



What We Heard: Fundy Albert 2026 Budget Survey

*A Public Summary of Community Feedback
156 Responses Collected – November 2025*

Introduction

The Municipality of Fundy Albert invited residents and business owners to participate in a Budget Survey to help guide the development of the 2026 municipal budget. The survey asked respondents to identify their priorities, share their views on service delivery, and provide comments on where the municipality should focus its resources.

This “What We Heard” report provides a transparent summary of the feedback received. It reflects the voices, concerns, and expectations of people across Fundy Albert’s former villages and rural communities.

Key Takeaways at a Glance

- Property taxes, infrastructure, and governance are the top issues for residents.
- Roads and water systems are the greatest sources of concern and dissatisfaction.
- Fire protection and community events receive the highest satisfaction ratings.
- Residents want fairness across wards, especially rural areas with fewer services.
- There is strong demand for improved communication and transparency.
- Most residents want taxes reduced or frozen, not increased.

1. Who Responded

- 156 participants, with 99% being residents or business owners in Fundy Albert.
- A majority of respondents are long-term residents, with 43% living here for 21+ years.
- The largest age group was 55+ (49%), which influences expectations related to stability, infrastructure, and taxation.

What This Means:

Residents who participated are deeply invested in the long-term future of Fundy Albert and expect visible progress in core services.



2. Top Issues Identified

Respondents were asked to select the three most important issues facing the municipality.

Top-Ranked Concerns

1. **Property taxes (69%)**
2. **Governance & transparency (57%)**
3. **Cost of living (46%)**
4. **Infrastructure & roads (43%)**
5. **Economic development (26%)**
6. **Housing affordability (23%)**

In Their Words:

Residents want to understand *how* decisions are made, *where* dollars go, and *why* tax rates vary so much by area.

3. Satisfaction with Municipal Services

Respondents rated several municipal services on quality and timeliness.

Highest Satisfaction

- **Fire services**
- **Community events**
- **Museum, culture, and library services**

Lowest Satisfaction

- **Roads, culverts, ditching, and general infrastructure**
- **Water and wastewater systems in former villages**
- **By-law enforcement**

What This Means:

Emergency and community-based services meet expectations, but essential infrastructure and rural maintenance need improvement.



4. Rural Service Concerns

Feedback shows a clear divide between former villages and rural/LSD areas.

Key Findings

- 74% are unaware of how budgets for rural services are allocated.
- 74% believe rural areas do not receive enough funding.
- 76% have not noticed improvements in rural areas, even with higher taxes.

Recurring Themes

- Calls for fair taxation and recognition of service differences.
- Requests for more transparency about where tax dollars go.
- Desire for more visible Public Works activity outside village centres.

In Their Words:

“I get snow plowing and garbage. That’s it. So why am I paying more every year?”

“Lower Coverdale pays the bulk of the taxes and gets the least services.”

“We need fairness and better communication.”

5. What Improvements Residents Want Most

From 126 open-ended responses, the strongest themes were:

1. Roads & Infrastructure

- Paving of streets and rural roads
- Ditching, culvert repair, and flood mitigation
- Clearing trees/brush along roadways
- Road signage and speed control

2. Public Safety

- More RCMP presence
- Better response times
- Speeding enforcement

- Cameras or visible deterrents

3. Water Services

- Consistent pressure
- Water security for droughts
- Fair utilities rates in Alma and Hillsborough

4. Transparency & Trust

- Clear explanations of projects, budgets, and decisions
- Accountability for land sales and tenders
- Improved communication to ALL wards

5. Recreation & Community Life

- Youth programs
- Playgrounds and trails
- More events outside Hillsborough

6. Perceived Value for Tax Dollars

Residents identified which services provide the best and least value.

Best Value

- Snow removal
- Garbage collection
- Road maintenance (where well maintained)
- Fire services

Least Value

- Beautification projects (flowers, banners)
- By-law enforcement
- Arena and pool (mostly from residents outside Hillsborough)
- Economic development office

**What This Shows:**

There is a strong public preference for focusing on core, essential services.

7. Tax Preferences

When asked how the municipality should approach taxes and services:

- 39% want taxes decreased, even if services are reduced.
- 45% want taxes frozen at current levels.
- Only 16% support higher taxes in exchange for more services.

Conclusion:

Public tolerance for tax increases is very low. Any proposed increase must be tied to clear, visible outcomes.

8. Where Residents Think Savings Can Be Found

Open-text responses identified several areas where the municipality could reduce spending:

- Fleet and vehicle purchases
- Administrative and council costs
- Beautification (flowers, banners, mowing)
- Arena and recreation infrastructure
- Contracting out work previously done in-house
- More efficient procurement and cost control

Theme:

Residents want visible fiscal discipline and better explanations for how money is spent.

9. What This Means for the 2026 Budget

Based on the survey, residents want the municipality to:

1. Prioritize Core Infrastructure

- Roads, drainage, culverts
- Reliable water supply
- Rural maintenance consistency



2. Improve Transparency and Communication

- Clear budget summaries
- Updates on completed work
- Fairness in taxation explained
- Public access to tendering and procurement results

3. Demonstrate Value for Tax Dollars

- Focus on essentials
- Show progress on rural services
- Justify major purchases and projects

4. Strengthen Public Safety

- More visibility from RCMP
- Speed mitigation infrastructure
- Support for emergency response services

10. Moving Forward

Council and administration have incorporated this feedback, along with insights gathered through public consultations and input from elected officials, to help shape the 2026 municipal budget and guide our service delivery priorities. Some concerns raised regarding governance and transparency appear to stem from uncertainty about where to access information. **The municipality meets all legislative requirements for public reporting and, in many cases, exceeds them by publishing monthly financial updates, project statuses, tender notices on our website, and Council meeting recordings on YouTube.**

We remain committed to clear, accessible communication and will continue working to ensure information is easy to locate and available as always.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their perspectives; your input directly informs how resources are allocated and helps ensure decisions reflect community priorities.