



News Release

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2016 - 2020 Financial Plan Approved

The Regional Board has adopted the **Five-Year Financial Plan for 2016 – 2020**. The 2016 budget totals just over \$63.1-million compared with \$59.4-million during 2015.

- ❖ 46.34% is Operating Expenses (\$29.2-million)
- ❖ 47.03% is Debt (\$29.7-million including Municipal Finance Authority payments on behalf of partner municipalities and the Okanagan Regional Library)
- ❖ 6.64% is Transfers to Capital and Reserves (\$4.2-million) for future infrastructure and capital projects

Board Chair Gail Given says, “The Regional Board fully supports our new Financial Plan which provides the continued effective and efficient delivery of high quality services on behalf of all Central Okanagan residents. The Regional District budget is a complex process, quite different from that of local municipalities. This year’s budget was much easier to understand and has been presented in a way that’s more friendly and useful to the public. We’re also proud of the increased opportunities that were provided to residents this year to share their comments and thoughts with the Board.”

The tax impacts on the average home assessed at \$499,000 in 2015:

Member	2016 Assessment	Total Tax per House	Net Incr / (Decr) on the home from 2015
Kelowna	\$537,000	\$178.10	\$2.87
Peachland	\$517,000	\$198.65	(\$9.59)
Lake Country	\$524,000	\$197.14	(\$3.95)
West Kelowna	\$528,000	\$192.18	(\$0.23)
C.O. West	\$512,000	\$619.02	\$96.73
C.O. East	\$536,000	\$506.37	\$45.28

The general decreases in the Regional District portion of taxes for the average property owner in Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna is based on each municipality’s adjusted participation in the new Five Year Fringe Area Planning agreements resulting in reductions in funding for the Electoral Area Planning function. As a result, there is a substantial increase in requisitions for this service for the average property owner in each of the electoral areas as the municipalities are reducing their share of the costs of providing this service. Partial contributions to Electoral Area Planning provides the municipalities with the ability to vote on some defined land use applications within a determined Fringe Planning Area adjacent to each municipality. It should be noted that in 2015, the Electoral Areas benefitted from a large decrease in taxes when the municipalities opted in as full participants in Electoral Area Planning.

The Financial Plan provides \$11.5-million in various Capital project spending this year including just over \$3-million for a major upgrade to the Killiney Beach Water System of which \$1.9-million is funded through a Canada-BC Small Communities Fund grant.

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

- 2017 - \$61.5-million
- 2018 - \$61.7-million
- 2019 - \$55-million
- 2020 - \$51- million

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 in each Electoral Area.

The Regional District provides approximately 80 different services across the 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 regional services such as Economic Development, Regional Parks, Dog Control, 9-1-1 and Regional Rescue. These services account for a relatively small share (5.5-6%) of the total average tax bill for property owners in those municipalities. (See table above – 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 1,000 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 Five-Year Financial Plan for the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District (CORHD) was also adopted. Each year, ratepayers within the Hospital District contribute 40% of the funds for approved capital and equipment services. The owner of an average home assessed at \$533,000 in 2016 (\$499,000 in 2015) will contribute \$177.44 towards capital improvements and new health equipment. That's the same amount as last year.

The Regional Hospital District is funding more than \$13.3-million this year in capital projects. More than \$3.9-million is being contributed towards the new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre including 100% of the construction costs of the 4th floor Perinatal unit which opened earlier in March. As well, an additional \$1.5-million will be spent this year to purchase of new equipment for the laboratory at Kelowna General Hospital. In addition, the Hospital District will contribute \$2-million for improvements to the Community Health Services Centre in Kelowna.

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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