



News Release

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2015 - 2019 Financial Plan Approved

The Regional Board has adopted the [Five-Year Financial Plan for 2015 – 2019](#). The 2015 operating budget which includes Municipal Finance Authority financing totals just over \$59.4-million compared with \$61.1-million during 2014. The decrease is due in large part to the cost savings provided through the new 9-1-1 service contract and a reduction in costs through the participation in the Multi-Materials BC recycling program.

The Regional District does not collect taxes directly. It requisitions funds from each local government on behalf of their residents and the Province which collects property taxes for Electoral Area residents.

The Regional District provides more than 80 different services across the entire Central Okanagan. The actual tax rate varies from neighbourhood to neighbourhood and municipality, depending on the local services provided by the Regional District.

The member municipalities of Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna receive services such as Economic Development, Regional Parks, Dog Control, 9-1-1 and Regional Rescue. These services account for a relatively small share (5-6%) of the total tax bill for property owners in those municipalities. (see table below – Total Tax per House)

The Regional District is also the local government for residents in the two electoral areas providing them with services such as Planning, four Paid-on-call fire departments and six water systems that connect almost 900 properties.

The Westbank First Nation (WFN) also receives several services from the Regional District such as Regional Parks, Regional Rescue, Economic Development and the Okanagan Basin Water Board. Cost sharing for Regional District services is based on the assessed value of properties.

The Financial Plan provides \$4.4-million in various Capital project spending this year.

The tax impacts on the average home are:

Member	2015 Assessment	2014 Assessment	Total Tax per House	Net Incr / (Decr) on the home from 2014
Kelowna	\$489,000	\$474,000	\$160.17	\$3.83
Peachland	\$495,000	\$474,000	\$192.11	\$5.54
Lake Country	\$490,000	\$474,000	\$185.71	\$3.70
West Kelowna	\$487,000	\$474,000	\$176.04	\$3.57
C.O. West	\$457,000	\$474,000	\$466.71	(\$117.90)
C.O. East	\$482,000	\$474,000	\$432.65	(\$101.43)

The increases in the Regional District portion of taxes for the average property owner in Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna is based on the decision of each municipality to fully fund and participate in the Electoral Area Planning function. As a result, there is a substantial reduction in costs for this service for the average property owner in each of the electoral areas as the municipalities are picking up more of the costs of providing this service. Until this year their previous partial contributions to Electoral Area Planning provided the municipalities with the ability

to vote on some defined land use applications within a determined Fringe Planning Area adjacent to each municipality. With full funding participation, municipal Board members will have full voting rights on all land use planning applications in the electoral areas.

In the two electoral areas during 2015, rather than taxation or rate increases, needed Capital upgrades and equipment purchases will be completed thanks to more than \$1.1-million from the Federal Community Works Gas Tax program. Just over \$499,000 will be spent on facilities and equipment for the four paid-on-call fire departments (Ellison, Joe Rich, North Westside, Wilsons Landing) and almost \$385,000 worth of improvements are planned for four water systems (Falcon Ridge, Killiney Beach, Westshore Estates, Trepanier).

With this year's budget of slightly more than \$59-million, the Regional District is also setting aside funds for future infrastructure by transferring more than 7.2 per cent of our budget for reserves and capital projects.

The total of the 2015 RDCO Operating Budget is \$59.4-million:

- ❖ 46.46% is Operating Expenses
- ❖ 46.34% is Debt (\$27.5-million including Municipal Finance Authority payments on behalf of partner municipalities and Okanagan Regional Library)
- ❖ 7.2% is Transfers to Capital and Reserves

The Financial Plan also outlines proposed operating budgets for the following four years:

- 2015 - \$57.6-million
- 2016 - \$57.6-million
- 2017 - \$57.8-million
- 2018 - \$57.7- million

The Regional Board also adopted the Five-Year Financial Plan for the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District (CORHD). Each year, ratepayers within the Hospital District contribute 40% of the funds for approved capital and equipment services.

The Regional Hospital District is contributing more than \$7.8-million this year towards the new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre (Total CORHD contribution - \$70.69-million) and \$9.6-million this year (\$14-million total) for 100% of the construction of the complete 4th floor Perinatal unit. In addition, the Hospital District will contribute \$3.9-million for other capital projects during 2015 and \$1.5-million over the next two years towards the purchase of new equipment to update and increase the testing capacity of the laboratory at Kelowna General Hospital. The owner of an average home assessed at \$474,000 in 2014 and \$489,000 in 2015 will contribute \$173.89 towards capital improvements and new health equipment, an increase of \$3.01 from last year.

Central Okanagan property owners may be eligible for the Provincial Homeowner Grant. Information will be available on your Property Tax Notice or you can visit the Ministry of Finance website:

www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Home_Owner_Grant/hog.htm

Some property owners may qualify for assistance through the BC Property Tax Deferment Program. Information about this program and who qualifies is available on the BC Government website:

www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Property_Tax_Deferment/ptd.htm

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