



MEDIA RELEASE

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December 18, 2025

Budget 2026: Back-to-Basics

Council approves responsible budget with 4.2% tax increase and significant transfer to reserves

Diamond Valley Council has approved the 2026 Operating Budget, delivering a sustainable financial path through organizational restructuring, operational efficiencies, and a disciplined focus on core services.

The approved budget reduces the projected tax increase from 21% to just 4.2% while contributing \$697,204 to reserves—strengthening the Town’s long-term financial resilience and capacity to fund future infrastructure needs.

“This budget reflects responsible choices and a shared commitment to long-term sustainability. Residents sent us a loud and clear message that they did not want big tax increases. We heard them. By making tough but necessary decisions, **we’ve kept taxes affordable and still managed to build meaningful reserves for the future of our community.**” – Mayor Brendan Kelly

Back to Basics

The initial budget projection in November required a 21% tax increase. Early restructuring reduced this to 12%, and further efficiencies brought the final increase to 4.2%—roughly \$11.52 per month for a \$590,000 assessed home (not including provincial requisitions).

Financial Prudence and Reserves

Even with the reduced tax increase, the 2026 budget transfers \$697,204 to reserves, including \$35,000 to the newly created Pool Reserve. This contribution enhances Diamond Valley’s ability to address future capital projects, emergencies, and infrastructure renewal without relying on borrowing or future tax spikes.

Organizational Restructuring

A 20% staff reduction was implemented and supported by organizational restructuring. Changes include a unified Corporate Services Department, streamlined Parks & Recreation Division, integration of OHS into the Public Safety Department, contracting out Water and Wastewater operations, and continued progress toward full cost recovery in utilities.

“We were faced with a challenging task that required difficult decisions,” said CAO Adam Davey. “This back-to-basics budget streamlines processes, creates efficiencies, and positions Diamond Valley to operate from a foundation of affordability and stability.”

2026 Service Level Adjustments

To align with reduced staffing and new operating models, the following strategic adjustments will take effect:

- Closure of the Turner Valley campground beginning in 2026 – the Town will seek a non-profit operator
- End of Town-operated transit service as of December 23, 2025
- Reduced weekend snow clearing of trails and arena staff backup coverage
- Closure of the Turner Valley outdoor rink
- Christmas tree collection moved to a drop-off site
- Municipal communications focused on essential updates
- Reduced Public Works support for third-party events

The full Draft 2 Operating Budget presentation is available at www.diamondvalley.town/Council

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Brendan Kelly
Mayor
Town of Diamond Valley
Info@DiamondValley.town
403-933-4348

Adam Davey
CAO
Town of Diamond Valley
Info@diamondvalley.town
403-933-4348