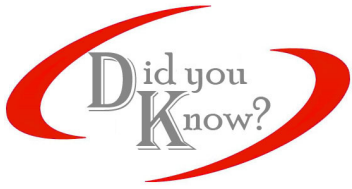




2022/23 Budget Highlights

Fullerton's Creek
Conservation Park

Town of Stratford



The Town of Stratford budget once again does not include an increase for Stratford Utility customers. After a year of pumping the town's sewage to the Charlottetown Pollution Control Plant, we are pleased to see the results of our collective efforts in conservation. Despite new development growth in the Town and increased connections to our water and sewer systems, the overall volume of sewage treated at the CPCP this past year was slightly less than anticipated. Please continue be mindful of how much liquid is leaving your home and entering our system, making changes where you can - every drop saved counts! Consider using that leftover water in your cup to water a plant, shorten your shower time by a minute or two, and check that your sump pump isn't illegally connected to the Town's sewer system. Be sure to have a water audit completed if you haven't already and learn even more ways to save. Your cooperation is appreciated!

It is my pleasure to highlight for residents the 2022/23 Town of Stratford Budget. This budget contains no tax increases to residential or commercial rates, and there will be no increase in our Stratford Utility charges for the second year in a row.

However, the Town of Stratford continues to face significant pressure from growth. The growth we are experiencing, while positive for our community, places pressure on our finances. With growth comes the need to provide additional infrastructure, programming, and services, all of which require additional revenue to deliver. Growth does not directly relate to increased revenue for the Town, as one might assume, but requires the Town to deliver expanded services including water and sewer infrastructure, trails and sidewalks, increased recreation and culture programming, and fire protection, among others, in order for the growth to occur. These come at an expense that is not equal to the growth revenue.

We continue to negotiate alongside our fellow Island municipalities for a new revenue sharing agreement with the Province of PEI and remain hopeful that a fresh approach can be found which will provide a long-term model that is predictable, stable and fair.

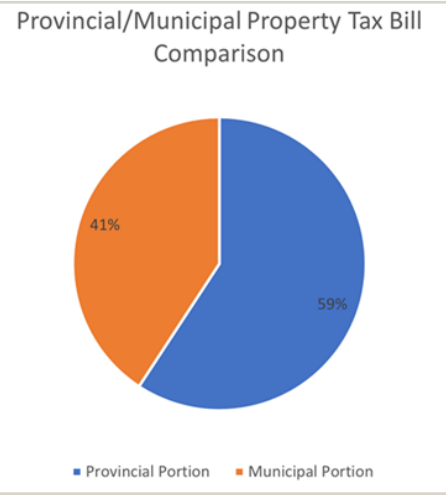
As we look forward to the next 12 months, the Town of Stratford has many exciting projects underway, as well as through private development planned to take place in our community. Some of these will be highlighted in more detail on the following pages but include the Michael Thomas Waterfront Park, Community Campus, the start of the Pondsides Watershed restoration project, additional Town staff being hired, continued energy and water conservation programs; and much more!

The biggest asset our community has is our residents. We thank those who participated in our recent draft budget presentation and provided their feedback to us. We also thank residents for their budget requests, some of which we have been able to incorporate at this time, and others we will review for future consideration. We hope that all residents will continue to be proud to call Stratford home, and that we are building a community not only for today, but for tomorrow as well. With many things on our horizon, our community is poised to transition to a fully-serviced community in the coming years, one that continues to welcome and celebrate our diversity. We are truly building the best community possible!

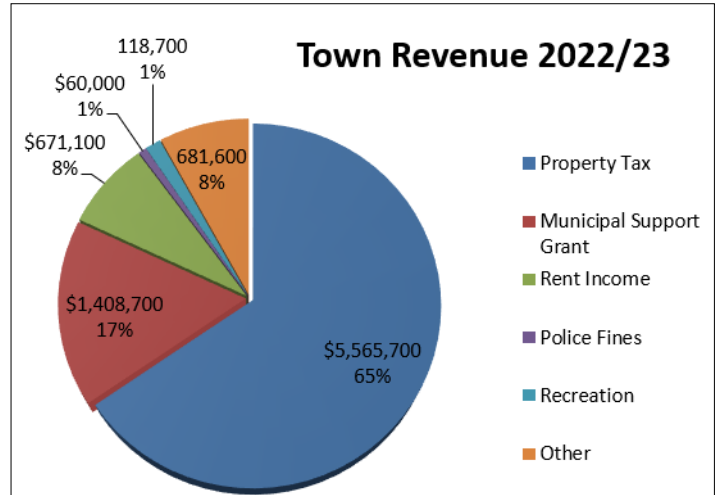


Revenue and expenses

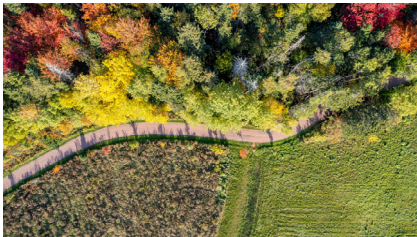
The 2022/23 Town of Stratford budget forecasts revenue of \$8,505,800 which includes government transfers of \$1,408,700 and expenses of \$8,499,000, resulting in a surplus of \$6,800. The



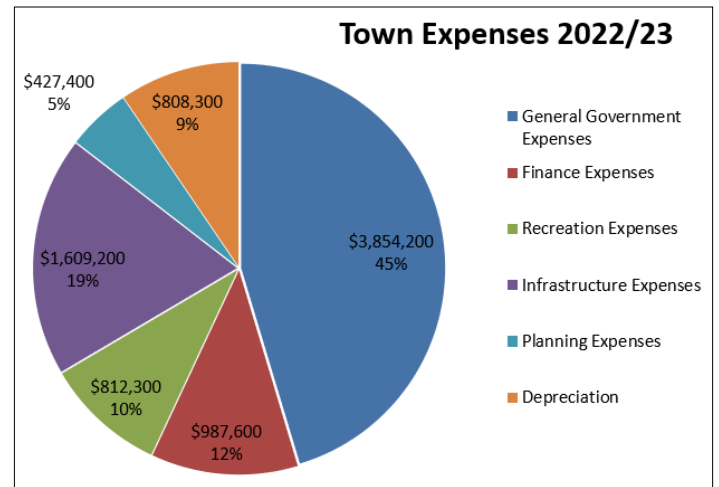
Town of Stratford, like all Island municipalities, are limited in the sources of revenue available and, like others, rely primarily on property taxes, utility charges and fees to pay for services and infrastructure. With no tax increases, your Town Council and staff will continue to make necessary investments in our community while still managing to expand some services as well. We will work within the amount of revenue available to us in the upcoming year and manage our expenses. This is our commitment to you.



This budget includes continued investments in our parks, green spaces and environment, in our active transportation, sidewalks and trail networks, and in our people. The past year has once again seen growth in the numbers of people using our outdoor spaces, including the newly opened multi-use path along Keppoch Road. The increased usage has demonstrated the need in this area, and now completes a loop connecting our community. We look forward to further investments this coming year including those recently announced by the Province of PEI related to the roundabout project and Trans Canada Highway improvements. The addition of active transportation along this busy stretch will further enhance the completed dedicated lane across the Hillsborough Bridge. We thank the Province of PEI for their support of our community.



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Capital Budgets

The Town's capital budget is \$19,964,800, which after infrastructure funding and other funding partners in the amount of \$15,058,600, will have a net cost of \$4,906,200. Funding for Town capital includes \$2,794,400 in New Deal Gas Tax Funding, \$10,512,100 in Investing in Canada funding and \$1,752,000 in other funding. The Town will use the surplus from 2021/22 to reduce our capital financing.



The Utility Capital Budget is \$2,977,100 of which the Town will receive infrastructure funding of \$238,200 from Municipal Strategic Component Funding and \$1,455,200 from the Investing in Canada Fund for a net capital of \$1,283,700.

Community Campus

Last year the Town of Stratford finalized the purchase of the Community Campus land. Applications for funding have been submitted to begin developing the property during the 2022/23 budget year with the work to design and construct required roads and trails; water and sewer; a solar array to offset our energy outputs; and electrical distribution. The



Town has also entered into a lease agreement with Island Gymnastics Academy who have applied for their own funding to construct a larger facility on the Stratford Community Campus than they currently operate out of. Many

other organizations have expressed similar interest and the Town of Stratford will continue to work with these groups where possible for the development of recreational and cultural infrastructure on the Community Campus.

The Stratford Community Campus Master Plan has recently been completed by our consultant. The plan will be released to the public in the near future and includes a site plan with elements and amenities laid out in accordance with their relationship to one another, and showing where the roads, water and sewer services, electrical and communication services, stormwater infrastructure, and active transportation infrastructure will be located, following the natural topography to the extent possible. The plan also includes a phasing scheme to enable the campus to be developed in an orderly fashion, however funding opportunities and community needs may also dictate the development.

This property will become a focal point of our community in the future and also include the previously announced high school by the Province of PEI. In time, the Community Campus will provide Stratford residents with a recreational, cultural and social hub that will provide physical, social and mental health benefits.

Michael Thomas Waterfront Park

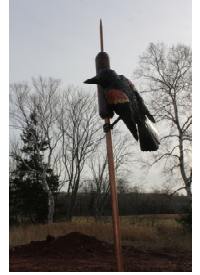
The upcoming year will be an exciting one for the Town of Stratford as we look forward to the anticipated completion of the first phase of the new park on our waterfront. Our work-plan includes the installation of



a boardwalk to allow residents to access this space on our waterfront. The decommissioning of the lagoons is also creating renewed interest in the commercial lands around the waterfront park.

Arts Investments

The 2022/23 Town of Stratford budget includes an increase in funding for public art. This will allow for the procurement of more substantive art pieces and takes into consideration the rising cost of goods and services. The 2022/23 budget also includes a new bursary available to Stratford artists.



Pondside Watershed Restoration

Funding has been received to allow the Town of Stratford to begin work on the Pondside Watershed. Work will include dredging both Moore's and Kelly's ponds, and the rehabilitation of the wetland and buffer zones surrounding the ponds. This project has been on the Town's workplan for a number of years and we are excited to see it funded and moving forward at this time.

Investments in Staffing Resources

As the Town of Stratford continues to grow, some identified staffing resource investments are being made in the upcoming year. The Town of Stratford budget includes the addition of a 36 week position in the Planning Department, a full time Information Technology position to eliminate the current contract for related services, a full and part time position to provide custodial services by Town staff rather than as a private contract, and an additional staff person to assist with fall, winter and spring maintenance and expanded services.

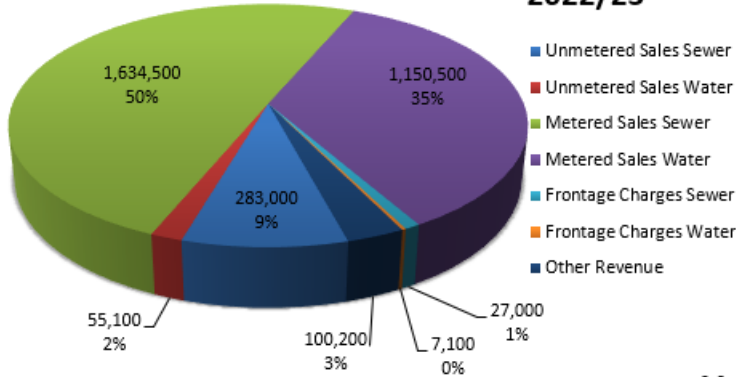
Other Highlights

- Continued investment in active transportation including a paved multi-use path on Kinlock Road from JK Beauty Lane to the TCH
- Solar panel installation at Stratford Emergency Services Centre (subject to funding)
- Purchase of a new electric vehicle to add to the Town's fleet
- Implementation of additional supports identified in the first annual business survey
- Town operational review
- Continued implementation of and reporting on the progress made in the Town's Community Energy Plan
- Power connection installed at Stratford Community Gardens
- Stratford Youth Centre introduction of the Cheryl Duffy Bursary
- An anticipated return to full-scale in-person events and activities

Utility Update

The Stratford Utility operates on a cash recovery basis and as such, the Town continually analyzes expenses to ensure that the rates for customers are equitable while being sufficient to meet our long term goals.

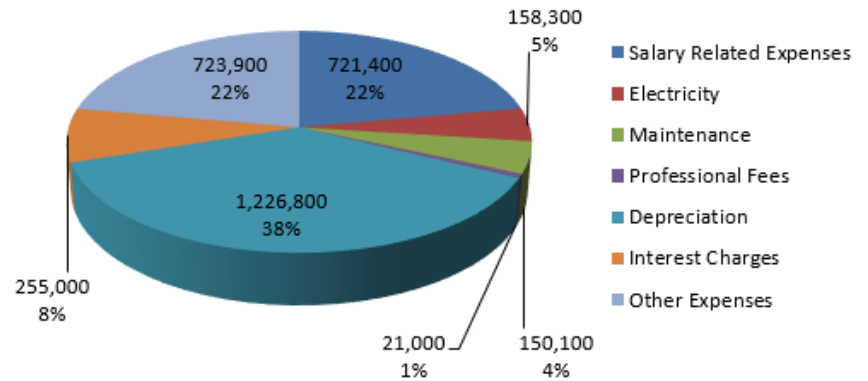
Utility Revenue 2022/23



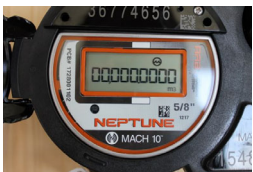
This past year the Stratford Utility Corporation, and ultimately all residents, reached a milestone as the Town’s sewage began successful pumping to the Charlottetown Pollution Control Plant, allowing a large portion of the land on the waterfront to be developed in a signature park. In 2020 a comprehensive review of water and sewer expenses as well as a five year projected capital plan was completed and these projections are run through a utility rate model. For a second year in a row the upcoming budget will see no increase to water or sewer rates for Town of Stratford Utility customers. Stratford Utility customers continue to demonstrate their support by limiting their personal use of water where possible, and supporting conservation methods and programs.

Further budget investments include an additional water reservoir tower to supply domestic and fire protection for our growing community, and upgrades to the Corish sewage pump station and forcemain, with the ultimate goal to redirect the Corish station flows away from the Pondsides station and into the gravity trunk main instead. Pending funding, the completion of upgrades to the Bunbury sewage pumping station to accommodate the current and future growth in that area will also take place.

Utility Expenses 2022/23



The Utility will continue to implement the inflow and infiltration reduction program as a means to minimize the amount of water entering the sewer system that does not require treatment. Since we are now pumping our sewage to Charlottetown, this work is even more important to complete, and will reduce the amount of surface and groundwater seeping into the sewer system. The Utility continues to monitor and review the sewer system to identify areas that require attention and repairs. In 2021, we have been able to rehabilitate 210 meters of sewer by using innovative technology where the existing pipe was lined through manhole access with no excavation was required. We will continue to look for opportunities to use this technology where possible and minimize both expense and interruption of service to our customers.



The Town of Stratford and Stratford Area Watershed Improvement Group continue to provide Stratford Utility customers with a free in-home water audit. The program aims to teach residents how to read their water meter and check regularly for leaks in their home, to educate residents about how much water they are using and provide homeowners with recommendations on how to reduce their water consumption.

Closing

In closing, on behalf of all members of Council, I thank residents for their support. You should be proud of the work undertaken in this budget. With no tax increases we have still managed to expand some services and deliver necessary investments and improvements as required. As your Council, and alongside Town staff, we continue to work hard on your behalf every day. There is a tremendous amount of optimism in the air around Stratford with lots of exciting, positive changes coming to our Town. We hope that along with us, you will continue to be proud to live here, and we eagerly look forward to seeing residents in person soon.



Respectfully submitted,
Gail MacDonald, Chair Finance & Technology