



MEDIA RELEASE

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Strathcona Regional District Board Adopts the 2018 – 2022 Financial Plan

Campbell River, B.C. – The Strathcona Regional District (SRD) Board has approved the 2018 – 2022 Financial Plan. The financial plan outlines the approved projects and initiatives which will be undertaken by the SRD in the coming five years to drive the Board's strategic priorities and ensure the on-going delivery of services desired by the community in a fiscally responsible manner.

"The Board's strategic priorities continue to be driving improved cellular and broadband connectivity, building relationships with First Nations and working with the Community Health Network to improve the health and well being of our communities. We also have two large-scale capital projects this year. The Connected Coast project, which will see the placement of broadband infrastructure along the BC coast and around Vancouver Island and advancing the REC-REATE project to redevelop the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex," says SRD Board Chair Michele Babchuk.

The 2018 – 2022 financial plan includes \$18.7 million in consolidated operating expenses, a slight increase from last year, but it is important to note that the SRD has retained its low debt position, with only 1.4 per cent (1.4%) of operating expenses going towards debt repayment.

"We have received a considerable amount of funding from the provincial and federal governments as well as through grants. This comes from employees actively pursuing funding opportunities that allow the SRD to continue to improve the delivery of services with minimal impact on tax rates," says SRD CAO David Leitch. "Overall, the average increase for taxpayers in the SRD will be less than two per cent (2%). Some areas will see their taxes decrease, while others will see larger increases. The tax rates are based on the number and amount of services a region receives such as water, sewer and solid waste management."

The 2018 – 2022 Financial Plan is available on the SRD website at www.strathconard.ca and additional information is included in the attached addendum. Paper copies of the Financial Plan can also be requested at the SRD office located at 990 Cedar Street, Campbell River, BC.

The Strathcona Regional District is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities providing approximately 43,000 residents with 55 services including a full-service sports complex, parks, liquid and solid waste systems, fire protection and emergency preparedness programs.

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SRD 2018 – 2022 Financial Plan high-level snapshot:

- Within the Strathcona Regional District, the average residential household will see the SRD portion of their taxes increase by roughly \$14.30, or 1.4 per cent (1.4%).
- Depending on the area in which residents live, they may see no change to the taxes year-over-year from 2017 to 2018, a slight decrease, or a slight increase.
- The reason for the minimal changes to taxation rates in 2018 stem from several sources:
 - o General administration cost-savings opportunities were realized in 2017, allowing for the carry-over of funds to be allocated into the 2018 budget;
 - o Employees actively pursue grant funding from the federal and provincial governments to off-set the cost of eligible projects or initiatives;
 - o Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex made several changes to its operating model and extending its operating hours – which in turn provided greater revenue than forecasted; and
 - o Some projects were deferred to the 2018 fiscal year due to scheduling and or resourcing constraints.
- Taxation rates are based on the amount of services provided to residents of a region – such as water, sewer and solid waste management.
- The SRD remains focused on finding ways to increase and improve services for SRD residents while operating in a fiscally responsible manner.

2018 – 2022 Financial Plan annual cost breakdown by region:

**Please note – all calculations are estimated based on the assessed value of an residential single-home family in that municipality or region.*

Campbell River:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$320.78
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$333.40
Estimated tax rate change:	\$12.62, or an increase of approximately 3.9%

Gold River:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$24.53
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$25.99
Estimated tax rate change:	\$1.47, or an increase of approximately 6.0%

Sayward:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$32.66
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$33.39
Estimated tax rate change:	\$0.74, or an increase of approximately 2.3%

Tahsis:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$14.78
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$15.52
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>\$0.75, or an increase of approximately 5.1%</i>

Zeballos:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$17.00
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$16.54
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>(-\$0.46), or a decrease of approximately 2.7%</i>

Part Electoral Area A – Kyuquot/Nootka:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$96.32
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$90.90
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>(-\$5.41), or a decrease of approximately 5.6%</i>

Part Electoral Area A – Sayward:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$498.12
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$501.58
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>\$3.47 or an increase of approximately 0.7%</i>

Electoral Area B:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$787.58
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$799.74
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>\$12.16 or an increase of approximately 1.5%</i>

Electoral Area C:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$404.91
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$391.88
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>(-\$13.02), or a decrease of approximately 3.2%</i>

Electoral Area D:

2017 average household SRD property tax:	\$1,985.10
Projected 2018 average household SRD property tax:	\$2,115.77
Estimated tax rate change:	<i>\$130.69 or an increase of approximately 6.6%</i>

Capital Project Funding 2018:

Connected Coast funding:

- The \$45.4 million Connected Coast project will see the placement of a sub-sea high-speed fibre optic cable running from Prince Rupert, south along the coast to Vancouver, then around Vancouver Island.
- The 3 year project will be managed by the SRD and CityWest, but funding for the project will come from the Government of Canada's Connect to Innovate program (50%), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (25%) and the Connecting British Columbia program (25%). BC's Connecting British Columbia program is administered by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

REC-REATE funding:

- Over the last two years, the Strathcona Regional District has been planning and saving for major repairs and renovations required for the Gardens facility.
- The SRD has undertaken an extensive consultation and engagement process with facility user groups and the public, and there is large support for the REC-REATE project to proceed to the next step, schematic design. This step will be completed in 2018.
- Federal funding for recreational infrastructure is expected to be announced in the coming year. SRD staff are working to ensure that the REC-REATE project is well positioned for this funding opportunity.