tax Increase		3.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%

Achieving this reduction in 2026 requires identifying \$3.2 million in adjustments.

In the December report, staff had identified \$2.2 million of those adjustments:

- \$1.6 million in cost savings and
- \$600,000 from removing the proposed Parks, Recreation & Culture levy.

This left \$1 million still to be found to reach the 3.5% target.

Adjustments Since December

Since December, additional information has been incorporated into the budget projections.

Assessment growth, which had been projected at 1.5%, came in at just under 1%, creating an additional shortfall of \$650,000 and increasing the remaining gap to \$1.65 million to reach the 3.5% target.

Staff continued to review expenditures and identify further reductions and funding adjustments. Through a combination of additional savings, program reviews, and funding realignments, staff were able to close that gap and arrive at a balanced position. These include:

- \$895,000 of additional cost savings
- \$1.2M from removing the 2026 increase to the Infrastructure Sustainability Reserve (ISR)
- \$325,000 through a review of programs

To include the decision packages noted in Appendix A, staff had made further adjustments to achieve the proposed 3.5% tax increase target.

Infrastructure Levy

To help reduce the 2026 tax rate without making additional service reductions, the 2026 increase to the Infrastructure Sustainability Reserve has been removed, generating \$1.2 million in relief. The increases from 2027 through 2030 remain.

This is a one-year adjustment intended to support affordability while preserving core services. While this will slow the pace of infrastructure replacement in the short term, approved infrastructure projects will continue. Once confirmed, and subject to Council approval, year-end one-time funding can be earmarked to address immediate infrastructure priorities.

Programs Under Review

Staff have identified \$325,000 in savings through a review of City programs.

The Chipping Program (a free service that removes tree waste) and the outdoors Hammond Pool will continue to operate in the short term but will be supported using 2025 operating savings while staff assess future service delivery options.

Later this year, staff will return to Council with findings and recommendations regarding the future structure and funding.

While these two programs are specifically identified at this time, staff will continue to review programs and service levels across the organization and identify additional areas for savings as part of ongoing financial planning.

Decision Packages

The financial plan includes \$706,940 in ongoing decision packages, as detailed in Appendix A. This carefully considered list focuses on essential service continuity, operational capacity, and areas where pressures can no longer be absorbed within existing resources.

Only those requests that address clear risks, asset protection, or sustained service demands have been brought forward. Throughout the review process, departments were asked to prioritize within their existing budgets wherever possible, resulting in a restrained set of recommendations aligned with Council's direction on affordability.

These additions are intended to stabilize key service areas and ensure the City can continue to meet current expectations while managing growth and increasing operational complexity.

Police and Fire Protective Services

The 2026 property tax increase to support the additional RCMP members approved in 2024 remains unchanged. The planned 2027 increase associated with the 10 additional members approved in 2025 has been phased in to align with the expected hiring timeline for the RCMP, due to factors outside the City's control. These increases will also help offset the budget shortfall resulting from the discontinuation of RCMP rent and support service charges to Pitt Meadows. Any timing differences between budgeted and actual vacancies will be managed through the Police Services Reserve.

Financial Impact:

For the purpose of illustrating impact, we look at how the 3.5% property tax increase affects the “average home”. This ‘average home’ includes both single-family homes and multi-family units such as townhouses and apartments. In 2026, the average home is valued at \$1.04 million. A 3.5% property tax increase represents an increase of about \$101.

Water and sewer rate increases remain unchanged from what Council approved in December. 2026 water and sewer rates will increase by 4.5% and 6.05% respectively. With tax and utilities combined, the total expected 2026 increase for an average home with water and sewer service is \$181, or 4.1%.

Public Engagement:

Public engagement and review of community feedback will take place prior to bringing the Financial Plan Bylaw forward for Council consideration. Engagement in this next phase will include an online feedback form, with hard copy versions available, running from February 25 to March 29, 2026. In addition, a minimum of 5 budget pop-up sessions will be held at various locations throughout the community to gather input and feedback.

Staff will promote the budget engagement through the City’s social media and print materials and by circulating a mailout to all households summarizing the budget highlights and encouraging participation in the pop-up events and online survey. Staff are focused on reaching diverse audiences by targeting pop up events where community members gather, going beyond City facilities to ensure a broad spectrum of participation and awareness raising.

As noted above, the 2026-2030 budget and proposed tax rate has been developed with a priority on affordability for residents and in the context of significant constraints to growth, the need to manage risk, and by identifying efficiencies in City operations. Engagement findings help inform Council’s final decisions regarding the adoption of the 2026-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw and Tax Rate Bylaw. Phase one of public engagement began in Fall 2025 with the release of a “Budget Talks” video series through the City’s website and social media platforms and included an invitation for residents to engage with the City at budget@mapleridge.ca. In addition, a quantitative public opinion survey of more than 700 residents took place from October to November 2025. The survey provided a snapshot of residents’ priorities, perceptions and attitudes about quality of life, municipal services, infrastructure investment and the City’s long-term direction. These findings were considered by staff in the development of the proposed financial plan and were presented to Council in January 2026 and circulated via the City’s website. Further engagement findings will be used to validate the assumptions underlying the budget and identify any areas for adjustments prior to adoption.

Applicable Legislation/Bylaw/Policy:

Once the business planning process is complete and final BC Assessment figures, 2025 year-end results, and 2025 capital carry-forwards are confirmed, staff will bring forward the Financial Plan and Property Tax Rate Bylaw for Council’s consideration in April.

CONCLUSION:

Affordability has been the primary driver throughout this process. Staff have worked to balance cost pressures, service delivery expectations, and long-term financial sustainability while continuing the detailed review of revenues and expenditures that began last year.

Through these efforts, enough adjustments were identified to fund the most critical decision packages while maintaining a reduced tax increase target.

A 3.5% property tax increase places Maple Ridge among the lower increases compared with similar municipalities and supports Council's direction to maintain services while being mindful of residents' financial pressures.

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Planning

Attachments: (A) Attachment 1 – 2026 Ongoing Decision Packages

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2026-2030 Financial Plan Update (February).docx
Attachments:	- (A) Attachment 1 – 2026 Ongoing Decision Packages.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Feb 11, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Trevor Thompson, Chief Financial Officer

Carolyn Mushata, Director of Legislative Services and Corporate Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer