

2026 Proposed Business Plan & Budget
Engage Tecumseh Questions and Comments

mmb | Posted on Feb 4, 2026

Developers should bear the cost of Development not the residents who, for the most part, are against the incessant development that has been pushed under the guise of (in my opinion) a non-existent 'housing crisis' in the Town of Tecumseh. NO to increases in water rates to cover the developers costs and usage. Much hay was made regarding 'affordability' when trying to push through densification of housing - what about affordability NOW when proposing tax increases such as these??

Town of Tecumseh Response

The proposed municipal general tax rate increase is 2.85%. The 2026 Proposed Business Plan and Budget identifies the 2026 budget drivers primarily being:

- Contributions to the Town's capital reserves – 0.99% - in the 2026 budget, a \$450,000 increase in annual contributions to capital reserves is proposed to support replacement/construction of capital assets. Note that construction costs of new assets that support growth, are funded primarily from Development Charges which are paid by new development. Capital costs that benefit existing property owners are borne by current taxpayers. This includes repairs/expansion/replacement of existing capital assets like roads, stormwater pump stations, sewer and water pipes, etc.
- Inflation – 0.46% of the tax rate increase is for things like contractual wage increases, contractual increases for third party service providers such as OPP policing and garbage collection, as well as costs for insurance/utilities, etc. and
- Operations – 1.40% - includes staffing enhancements, increases to technology costs related to software licensing, and increases for facility and fleet maintenance costs.

N&A | Posted on Feb 3, 2026

This budget is out of touch with the realities most people are facing with the cost of living. The proposed increases such as to the water usage and waste water usage is a nice way to hide that we will be paying more in fees for water than for actual water being used. The increase proposed to property taxes and raises in no way matches increases in salaries to the average resident. Also, why are we paying for development. These developments are not supported by the residents of the affected areas and have caused nothing but road closures, street congestion and delays, dirt and grime on my home and cars and noise pollution at all hours of the day. We should be reducing our costs and trying to make life in Tecumseh as affordable as possible.

Town of Tecumseh Response

Please refer to the response to the comment by mmb of Feb. 4th explaining the budget drivers for the 2026 budget.

The Town's water and wastewater rates are guided by the Town's Water and Wastewater Rate Study (Study), most recently updated in 2023. This Study calls for annual increases of 3% for both water and wastewater rates for the study period (2023-2027). The Study guides user rates, such that user charges collected are sufficient to fully recover the cost of both water and wastewater services, and that there is no reliance on the general property tax levy to fund these services.

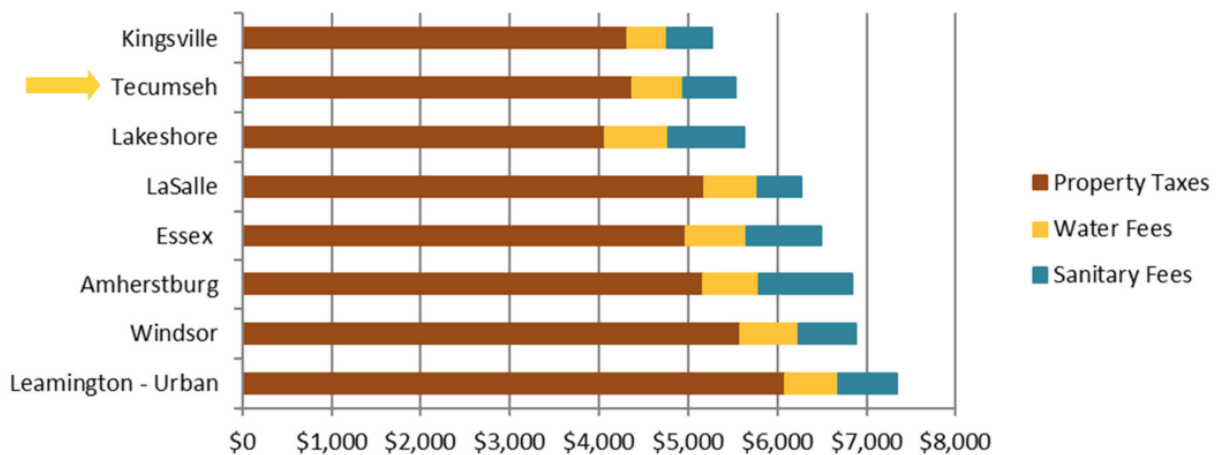
During the Town's annual budget process, both operating and capital costs incurred and projected are reviewed to assess if the user rate increases forecasted within the Study remain sufficient.

To date, the Study recommendation for water rates continues to be satisfactory, and so the 2026 Budget includes a 3% increase.

Wastewater rates are proposed to increase by 5%, instead of the 3% recommended within the Study. This is due to significant sanitary treatment cost increases imposed by the City of Windsor. The majority of the Town's wastewater is treated at the City of Windsor's Little River Pollution Control Plant. The City updates sanitary treatment cost rates annually, based on the prior year costs incurred. Annual treatment cost rates have increased 25% per year for 2022, 2023 and 2024 (reflected in our 2023, 2024 and 2025 rates from the City) for the Little River Plant due primarily to extensive capital investment recently completed and planned for the plant. The Town's budget for treatment costs has therefore increased from \$1.3M in 2022 to \$2.5M in 2026 in response to these rate increases. This has required increasing rates by 5% (instead of 3%) to offset increasing costs. Costs will continue to be closely monitored when considering future rate adjustments. This treatment cost increase is not related to future development. Cost increases related to plant expansion due to growth, would be covered through Development Charges. Cost increases due to plant operating and capital replacement are borne by existing users and therefore reflected in the proposed user rates.

With respect to affordability, please see the chart below that compares the overall tax and rate costs in Tecumseh to our neighbouring municipalities in Windsor-Essex:

Combined Tax, Water and Sanitary Burden Comparison *



* - Property Taxes calculated based on home with an assessed value of \$275,000.
Water and Sanitary Fees based on monthly consumption of 20 cubic meters.

** - Windsor taxes calculated using 2024 rate.

TTTeno | Posted on Jan 28, 2026

We spend SO MUCH on governance - salaries, legal HR, etc. Example: in 2024 the CAO's salary was \$262,300! That's more than the Premier of Ontario gets paid. The Director of Planning is paid \$193,828. They both get double digit raises. In the last 5 years the number of employees on the Sunshine list increased from 18 to 30, with an average salary of \$137,949. Compare that to the fact that 85% of the people in Tecumseh make less than \$100,000 with the majority of THOSE folks making below \$50,000!!! Why are we paying our town employees so much and we don't even make that in salary ourselves?! And now, for 2026 they want to ADD more employees to the payroll. Why? We have a by-law concerning employee salaries and one of that factors to be examined is the fiscal position of the Town. Well, if we have to raise taxes every year and take out loans,, then our fiscal position is not stable and we should not be awarding double digit raises to certain town employees. In the case of the Planning Department, they routinely hire consultants to do the work for them (about \$300,000 was spent on consultants on the HAF initiatives). Why can't they do the work of the consultants?

Then the budget calls for almost \$950,000 for memberships and professional development fees for these highly compensated employees. What is all that for?

Now, take a look at the ludicrous entry for a new employee - a 7-month contract for someone to encourage voting in our municipal election! We received a grant of \$15,000 and we are

then spending \$17,000 more to fund this contract. WHY DO WE NEED THIS? Rent a sign for the front of town hall and tell people when the election is and to vote. Is that so hard??? Put it on the website. Then be done with it. We don't need to pay a new employee to do this.

We employ about 250 people (including part time summer students) and the budget for wages and benefits is \$14.46 MILLION. This is an increase of \$1,107,000 from 2025. How can a town of about 24,000 people afford this?

Under Mr. McNamara's budget (he used his Strong Mayor Powers) he is raising taxes...probably to pay for the exorbitant salaries for the Town employees, especially the directors. As well, his pet legacy building project of widening sidewalks so he can call them trails was millions of dollars over budget in 2025, yet he plans to continue to do it. Perfectly fine sidewalks are being widened simply to call them 'trails' and we have to pay for it. (and we homeowners will then have more snow shoveling to do on these wider 'trails'.) What an absolute waste of money, energy and time. We should not be funding his vanity projects. Under the General Operating Costs, there is over \$271,000 for "other" . It would be nice to know what this is.

The budget calls for about \$250,000 for legal fees - what is the Administration doing wrong that it needs to budget a quarter of a million dollars to pay for lawyers?

There is money allotted to "Development Services". In 2024/25 there was 3% of the budget going to this department? What does this department even do?- we already have a Planning department that is supposed to work with developers? What is this money for?

Look carefully at the first "Strategic Priority" of the Budget. It is a sly, slickly worded improper goal designed to bolster the Mayor's never ending quest to cram in more and more housing. The priority says "Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth". What nonsense. We already HAVE a prosperous, livable community - we don't need to ACHIEVE it. This goal is not needed - but if Council wants to have a goal then it should read: "CONSIDER moderate growth in Tecumseh which will not hinder or change our small town character, and which is driven by what the residents want, not a federal or provincial government".

Mr. McNamara's budget is overblown and wasteful. It needs culling to cut out the extra spending.

Town of Tecumseh Response

With respect to the comments concerning governance salaries:

- Compensation for Non-Bargaining Unit employees is governed by Policy 67- Compensation and Salary Administration. The policy was most recently revised and approved by Council on March 11, 2025. It provides for an objective, market-based means of determining employee compensation.

- Compensation for bargaining unit members is determined through negotiations with our labour partners and formalized in Collective Bargaining Agreements.
- Annually, Town Management evaluates staffing requirements based on the outcome of recent organizational reviews, service delivery reviews and special circumstances (like the Municipal Election) and recommends adjustments/enhancements to our workforce accordingly.
- With specific reference to the requested one-time contract position of Voter Engagement Specialist, in 2022 Voter turnout in the Tecumseh municipal election was at 28% which was below the provincial average and lower than previous recent Tecumseh municipal elections. Feedback received from residents coming out of the last election indicated frustration in not knowing who their candidates are and/or how or when to vote. A low voter turnout is not an acceptable standard for municipal elections and so the Voter Engagement Specialist (temporary contract) position is designed to assess and implement new and creative initiatives to increase voter turnout and civic engagement for the 2026 Municipal & School Board Election. These new initiatives will serve as a template that will continue to engage and attract interest on the part of the residents in their local government.

On the matter of the Town's financial position, specifically the reference to borrowing money equating to unstable financials:

- It is not only common but also quite reasonable to borrow funds and repay over a long-term, such as 20 or 25 years, for the cost of long-lived infrastructure. For example, storm pump station improvements totalling over \$30M will benefit property owners for decades. The Town has a successful capital reserve program that was initiated in 2004 that has allowed for Town infrastructure to be maintained at high standards and provided for investment in new infrastructure while requiring minimal borrowing, however investments of this magnitude typically require long-term debt.

With respect to the reference to \$950,000 for memberships and professional development:

- Corporate-wide budget for 2026 is:
 - \$79,000 for memberships
 - \$334,000 for professional development
- Professional development is approved in accordance with Policy 3-Education Policy. The purpose of education is to encourage, support, and assist employees enroll in courses of professional development deemed to be appropriate by the Corporation, the assimilation and passing of which will contribute to the employee's effectiveness and directly benefit the Town. Funds are included in each annual budget for this purpose, subject to budget approval and the Corporation's applicable policy.
- Membership fees support the Town's wide range of professions held by staff ensuring that they stay abreast of advancements in their respective fields, maintain licensing requirements in applicable fields, and avail themselves of networking opportunities, resources and a variety of tools for professional development that directly benefit the Town.

- Memberships and professional development are a vital component of fulfilling several strategic priorities within the People Strategy as approved by Council in October 2022. Professional development/memberships ensure that the organization develops leadership capacity and capability, enables the development of a high performance and value-based culture, and retention strategies.

On the matter of widening sidewalks to call them trails:

- The Town's Transportation Master Plan included a recommended Active Transportation Plan that identified the framework for both on-road and off-road active transportation facilities. The recent multi-use trail projects in 2024 & 2025 on Lesperance Road were identified within the Master Plan and the Town was successful in receiving higher level government funding for these projects.
- 2024/2025 Lesperance Road Multi-Use Path (CR22 to CR42) – This project included the installation of a multi-use path on Lesperance Road for an approximate length of 3-km. The path design features components such as accessible landings at the County Road intersections, improved street lighting, and improvements to crossings at side streets, the installation of a pedestrian crossing near Abraham Cole Park, connectivity with the future pathways along County Road 42, and the installation of trees along the trail where possible. The project financials at the time of tendering were \$2.6M with a \$0.46M grant from the Federal and Provincial governments.
- 2025/2026 Lesperance Road (First to Riverside) and Little River Boulevard (Lesperance to Gauthier) Multi-Use Trails – This project include the installation of a multi-use trail on Lesperance Road for an approximate length of 2.2-km, and on Little River Boulevard for an approximate length of 0.3-km. Design features included accessible landings at street intersections, improved street lighting, improved crossings at side streets, connectivity with other existing pathways, Town Hall parking lot improvements, significant tree plantings, and beautification between McNorton Street and First Street in accordance with the Mainstreet Beautification Project. The multi-use trail network was integrated with proposed improvements to Col. Paul Poisson Park as well as with the Town Hall/OPP/Fire Station One Campus. The project financials at the time of tendering were \$6.5M with a \$2.6M Federal grant, a \$0.24M Provincial grant, and a project contingency of \$1.09M.

With respect to the General Operating Costs, other of \$271,000, this covers a broad array of items, including:

- Public Relations – for educational promotions such as Fire Prevention Week and Local Government Week and recognitions including Volunteer Appreciation as well as community relations for the Community Policing initiatives of the Essex County OPP Detachment Board – North.
- Advertising – for items such as annual recreational programming, annual garbage collection calendar, notices for public works' roadside spray programs and one-time costs associated with the upcoming municipal and school board elections.

- Clothing budget for outdoor workers including public works and recreation labourers and crossing guards, per the current Collective Agreements.
- Property taxes owed by the Town to the County and Province for municipal-owned taxable properties, such as the Town's storm water pump stations.

Regarding the matter of the Town's legal fees:

- The Town's Professional Fee – Legal annual budgetary allocation encompasses all Town departments' legal expenses relating to legal claims involving the Town, enforcement, possible court trial matters and litigation, potential for Ontario Land Tribunal & Ontario Municipal Board appeals, contracts and negotiations, and dispute resolution.

Regarding the question relating to the Development Services department and what it does, this department delivers the following services:

- Land use policy and planning services for the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law and development applications (zoning, plans of subdivision, plans of condominium, official plan amendments, site plan control), and support to the Town's Committee of Adjustment which is responsible for deciding applications for minor variance and consent to sever land.
- Building services is responsible for administering the Ontario Building Code, including development plans review, building permit issuance and inspections, issuance/inspections of other permits (demolition, fences, signs, etc.)
- Administration of the Town's transit service
- Local economic development.

In reference to Mayor using Strong Mayor Powers to raise taxes:

- Town Administration prepares the budget based on the delivery of programs and services approved by Council and supported by Council's Strategic Priorities.
- Strong Mayor Power legislation was imposed on the Town of Tecumseh by the Province, as with many other municipalities, specifically to advance Provincial priorities. The Town must follow Strong Mayor Powers legislation.
- With respect to the 2026 Proposed Budget, the document details the new budget process whereby Administration prepares the proposed budget then reviews with the Mayor, allowing for the Mayor to make changes. The result after those changes becomes the Mayor's Proposed Budget. See budget document pages 306-313 where this process is described including the changes made by the Mayor, which resulted in a reduction to the tax levy.

Regarding concerns regarding the Strategic Priority of Council relating to growth, the Province has set a goal of getting at least 1.5 million homes built by 2031. Every municipality has a role to play in achieving this target. Moreover, the Strong Mayors Act confers strong mayor powers on over 160 municipalities in Ontario, including Tecumseh. This legislation requires mayors to use these powers to implement Provincial priorities, including:

- Building 1.5 million new homes by 2031 and
- Constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing, transit, roads, utilities, and servicing.

In accordance with the Planning Act, planning decisions at the local level must be consistent with Provincial Planning Statement (PPS). The PPS establishes that the Town shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area. The PPS further sets out that the Town shall:

- maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are designated and available for residential development; and
- maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned, including units in draft approved or registered plans.

Reene | Posted on Jan 27, 2026

This is downright awful. The majority of people in this hamlet did not want this development and here we are having to pay for it.

Town of Tecumseh Response

Please refer to the response to the comment by mmb of Feb. 4th explaining the budget drivers for the 2026 budget.

Jim | Posted on Jan 27, 2026

The green bins can go back 1 out of 30 of us use them and we all have composters and garburators in our houses. The green bins in the summer will be full of maggots and knowbody will use them.

Town of Tecumseh Response

FAQ issued by the County of Essex and EWSWA is posted on Engage Tecumseh.

The Province of Ontario mandated the collection of food and organic waste through curbside pick-up, public drop-off sites or community composting programs for urban settlement areas in municipalities of a certain population and/or population density. In our County, Amherstburg, LaSalle, Leamington and Tecumseh triggered these population and/or density thresholds. The mandate required these local municipalities to achieve target diversion rates of 50 per cent generated by single-family dwellings in urban settlement areas by 2025. Accordingly, there is no 'opt-out' of the green bin program.

The Green Bin program will help to:

- Create renewable energy and fertilizer for next year's crops.
- Reduce greenhouse gases that are created when organics are unnecessarily landfilled.
- Extend the life of our local, Essex-Windsor Regional Landfill, which avoids high costs of siting and constructing a new one, estimated in excess of \$1B.
- Save taxpayers money that is spent on garbage services.
- Foster a shared sense of environmental responsibility to support this agriculturally-rich region.

Kingsville, Lakeshore and Essex are not yet required to collect food and organic waste or meet diversion targets, but these local municipalities were included in the regional program. County Council voted on March 16, 2022, to include all County of Essex municipalities in a regional organics program. Similarly, the provincial mandate does not apply to rural settlement areas yet. However, County Council voted on June 5, 2024, to include both rural and urban residential properties in the program.

The Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA) manages the Green Bin Program. The EWSWA website provides resources on various topics for Green Bins including seasonal tips to minimize odors and ensure all materials are emptied properly:

<https://www.ewswa.org/curbside-collection/green-bin/seasonal-tips-green-bin/>

A detailed FAQ about the Green Bin program structure and funding model is available at <https://www.countyofessex.ca/news/posts/faq-green-bin-program-in-the-county-of-essex/>

If you have any questions about billing for the organics program, please email coeinfo@countyofessex.ca.

If you have any questions about the Green Bin program, please contact EWSWA via its website (<https://www.ewswa.org/>) or phone 1-800-563-3377.

JOANNE ANDKILDE | Posted on Jan 27, 2026

Why are we spending \$30,000 on automatic announcements for the underutilized transit system? What exactly will this system do?

Town of Tecumseh Response

The automated announcement systems are assistive technologies required for public transit systems in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Persons with visual impairment will be able to hear an announcement when approaching the next stop, and for persons who are deaf, the next stop will be visually identified.

Joanne Andkilde | Posted on Jan 22, 2026

Since the town no longer has to cover the cost of disposal for the items in the green bin. Why wasn't that cost savings passed on to the tax payer?

FAQ issued by the County of Essex and EWSWA is posted on Engage Tecumseh

Please refer to the response to the comment by Jim of Jan. 27th explaining the Green Bin Program.

At its meeting of June 5, 2024, County Council reviewed a range of funding models for taxpaying residents of the County's seven municipalities, and ultimately endorsed a hybrid model, which combines the County levy-based funding model with a user-fee methodology to cover new expenses associated with the Green Bin program. The Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority manages the Green Bin Program.

A detailed FAQ (including further information regarding the funding model) is available at <https://www.countyofessex.ca/news/posts/faq-green-bin-program-in-the-county-of-essex/>

If you have any questions about billing for the organics program, please email coeinfo@countyofessex.ca.

If you have any questions about the Green Bin program, please contact EWSWA via its website (www.ewswa.org) or phone 1-800-563-3377.

The Town's current waste collection contract (garbage and yard waste) is in place until January 2027. The Town's 2026 Garbage Disposal budget should see savings from a reduced tonnage as property owners participate in the Green Bin program.