2026 Budget Questions & Answers

Do you have questions about the 2026 City of Vernon budget? Review the Q&A below to get answers to commonly asked questions.

1. What do my municipal tax dollars pay for?
Your property tax dollars help fund essential City services and infrastructure. In Vernon, this includes community safety (police and fire services), parks and recreation facilities, road maintenance, and other municipal programs.

2. What is the largest portion of my property taxes funding?
The largest share of your municipal property taxes is allocated to community safety services, particularly policing and fire rescue. This includes the personnel, equipment, infrastructure, and support systems necessary to provide emergency services and maintain public safety across Vernon.

3. What other services are funded through property taxes?
Municipal property taxes also support a wide range of essential services, including:

- Maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and street lighting
- Operation of parks, trails, and recreation facilities
- Stormwater and drainage management
- Long-term community planning and development oversight
- Recruitment and support for City staff and operations

4. How does the City decide how to allocate my tax dollars?
Budget decisions are guided by a combination of Council priorities, strategic plans, public consultation, and regulatory requirements. Each year, the City develops a balanced budget that reflects the community's needs while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.

5. What happens if the City does not invest in services or infrastructure?
Delaying investment could result in higher long-term costs and service disruptions. For example, deferring road maintenance today may lead to full reconstruction needs in the future. Proactive investment helps ensure Vernon remains safe, efficient, and well-prepared for growth.

6. How are tax rates calculated?
Each year, tax revenue is calculated to balance the City's budget needs. In December 2024, Council approved a taxation revenue budget increase of 11.06% for 2025. Tax rates are calculated in the spring once assessment values have been received. In 2025, an owner of a single-family residence with an average value of $802,464 will pay approximately $2,512 in City of Vernon taxes.

7. How will the Active Living Centre Project impact taxes?
Construction of the new Active Living Centre (ALC) is underway, with the facility scheduled to open in fall 2026. Supported by a referendum, the ALC will serve as a modern hub for health, fitness, and inclusive programming for residents of all ages. Approved by voters in 2022, the 2025 budget includes the first of three annual 3.5% property tax increases to support this project.

