



RM of Lac du Bonnet unveils proposed 2026 Financial Plan

Learn more about this year's budget and what it includes.

March 25, 2026: The Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet has unveiled its proposed 2026 Financial Plan.

“The annual Financial Plan – the budget – is always the largest project the municipality undergoes in any given year,” Reeve Loren Schinkel said. “The process to create this year’s budget started in fall with strategic planning and is the product of a lot of consideration, internal deliberation, and collaboration between Council and staff.”

[View the proposed 2026 Financial Plan here](#)

“Every budgeting cycle is difficult in its own way,” Reeve Schinkel said. “RM Council and staff are very cognizant that we must provide excellent, cost-effective services to our ratepayers, manage infrastructure and maintenance, pursue ongoing yearly projects to enhance our municipal facilities, and make capital purchases all while providing a balanced budget as required under Provincial legislation.”

Under *The Municipal Act*, the RM is required to adopt a balanced budget, ensuring responsible financial planning and long-term sustainability.

“We have a great respect for our residents’ tax dollars and know they feel the rising costs of so many things just like we do,” Reeve Schinkel said. “It’s our job to allocate every dollar carefully to keep our community running well and our many important projects moving forward. We understand the impact of our decisions on our community, region, and ultimately on our residents’ pocketbooks.”

Costs relating to last May’s wildfire were an ongoing challenge in this budget cycle.

“Last year’s wildfire devastated our municipality,” Reeve Schinkel said. “We are still in the rebuilding stage and have spent \$1.5 million. Although we have been accepted into the Provincial Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) Program, we have only received a pre-payment of just over \$250,000 and the balance is still outstanding. We continue to track our ongoing costs and add to the claim, so with that in mind – and not knowing what will or will not be covered by the DFA program – made this year’s budget extremely difficult.”

Between General Government Services, Transportation Services, Protective Services, Environment Health Services, Public Health and Welfare Services, Economic Development

Services, Fiscal Services, Planning and Development services, and Recreation and Cultural Services, the total budget is **\$9,700,229.37**.

The full proposed 2026 Financial Plan can be viewed any time on our website's [Financial Plan & Audited Statement](#) page. Paper copies are also available at our Administrative Office.

Mill Rate increasing by 1.991%

The 2026 municipal Mill Rate will be **10.093**, a **1.991% increase** from last year.

“Council is very aware of the ongoing rising cost of living and stays very focused on the Mill Rate throughout the budget process,” Reeve Schinkel said. “Over the past several years, we have managed to hold the Mill Rate level or decrease it.”

“However, the wildfire impacts, the unknowns surrounding the DFA, and Council’s need to balance the continued rebuild with reinvesting in reserves and completing key projects has led to us landing on a slight increase,” he continued.

This year, school taxes (which include the Sunrise School Division Tax Mill Rate and the Provincial Education Mill Rate) equal **57.9% of taxes levied**, an increase from last year when they were **56.7%** of taxes levied. The RM is collecting **\$8,154,151.00** in school taxes this year.

“It’s important to remember that the majority of taxes collected are actually school taxes,” Reeve Schinkel said. “Under Provincial legislation, the RM collects taxes on the school division’s behalf and then remits them to the division. We don’t keep those funds, and those taxes are what have the biggest impact on your bottom line.”

Property assessment increasing by less than one percent

The Provincial property assessment is nearly flat, with less than a one per cent increase (.853%).

2025 was a general assessment year and the assessment increased by an average of more than 20 per cent in Lac du Bonnet.

2027 will be the next general assessment year.

RM investing in key projects and purchases in Public Works, Administration, Recreation, and at Lac du Bonnet Regional Airport

Key Public Works projects in the Financial Plan include the excavation and rebuilding of Gauer Road, the completion of the Drifter’s Bend asphaltting project, the addition of a streetlight at Wendigo Road and Provincial Road #313, the design and installation of new Welcome to Lac du Bonnet boundary signs, and the purchase of a new bin truck chassis for the Transfer Station.

Transportation Services – which covers road maintenance and construction, equipment repairs, snow clearing, mowing, brushing, dust control, drainage, culverts, and fuel – is the largest expenditure area at **\$3.013 million** overall. Despite how costs have risen since last year, this year’s Transportation Services budget has decreased slightly from \$3.031 million in 2025.

“The wildfire also pushed back a number of capital projects, so we continued to analyze and have moved these forward in 2026,” Reeve Schinkel said.

Administratively, the Financial Plan includes cybersecurity upgrades, a rural water rate study, and a Manitoba Water Services Board (MWSB) feasibility study for the anticipated water project the RM continues to pursue alongside the Town of Lac du Bonnet. The RM’s portion of the MWSB project will be partially funded by Reserves and funding from the MWSB.

On the Economic Development side, the Financial Plan includes the development of a new Economic Development-focused website (cost-shared with the Town of Lac du Bonnet) and a Business Park Survey.

In Recreation, the RM will contribute \$59,851 to Lac du Bonnet Recreation as per the cost-sharing agreement with the Town to fund programming (this includes cost-sharing lifeguard salaries). The Financial Plan also includes \$181,400 for the development of an Active Transportation Plan, with \$98,000 covered through a grant and the Town cost-sharing half of the remaining \$83,400.

At the Lac du Bonnet Regional Airport, the Financial Plan includes funds for a taxiway expansion, lidar, and a land survey.

As 2026 is an election year, the Financial Plan sets aside \$35,000 for expenses related to the municipal election taking place in October.

RM investing \$945,000 into reserves

The RM is investing **\$945,000** into reserves this year. This includes **\$210,000** into the Road Reconstruction Reserve, **\$150,000** into the Airport Reserve, **\$105,000** in the Machinery Reserve, **\$100,000** into the Recreation Reserve, and **\$75,000** into the Firefighting Equipment Reserve.

“Council is very focused on the RM’s financial future and we continually monitor our reserves,” Reeve Schinkel said. “When we fund purchases, projects, unforeseen equipment-repair costs, or emergency situations through reserves, it’s crucial we reinvest in them.”

“The RM doesn’t owe any money on debentures, which is another positive on the financial side,” he continued.

RM to provide more than \$300,000 in grants, funding, and work in kind

The RM will provide **\$302,157.33** in grants, funding, and work-in-kind support to more than 40 community charitable and non-profit organizations and agencies.

“Lac du Bonnet has many great organizations that work hard to serve our region’s citizens,” Reeve Schinkel said. “They provide essentials for those in need, promote recreation opportunities, provide entertainment, and provide education and access to educational resources.”

“These organizations have been resilient over many years to serve our community, and that’s why Council takes their requests seriously and remains committed to supporting their good work,” Reeve Schinkel continued.

For just a few specific examples, the RM will allocate **\$41,360.23** to the Lac du Bonnet Arena so RM residents can access its services and programs, **\$28,923** to the Community Centre for that same reason, **\$52,376.10** toward the Lac du Bonnet Regional Library’s operational expenses, **\$30,525** to the Youth Centre, and of course, **\$5,000** to the Lac du Bonnet Lions Club for their legendary Canada Day fireworks show and festivities.

“Instead of funds, some organizations request in-kind support, such as grass cutting, brushing, or other maintenance done by our Public Works Department,” Reeve Schinkel said. “We’re happy to be in the position to provide those types of services as well.”

How does the RM make its revenue?

The RM receives the majority of its revenue through property taxes. It also receives revenue through trailer fees; metal, fuel, and recycling rebates; various permits; and grants from the Provincial and Federal governments.

Financial Plan Public Hearing taking place Wednesday, April 8 at 5 p.m. – plan to attend in person or virtually

The next step is the Financial Plan Public Hearing, where Council will present the proposed 2026 Financial Plan and residents have a formal opportunity to provide feedback. This public and transparent process is mandated by Provincial legislation.

The Financial Plan Public Hearing will take place on **Wednesday, April 8 at 5 p.m.** in the RM of Lac du Bonnet Council Chambers. This Public Hearing is open to in-person attendance and anyone wanting to make a representation, ask questions, or speak for or against the budget can do so at this hearing. To register to make a representation, please email rmldb@lacdubonnet.com.

Virtual participation is also available via Zoom. The link will be available on our website’s [Meetings, Agendas, & Minutes](#) page.

“This Financial Plan is essentially the public’s plan, developed for you through collaborative consultation, thoughtful discussions, review, planning and a lot of work by our dedicated

executive team and staff,” Reeve Schinkel said. “Consultation with the community is an important component of this budgetary process, so Council strongly encourages residents to attend, whether in person or virtually.”

To submit any questions, please email finance@lacdubonnet.com or drop off a written submission at the Administrative Office **by April 7**.

The deadline for the RM to submit the Financial Plan to the Province is **May 15**.

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Keep in touch

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