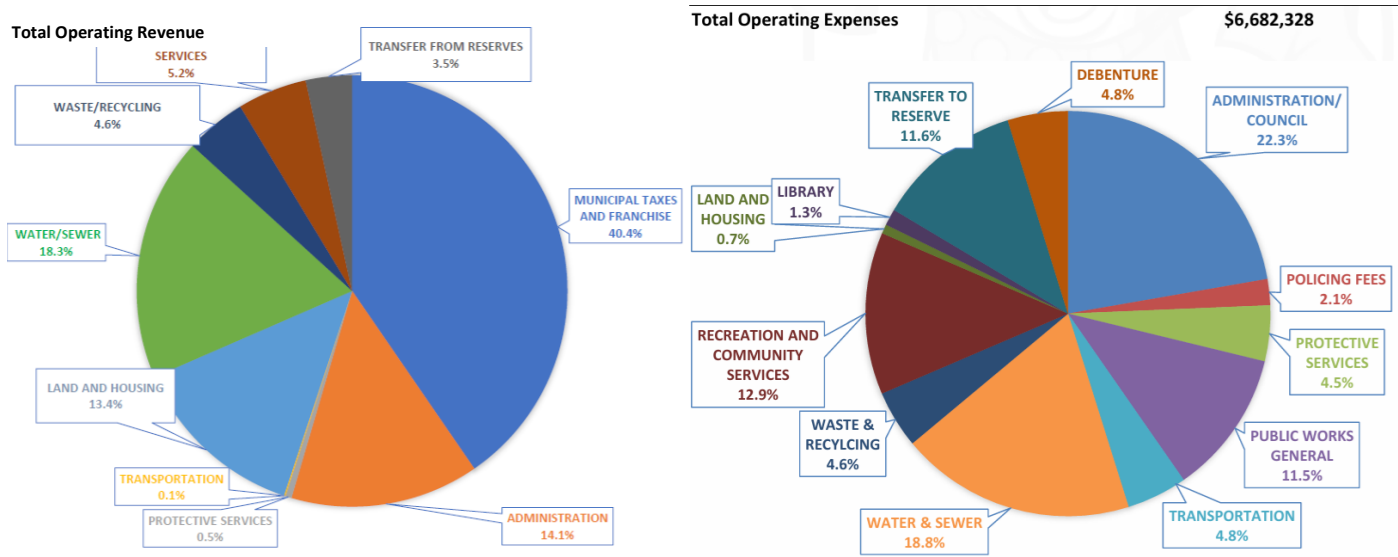


At the March 23rd Council meeting the 2026 Tax Rate Bylaw was given first reading. Deliberations were based on a information from the Assessor that the **average** assessed value of homes in Bow Island had risen by 12%. Council chose to reduce the Residential tax rate by 10% resulting in an **average** increase in the Municipal portion of the residential property tax at 2%, or approximately the rate of inflation. The Assessor's report shows the **average** increase in Commercial property values at 6.8%. The reduction in tax rate puts the Commercial tax increase at an **average** of 6.3%.

The charts below show the revenue and expenses for the \$6.7million operating budget.



This year's Capital budget includes spending on building, roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, recreation and equipment. Of the \$2.1million budget, 58% will be funded by reserves and the remaining 42% from grants. The Town's administration offices have moved to the former Provincial Building, now named the Harry Strom Municipal Building. Younger generations and newcomers might not be familiar with Harry Strom who served our community and the Province for many years. Mr. Strom was born and raised in the Burdett area in 1914 and served in several local organizations before entering provincial politics in 1955. He was the Minister of Agriculture for 4 years in the 60's and became Alberta's ninth (and first Alberta born) Premier in 1968. Premier Strom was respected for his integrity and dedication to public service. He retired from politics in 1973 and passed away in 1984. The Provincial building was dedicated to his memory when it opened in 1984. In recognition of his long service, Council feels it is important to keep his name alive and on our building.

The interior of the building is in very good shape however the grounds have not been well looked after for some time. Many of the trees and shrubs have been neglected and the walkway in front is in dis-repair so please take care when approaching the building. A new sidewalk will be poured, hopefully soon.

FCSS, the Community Resource Centre (CRC) and the Food Bank will be occupying the former Town office building on Centre Street. As their transition moves forward this larger location should help provide enhanced services to the community under one roof and be a great way to help celebrate their 25 years in operation. Congratulations to FCSS for organizing this year's Easter Egg Hunt on a beautiful spring day.

Congratulations also to the Town of Taber for their successful campaign to become this year's Kraft Hockeyville. The \$250,000 grand prize will be a big help in repairing their arena and community centre that were damaged in an explosion earlier this winter.

Let's hope we get some more April showers and get things growing.

Mayor Gordon Reynolds