



Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Town of The Blue Mountains
32 Mill Street ON N0H 2P0

October 1, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council of Town of The Blue Mountains:

I am pleased to provide you with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) Draft 2026 Business Plan and Budget booklet ([here](#) and attached) which was approved for circulation and input at the September 26, 2025, NVCA Board meeting. I invite your feedback by November 28, 2025.

NVCA's 2026 draft budget totals \$7.8 million, reflecting a 2.8% (or \$101,307.36) increase in municipal operational levy apportioned across our 18 municipalities with your apportionment outlined below. NVCA's draft 2026 Business Plan and Budget aligns with Section 21 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and O. Reg. 686/21 and reflects our commitment to responsible financial management, transparent oversight, and responsible stewardship. It prioritizes flood management, natural heritage protection, education, recreation, and climate resilience while recognizing population growth and hazard mitigation challenges. The plan invests in responsible asset management and fair, competitive wages for our dedicated staff. By leveraging grants, user fees, partnerships, and revenue-generating activities, we maximize the value of every municipal dollar and ensure long-term sustainability.

At the direction of the NVCA Board, and as part of responsible fiscal management and stewardship, NVCA has made changes to how programs and services are classified under Categories 1 and 3. These changes are a result of a thorough review and strategic reclassification with no elimination of services. Core stewardship and restoration work, such as floodplain reconnection and erosion mitigation, have been reclassified from Category 3 to Category 1, where they more appropriately reflect the direction of O. Reg. 686/21. The outcome is a 31% reduction in Category 3 charges and a very modest increase to Category 1. We continue to deliver programmes like forestry and environmental education in Category 3 which don't directly support flood and erosion hazard mitigation.

Wages remain our largest expense at 82% of the consolidated budget. Even with a projected decrease of \$9,000 in 2026 due to a reduction in FTEs, costs have risen 4.1% per-employee. You will also notice several revenue shifts including a \$132,500 increase in provincial grants for stewardship, a \$67,000 drop in federal contributions, and gains from private grants, education programs, Tiffin Centre operations, and investment income. Unfortunately, planning revenue is expected to continue to decline due to market slowdown and a provincial fee freeze. To offset planning revenue impacts, NVCA is investing in technology upgrades, expanded online services, enhanced staff training, and strategic initiatives like the Priority Lands Framework. This approach ensures service continuity and long-term watershed resilience, with no elimination of services.

The Town of The Blue Mountains' proposed 2026 operational levy contribution is \$55,066.58. The capital asset levy will be \$3,034.19. This represents a total of \$58,100.77 contribution for 2026.

Below is how it is broken down into the Category 1 and Categories 2 & 3:

Category 1 Operational Levy - \$51,430.48

Categories 2 & 3 Operational Levy - \$3,636.14

Category 1 Asset Levy - \$2,587.71

Categories 2 & 3 Asset Levy - \$446.48

Please contact Kerry Jenkins at 705-424-1479 ext. 272 or kjenkins@nvca.on.ca if your council would like to schedule a deputation or a meeting with staff to discuss this draft budget.

With careful financial planning, expert operational management, strong governance, and a clear focus on efficiency, NVCA is well-positioned to deliver its mandate with integrity. I am confident this Business Plan and Budget reflect both NVCA's responsibility to its member municipalities and to the residents of the watershed.

Thank you for your Municipality's support of NVCA's Category 1 and 3 programs.

Yours truly,

Jennifer Vincent
Chief Administration Officer

Copies: Corrina Giles, Clerk
 Councillor June Porter, NVCA Board Member
 Monica Quinlan, Director of Corporate and Financial Services