

Donna Sauter

From: Recycle
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:53 PM
To: Finance
Subject: FW: Proposed RDCO Tax Hike

Good afternoon,

Sending this email over as it was directed to the Recycle inbox.

Thank you

Kathryn Newman-Renwick, BFA (She/Her)

Administrative Assistant | Engineering Services
Regional District of Central Okanagan
250-469-6250 | recycle@rdco.com
Connect with us | rdco.com

I acknowledge my presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded [tm̓xʷúlaʔxʷ](#) (land) of the syilx / Okanagan people who have resided here since time immemorial. I recognize, honour, and respect the syilx / Okanagan lands upon which we live, work, and play.



From: Your Community Society <wilsonlandingandcommunities@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 1:17 PM

Subject: Proposed RDCO Tax Hike

You don't often get email from wilsonlandingandcommunities@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good morning everyone, our current President, Sue Huber and former President Karen Bennison asked me to forward this information to you.

The RDCO Electoral Area West and North Westside residents face a 16.5% jump in property with even more in extras and hidden debts.

A budget report released by the Regional District of the Central Okanagan (RDCO) Finance department calls for a base 16.5% increase in property taxes for an average home in Electoral Area West plus additional fees to residents of the North Westside who receive community hall, water or fire services. This comes on the heels of a considerable tax increase in 2023.

Here are the key points from the budget report and some missing facts:

Property Tax Increase: The report projects a 16.5% increase in property taxes on an average house valued at \$548,313 in Central Okanagan West, translating to an extra \$168, bringing the total to \$1,193 in 2024, up from \$1,025 in 2023.

Extra Fee for North Westside Residents: Those in the North Westside utilizing community hall, water, or fire services will face an additional \$418, marking an \$87 increase from 2023 (\$331). Water rates across all communities are also expected to rise, with the exact amount undisclosed.

Soaring Administrative Overhead: Administrative overhead costs are skyrocketing, with a proposed \$1 million increase in administration departments. The North Westside Volunteer Fire Department is hit with an enormous \$109,447 Administrative Overhead fee, up a staggering 177% from 2020 (\$39,473).

Hidden Deficits and Cuts to Local Services: The budget report fails to reveal a disturbing trend of cutting grant monies which are eligible for local services in Electoral Areas. A meeting on June 8, 2023, saw the rescinding of previously approved local parks capital projects in Electoral Area West, diverting \$4,298,000 gas tax reserves to WFN (IR#9 and IR#10), and imposing a \$435,038 deficit on residents outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) all without public consultation. These measures, which greatly affect Electoral Area finances, were backed by municipal directors and passed despite strong opposition from both Electoral Area Directors.

Questionable Allocation of Growing Communities Grant: Despite an influx of grant funding, especially from the Growing Communities Fund, the budget report lacks clarity in detailing how these funds were allocated. The one-time \$6,950,000 Growing Communities Fund grant from the Provincial Government was distributed to the RDCO based on a per-capita calculation. Notably, Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna, and Peachland each received separate distributions from the Province, distinct from the \$6,950,000 allocated to the RDCO. Despite objections from both Electoral Area Directors Kevin Kraft (East) and Wayne Carson (West) in a November 16, 2023 meeting, the Board approved only \$863,810 (12.4%) for local services within the Electoral Areas, with an overwhelming \$6,086,190 (87.5%) allocated to regional services benefiting neighboring municipalities. This decision, backed by municipal directors, passed despite strong opposition from both Electoral Area Directors. When provided transparency it becomes clear how regional parks received grants for capital improvement, leaving local parks unable to proceed with previously approved improvements, including a multi-use pickleball court at Westshore.

Your voice matters and your input into this budget process is crucial. We urge you to take action:

What You Can Do:

Email your questions and comments to finance@rdco.com Subject Line: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan In your message state your name, include your civic address of the property that you either own or live in, and ask questions. **The deadline is Monday, February 12, at 8:00 am.**

Ask Tough Questions:

Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? Call for increased transparency.

How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? Demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions.

The NWCA urges you to take notice of the RDCO 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan. If you've ever wanted to use your voice, now is the time! Our community needs your voice and many of us must raise these tough questions.

Together, let's ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability in our community's financial decisions.

Best regards,

Keith Crawley, Treasurer

Donna Sauter

From: B [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:48 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 5 Yr Financial plan.

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Having reviewed the details of the financial plan, there are many good points in it. But, as living in the Wilson Landing area and dealing with the after effects of the fire, I was wondering if the provincial government has a grant to help with the temporary drop in our Tax assessment base. I know we lost over \$40 million at LOR, almost \$6 million at Pine Point, plus traders cover, plus Jennu creek plus Wilson Landing.... For the general RDCO taxes, that loss is mitigated by it is spread across the whole electoral district. (and some of the homes lost in the White rock fire are returning to the tax base.) But where this is going to really hit is in funding our Wilson Landing fire department. It is funded totally from the south portion of the west electoral district... which is where the tax base took a big hit. It is proposed an operating increase of about 48% which translates into about 98% increase. On an actual \$ amount it is significant vs the 16.5% over all. While I really don't want to see the fire department cut back, is there no money available available from the wildfire recovery grant or any other grant that can be applied? I realize that we are also trying to fund a new \$900K truck in 2027. and there will be a reserve deficit of over \$600k for that purchase. And it will be the service by debt. is there an option to defer some of the reserve costs for this year only. I realize it will increase the deficit.

(FYI my house was ok externally thanks to the wildfire covent required materials and following the Fire smart guidelines for materials close to the house. Even still the fire burned about 30% of our land.)

--

Blanche Beda
[REDACTED] Banff Rd, Kelowna, BC V1Z 3S9
Kelowna, BC
[REDACTED]

Donna Sauter

From: Marianne Baden [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:18 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024 Financial Plan

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED] Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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We live in RDCO West, specifically in Westshore Estates and are disappointed to learn of the proposed property tax increase and apparent changes that will restrict our community's future grant allotments.

We understand costs are increasing overall but a proposed increase of 16.5 % is extreme. It appears even more excessive having just reviewed the 5 Year Financial Plan and not seeing any clear explanation or justification.

Even more disappointing is there is no mention of expanded services, not even a small increase to our local transfer station, upgrades to the community park, or road repairs; all items that would possibly justify a modest increase. At the same time we learn prior funding approvals to upgrade our community park has now been reallocated to regional parks in the larger centres. We have been looking forward to the upgrade to our park and find it frustrating and insulting that this decision was made in-house and not in consultation with affected residents.

On top of this we understand the fees for water and fire services and use of the hall are also going to increase; again with little justification or at least none that was apparent after wading through the briefing notes, draft policies, charts and power point presentations from earlier RDCO meetings.

We also request a clear explanation as to why we have been penalized by prior RDCO decisions that left a deficit in Electoral Area West. These decisions were clearly out of the control of residents yet our area will not be eligible to receive future grant funds until this deficit is paid out.

As well, we were ashamed to read that WFN and OKIB did not receive their portions of prior Community Works funds. It's admirable that the RDCO recognizes they need to "make WFN and OKIB whole" but it appears this will be corrected at the expense of other communities?

We appreciate this work is challenging and complex. We remain hopeful that the administrators responsible for these decisions consider our feedback and remember the residents you are impacting as we far more than just numbers in your documents.

Respectfully,

Marianne Baden and Richard Woloszyn
[REDACTED] Mountain Drive

Donna Sauter

From: Simon Harrison [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 2:16 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 5 Year Financial Plan

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Simon + Sashah Harrison
[REDACTED] Houghton Rd
Vernon, BC
V1H2C9

Dear RDCO.

Along with many of my neighbours living down the North Westside, me and my wife, Sashah are extremely disgusted with your proposed tax changes you plan on forcing upon us this year, and the way you handle money in general. How many more admin pay raises can you give yourselves whilst cutting spending to our residents out here?

We have been Killiney Beach residents for the past 6 years and have seen minimal spending on our community from your fat money coffers. We have been through both significant wild fires over the past couple years, the Terrace Mountain wildfire 10+ years ago, and the flooding disaster 4 years ago. The White Rock wildfire should have been a wake-up call for the RDCO to invest more money and resources into protecting our residents and infrastructure, but this doesn't seem to be the case. Right after the White Rock fire, the Aboriginal Reserve at the North end of Westside Road did a big fire mitigation push for their residents to firesmart the entire area, including installation of more fire hydrants, cutting back flammable ground brush, and more. The RDCO haven't done a thing for us this whole time, nothing has changed, and it's ridiculous. The RDCO was supposed to finish installing the backup generators for our Killiney Beach fire hall/pump station, but we haven't heard anything about that. On top of that, when the water system in Killiney Beach was damaged by the wildfire, Interior Health recommended adding additional filtering to the system due to more advanced contaminants in the water, which the RDCO ignored. Sashah and I, and even our pets, still get upset stomachs when we drink the water out here, and have to boil our water every day in case.

Our Killiney Beach community hall is old and run down, it needs more attention, but our maintenance budget has been cut back to nothing because of this tax change. Westshore Estates aren't even getting their promised pickleball court now thanks to this.

These are just but a few examples of problems stemming from the ridiculous rule of the RDCO as of late and issues being noted by our residents.

I would like the RDCO to give more attention to the North Westside, and rethink your tax plan for us, as you have upset a lot of residents. If this cannot be achieved with your capabilities, then maybe we should hand-off to the RDNO instead, and maybe we will be properly taken care of there.

Simon + Sashah Harrison

Donna Sauter

From: david weis [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 10:45 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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I feel our firehall is out of control on spending having to pay an assistant fire chief and a fire chief. The fire dept rarely drives down the hill to practice runs in lower Fintry especially in snowing conditions .There is a lag in communication skills with our relationship on social media on updates in their activities and budgets with transparency .Taxpayers deserve proper notice on increasing expectations on dedicated budgets.

Thank you
D Weisgarber
[REDACTED] Fintry Delta Road

Donna Sauter

From: George Turcotte [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 10:13 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 5 year financial plan

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Why the sudden increase in administrative costs?

George Turcotte

[REDACTED] Columbia Way

Westshore Estates

Donna Sauter

From: info-rdco
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 8:15 AM
To: Finance
Subject: FW: Taxes

Forwarding

-----Original Message-----

From: noreply@rdco.com <noreply@rdco.com> On Behalf Of Jeff Pilkington
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 7:46 AM
To: info-rdco <info@rdco.com>
Subject: Taxes

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To the RDCO Board,

We are residents of Westside Rd. In reviewing the recent budget report we have some concerns.

- 1) There is a large spike in Administrative overhead costs, there needs to be more transparency in what these costs included.
- 2) Are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek wildfire being used to benefit the department and the community? (Ie. new equipment/truck)
- 3) Why are grants being diverted from local park/capital projects?
- 4) Why are gas tax reserves being diverted to IR#9 and IR#10, leaving the rest of Electoral area West with a deficit?
- 5) Why is the proposed tax increase so large and what will those revenues be going to?

Thanks you for taking the time to read our concerns, we look forward to more transparency on these issues.

Sincerely,

Jeff Pilkington

Origin: <https://www.rdco.com/Modules/contact/search.aspx?s=BQk42125Y05IA5HxPONM0KycnweQuAleQuAl>

This email was sent to you by Jeff Pilkington [REDACTED] through <https://www.rdco.com>.

Donna Sauter

From: Sharon [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 8:04 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Questions

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To RDCO: Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? Does the drastic increase in Admin Overhead have anything to do with the wildfire, and if so please tell me exactly why?

How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used, and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? Demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions. How does this enormous tax hike help the people who are paying this tax hike, and what can the District do to reduce this enormous tax hike? What are the wage increases for staff and the CAO and Chair this year compared to the last two years? Do you have a print out or a link to these wages? Why is WFN able to vote in the North Westside area when they have their own governance? The North Westside don't get to vote in WFN territory, so why are they able to vote and sit on the North Westside Community Committee? People are broke from COVID and from the cost of food rising. This is a very bad time for many people, and they can't afford this huge tax hike. Sharon Schnurr [REDACTED] Balsam Road Kelowna, B.C. V1Z3V7 [REDACTED]

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I am Against Animal Cruelty

use the Bcc area when forwarding to your
'Email Buddies'..... Thank You !

Donna Sauter

From: Henrik Oloffs [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 7:55 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Unacceptable tax increase

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Really!?!?!?

Some suggestions for you;

1. Sell massive office complex on KLO and move into more appropriate space.
2. Eliminate redundant staff and departments. (Yes, you can).
3. Stop installing expensive playgrounds that children enjoy less than the old ones. For example, Traders cove playground.
4. What the heck is this WFN gas tax reserve diversion. Sounds like some sort of scammy political payoff scheme. Pleas explain!
5. Stop wasting time driving around to your parks threatening residents with \$500 dollar fines for walking down the street in a safe manner.
6. Do something useful for once. Get rid of the geese so children can actually use the parks and beaches.
7. Do NOT pass this five year plan.

Yours "not impressed",
Henrik and Sandi Oloffs
[REDACTED] Heldon Court

Donna Sauter

From: Edward McLean [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 7:40 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 5 year regional spending plan

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I live at [REDACTED] Westside Road North, Kelowna V1Z3W8. I wish to register my strong opposition to the proposed 2024 - 2029 spending plan recently approved by the regional district board. It is clear to me that significant changes in the funding plans for the region were made without sufficient, if any, public consultation and transparency. I urge the RDCO to pause or rescind these decisions until the community has a full understanding of the plans and their economic impact on people recently hit by the largest wildfire disaster in the area's history. Thanks you. Yours sincerely,
Edward McLean.

Ed McLean

[REDACTED] (Home) *Preferred*
[REDACTED] (Cell)

Donna Sauter

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 7:38 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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We live at [REDACTED] Westside Rd., Kelowna B.C, V1Z 3P8. And we have questions about the financial plan as follows.

Why the sudden spike in a ministration overhead costs as we feel we need an increase in transparency on this.

Next, how are the revenue is generated by a North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation and suppression in the McDougall Creek Wildfire used in are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

Next what justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in electoral area west outside WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit?

We look forward to your answer.

Stephen and Stephanie Marshall
[REDACTED] Westside Rd.
Kelowna B.C. V1Z3P8
Sent from my iPhone

Donna Sauter

From: Scott Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 6:55 AM
To: Finance
Subject: : 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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Hello,

What is going on with the huge increases and changes to revenues and expenditures?

Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? Call for increased transparency.

How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? Demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions.

What is going on without proper public input and transparency?

Before any changes can proceed We need answers to these questions.

Regards,
Scott Martin
Wilson Landing

Some Family. Some Friends. Some Food. Something Special.

Donna Sauter

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 6:10 AM
To: Finance
Cc: 'Josh Galloway'; 'NWCA Communications'; Wayne Carson; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: 2024/25 Budget Questions From NWCA Governance Board Chair

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Hello Tania,

I am writing to express concerns and provide community feedback regarding the proposed 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan.

Last year, we met briefly following a draft Budget meeting in February 2023. At that time, I was inquiring as to the lack of Board discussion on the 30% increase in Administrative Expenditures for the 2023/24 fiscal year, which was lacking detail in the Budget Package. You commented at that time, that the increase was due to a 15% overrun of administrative expenditures in 2022/23 (prior to your tenure) that had to be covered and duplicated within the 2023/24 budget. I'd like to confirm that with this current budget, we now have close to a 40% increase in administrative costs over the past 2 to 3 years? Could you roughly provide me an idea what the big expenditure drivers were, so I can explain it to our Community Members?

I recently watched the November 16th meeting, where Staff's recommendations for the allocation of the Growing Communities Fund and Community Works Funds were presented to the Board (Items 7.1 and 8.1). From the surprise response, it was apparent that there had been limited involvement or collaboration with our Electoral Area Directors, prior to presenting these significant funding proposals to the Board. This management style is not reflective of a positive or transparent governance process. It was one of the main issues identified in the Electoral Area West and North Westside services and Governance study, which was presented to the Board 18 months ago. Sadly, it's the ongoing lack of collaboration between our Electoral Director and the RDCO Staff, that leads me to ask the following questions:

- 1) Why are there no longer regular meetings between the CAO, CFO, Chair and Electoral Area Directors to address their individual constituents' concerns or funding needs for the delivery of local government services? Any level of transparent governance would suggest that these types of meetings should be happening monthly or at the very least quarterly.
- 2) Why are there no Board sub-committees that regularly meet to discuss strategy, the allocation of capital funds or proposed administrative budgets? This would allow time to address concerns and have a fully transparent budget process. I recognize that the Board establishes strategic priorities, yet the lack of committee engagement is concerning.
- 3) Was the 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan brought before the Electoral Area services Committee to provide input and recommendations on financial matters that affect the Electoral Areas, before presenting this plan to the Board of Directors?

- 4) Can you explain what internal controls are in effect to prevent operating cost overruns during the year? For example, when there is a forecasted 15% overage in budget, what interaction is there with the Board, to receive approval or review options to cut costs during the year?
- 5) Are the RDCO's financial statements subject to an annual audit conducted by the Province or external entities and what are these protocols?
- 6) Why is it, while the allocation and planned use of the original Community Works Funds expenditures for the past 8 years (which was obviously vetted by the Staff and approved by entire Regional Board) is no longer acknowledged as a shared financial responsibility by the Staff and Board?

It is important to note, by proposing and passing the most recent Community Works Funds allocation for 2024 and future years, the Staff and RDCO Board have imposed a financial deficit solely onto our small rural segment of the Electoral Area West. A more reasonable approach would have corrected this by sharing the burden by all Board budgets, based on a population weighting. This leaves our community with a \$480k debt applied to our water system...which is highly questionable. The entire approach taken to dumping this error on our NW communities is definitely not equitable and absolutely must be reconsidered.

- 7) Who within the Administration or Board, drove this WFN retroactive funding agenda? It wasn't necessary....at least not at the dollar level or timing applied.
- 8) Why would the decision to retroactively address the WFN funding be done without public consultation or extensive subcommittee discussions with those it impacted the most? As a non-government 3rd Party, did WFN have the appropriate administrative reporting qualifications or have projects proposed during the past 8 years to receive this funding? Why was it not presented annually and discussed at Council over the past 8 years?
- 9) The Growing Communities Fund (GCF), administered by the Province, distributes funds to both Municipalities and Regional Districts. Why was the funding that Municipalities received from the GCF not taken into consideration when the RDCO Staff was making decisions as to how to allocate funds? While these funds are supposed to be weighted to the advantage of small rural communities, is this not effectively double dipping by the Municipalities if the RDCO Staff does not consider the parallel Municipal funding?
- 10) How are our NW Communities supposed to deal with current issues like a waste transfer station that was designed decades ago with a third of the population, and now has steel bins that are rusted with the bottoms falling out of them? There are no funds to replace them or expand our space? Would those kinds of immediate needs not come before setting aside future funding of an \$8+ million dollar COSAR building project that has not even been discussed in any detail with the Board?
- 11) Have the Municipalities made any financial contributions to the COSAR project or all future costs to be borne by restricted funding to the Electoral Areas?
- 12) Why is the funding for our North Westside recreation court, which was approved in a prior year's budget, now cancelled?
- 13) Per Provincial guidelines, there is supposed to be a heavily weighted allocation of the Growing Community and Community Works funds, to small rural areas. As the Financial Professional for the RDCO, what advice did you provide to the Administrative Team regarding the apparent conflict between Staff recommendations to the Board and the intent laid out in this policy?
- 14) Why did the CAO and the Chair not table the Growing Communities Fund and Community Works Funds resolutions until there was more time for discussion between Council members and staff?

- 15) Why does this recently passed use of Community Works Funds resolution, restricting funds to the rural Electoral Area West, have no defined duration relating to this restriction?
- 16) Do these issues not contravene the Local Government Act, The negligence Act or Federal Funding Agreements? If so, what actions are being considered to correct it?

Tania, it is the consistent disregard for the Electoral Areas and ongoing actions of the RDCO Staff that have created an environment that led the Electoral Area West and North Westside Service and Governance Committee to conclude that the North Westside Communities would be better represented by a Regional District whose policies align with our small community needs. This study concluded:

THAT the Electoral Area West and North Westside Governance and Services Study Committee recommends that the Regional Board of Central Okanagan, in collaboration with the Province and the Regional District of North Okanagan, pursue a further study to explore in detail the services, governance, and financial implications of removing the North Westside Communities from Central Okanagan Electoral Area West and the Regional District of Central Okanagan's boundaries and create a separate electoral area within the Regional District of North Okanagan.

Despite being commissions by the RDCO, it appears that the Committee's recommendations have been disregarded.

It has been 18 months since the study was submitted to the RDCO Board at the regular meeting of September 26, 2022. As a resident of the North Westside and Chair of the Electoral Area West and North Westside Governance and Services Study Committee, the community has received no information of the status of this matter, no press release and no correspondence by the RDCO to date. Although the RDCO subsequently established an Electoral Area Service Committee, the scope and actions of the Committee are a farce. We can only conclude that the Minister of Municipalities and Housing has been erroneously lead to believe that all issues have been resolved. This is far from the truth, as there has been no collaboration. Further, the RDCO has failed to engage with discussions with any members of the Electoral Area West and North Westside Services and Governance Committee.

We officially request that the RDCO Board Chair inform the Minister of Municipalities and Housing that the residents of North Westside Communities continue to advocate for and await the funding to conduct a comprehensive financial analysis. This analysis is crucial for making a well researched decision regarding our future governance and potential boundary move, potentially aligning our neighborhood boundaries with RDNO. This study is not difficult to complete as all the necessary data is available at the two Regional District Offices. We request that the RDCO proactively engage with the Province to advocate for a this comprehensive financial analysis to commence this spring.

An additional note, concerning lack of consultation with our North Westside Communities, relates to an extensive report filed with Council in June of 2023, detailing failures of Fire Services during the 2021 wildfire. To date, there has never been any effort to have Community Hall meetings with the North West Communities (outside of our Electoral Director) to discuss the on-going concerns we have, and how to responsibly move forward, with local input, to rebuild our Community Fire Services. It was our North Westside Communities that built and funded the original Firehalls in this area. We need to be consulted. This is something that needs to be addressed with our community as a whole, in our Community Hall with RDCO HR staff present.

Would you please ensure that this correspondence is included in the 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan public input materials that will be presented to the Board.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Scott D Graham, CPA, CMA
Governance Chair and Director for North West Communities Association

█ Kildare Way
Vernon BC, V1H 2C7



Donna Sauter

From: Josh Galloway [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 12:29 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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Dear RDCO Chief Financial Officer,

My name is Joshua Galloway, I reside at [REDACTED] Westside Road, and I am writing to provide input regarding the draft 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan.

As a resident of Electoral Area West, I am expressing deep concern about the substantial tax increases compared to other jurisdictions within the RDCO. A 16.5% increase on the average \$500,000 home seems unreasonable, especially when compared to tax increases for Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland, and Electoral Area East.

I request that the Board to consider the following items:

1) Fire Services Reserves:

- a. How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department utilized for equipment and truck replacement?
- b. There is a noticeable increase in contributions to capital reserves for new equipment, but it's unclear how McDougall Creek Wildfire revenues are invested into equipment and trucks.
- c. Are local taxpayers investing in equipment and trucks that the Regional District is subsequently collecting revenues that get allocated into general coffers?

2) Community Works Fund (formerly gas tax):

- a. In 2023, the Board approved a \$435,038 deficit onto residents of Electoral Area West who reside outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10). Why isn't this deficit noted and transparent in the 2024 Budget?
- b. The Regional Board as a Whole, as governing body, should be accountable for historic spending decisions. Did the RDCO seek public consultation prior to approving the deficit onto the minority population of the electoral area? Does the Local Government Act provide the legislative authority for the Regional District to implement this deficit?
- c. Increase the budget to Service 001-Board by \$435,038 and use the funds to offset and remedy the imposed deficit. This increase would ensure that Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland, and the Electoral Areas are held equitable accountability for historic spending.

3) North Westside Waste Transfer Station Upgrades:

- a. The current footprint of the North Westside Waste Transfer Station is inadequate, leading to traffic congestion, safety concerns, and illegal dumping.
- b. Approve provisional funding for waste transfer station improvements and delegate to the Electoral Area Services Committee to receive and endorsement a design before RDCO proceeds with any upgrades.

c. There is an opportunity to build a facility that caters to the needs of our growing community, and I recommend against investing in paving an undersized facility.

4) Admin Overhead:

a. Is Admin Overhead charged on monies that are collected and allocated to reserves? In other words, are Admin Overhead fees charged on money when they go into reserves and again a second time when they are spent on capital investments of service deficits?

b. Provide greater transparency to how Admin Overhead is calculated for each service and identify the Admin Overhead classification and rate that is charged to each service.

c. Admin Overhead charged to the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department has ballooned to \$109,447, up 177% from 2020 (\$39,473), is this reasonable?

Thank you for considering these important matters.

Sincerely,
Joshua Galloway

Donna Sauter

From: Bob Galloway [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 10:45 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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As residents in Electoral Area West in excess of 30 years located at [REDACTED] Westside Rd N, my wife and I are extremely concerned with a number of proposals effecting our community.

Specifically the following:

- 16+ % property tax increase, this is obscene or gross mismanagement when compared to all of the other jurisdictions in CORD. How does the Board justify.
- Cuts to Local Services - June 28/2023 meeting that rescinded previously approved local parks capital projects, then diverting over \$4,000.000 of gas tax reserves to WFN and then imposing a larger deficit to others and more specifically Electoral Area West. How is this legally justified?
- Administrative Overhead is being significantly increased. Justify please.
- Growing Communities Grant funds appear to have been disproportionately distributed to Areas East and West compared to the other CORD members. Please provide a very detailed breakdown of how this is justified by the Board.

We look forward to hearing from you prior to the adoption of this Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob and Kathy Galloway
[REDACTED] Westside Rd. N
[REDACTED]

Donna Sauter

From: Heather Cliburn [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 10:14 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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To the RDCO Board,

We are residents of Westside Rd. In reviewing the recent budget report we have some concerns.

- 1) There is a large spike in Administrative overhead costs, there needs to be more transparency in what these costs included.
- 2) Are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek wildfire being used to benefit the department and the community? (I.e. new equipment/truck)
- 3) Why are grants being diverted from local park/capital projects?
- 4) Why are gas tax reserves being diverted to IR#9 and IR#10, leaving the rest of Electoral area West with a deficit?
- 5) Why is the proposed tax increase so large and what will those revenues be going to?

Thanks you for taking the time to read our concerns, we look forward to more transparency on these issues.

Sincerely,

Donald and Heather Cliburn
[REDACTED] Westside Road, RDCO

Donna Sauter

From: Cam Leslie [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 9:50 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan, cost increases to Westside residents

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Hello RDCO,

I am a long time homeowner at [REDACTED] Westside Place, Kelowna, BC, V1Z 3T5, in Wilsons Landing on the Westside.(RDCO Electoral Area West) I have just reviewed the RDCO 5 year financial plan and am very concerned as to some of the % expenses for our area.

Could you please expand on the Electoral area West tax increase of 16.5%, seeing it doesn't include any local service area taxes (e.g. fire protection, community centres, transit) The next highest increase is only 6%, so why is the Electoral area West increase of 16.5% going to cover?

A very concerned resident of the Electoral area West, Thank you very much.
Cam Leslie

Donna Sauter

From: Tammie Chamberlain [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 8:30 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Tamara Chamberlain I reside at [REDACTED] Valley Drive, Vernon BC located in Westshore Estates, and I am a full-time resident living year-round in the North Westside. I have several questions for your regarding the 2024-2028 Financial Plan they are as follows.

1. Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? I would like full transparency in your response to this question anything less is unacceptable.
2. How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?
3. What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?
4. Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? I am demanding accountability from the board as a whole for their historical spending decisions.

I am eagerly awaiting your detailed response to my listed questions above anything less is unacceptable.

Respectfully

Tamara Chamberlain

Donna Sauter

From: Kenny Chamberlain [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 8:29 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 five year financial plan

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Kenneth Chamberlain . I live at [REDACTED] Valley drive in west shore estates.

I have a few questions for you regarding the financial planning.

1. Why is there such a spike in the administration overhead cost? I would like full transparency in your response to this question as this seems extreme.
2. How are the revenues generated by the northwest side Volunteer fire department for there participation in suppression of the McDougal creek wild fire used. Are they used for equipment and truck replacement?
3. What justifies diverting grant funding from local services.
4. Why are residence in electoral area west out side of Wfn (IR#9 and Ir# 10) saddled with a 435000.08 deficit? I am demanding accountability from the board as a whole for there historical spending decisions.

I look forward to your timely response to questions above. Anything less would be unacceptable.

Thank you for your time

Kenny chamberlain.

Donna Sauter

From: Wendy Waters [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 4:46 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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- My name is Wendy Waters and i reside at [REDACTED] Mountain Drive in Westshore Estates, Vernon.
- I have been made aware that RDCO has a five-year plan in place for 2024-2028 and would like to ask the following questions.
-
-
- **Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs?** Where did this 'significant' increase come from...why was it deemed appropriate? It's a million-dollar question.
- **How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?**
- **What justification do you have for diverting grant funding from local services?**
- **Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit?** The RDCO Board should be held responsible and accountable for any overages in spending, NOT the residents. Residents have no say in over budget spending. Who is responsible for the overages and what is being done to take care of the problem? Board members who advocated for the overspending should be dismissed for such gross mishandling of money.

Thank you for addressing these concerns.
Wendy Waters

Donna Sauter

From: Robert Harrison [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 3:33 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024 - 2028 Five Year Financial Plan.

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Address: [REDACTED] Killarney Way, Vernon, B.C. V1H 2C5

Dear Sir or Madam,

After getting an update on the R.D.C.O.'s recent proposal for the 2024 property tax increases plus additional fees for North Westside residents, I am utterly dismayed with the lack of transparency, lack of democracy and autocratic way the R.D.C.O. board conducts themselves. You think you are a law unto yourselves. Do you think that you are ruling the feudal lands of Britain in the 1200's where you dream up a new tax or law and implement it without any input or conversation with those that it affects?

As usual the residents of Westside Road are completely ignored. Transparency..... where is the transparency ? Voice of the people, where is the voice of the people being listened to and taken into consideration ?

It appears that in the November 16th, 2023 meeting of the R.D.C.O. board, the board completely ignored the opposition voiced by our Electoral Area Director Wayne Carson and they steam rolled on with their decision. Where is the communication? Not everybody wants continuous email updates or apps on their phone to get meeting updates. Why wasn't a letter mailed out to all Westside Road tax payers outlining your proposals and giving us the opportunity to meet with you and voice our opinions? The reason is that everyone would then be aware of your plans and you might God Forbid run into some opposition. You prefer to slide these tax increases and community cutbacks through hoping there is little or no voice of dissent. Seniors such as myself are on a set income. Inflation is currently at 3.4%. You want to propose a 16.5% increase on property taxes - a proposed \$168 increase and also an extra \$87 increase in fees for North Westside residents. Our facilities here are already at a bare minimum. The N.W. side transfer station is completely inadequate for the number of residents living here and the amount of people who use it. It's like something out of the 1970's. We lived in Cochrane AB. for 23 years. They had a newly built state of the art recycling depot..... Cochrane's population at the time was 23,000 people.

The unbelievable proposed increase in the R.D.C.O. admin. fees is totally unacceptable. A \$1 million increase for admin. departments..... REALLY?

The sooner we can get a body of competent people managing our finances and giving us value for money the better.

Sincerely Robert & Wendy Harrison.



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Donna Sauter

From: Pamela Kwiatkowski [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 3:14 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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To Whom it may concern:

We reside at [REDACTED] Westside Road, Kelowna BC V1Z 4T5 and deeply concerned about the enormous tax increase that are being applied to our community and the cuts in funding.

We would like answers to the following questions:

Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? Please show how and why these overhead costs are spiking.

How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit?

We demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions.

Please provide answers and consider reducing the massive tax increases being placed on our important community.

Thank you

Pamela Kwiatkowski
[REDACTED]

Donna Sauter

From: Andrea Cohen [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 2:56 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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My name is Andrea Cohen and I am a full time resident in Shelter Cove, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Westside Rd, V1Z3P8

Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? I call for increased transparency!!!!

How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?

What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?

Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit?

I demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions.

Sincerely,

Andrea Cohen

Sent from my iPhone

Donna Sauter

From: AL HUBER [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 2:52 PM
To: Finance
Cc: Wayne Carson; Kevin Kraft; ICE
Subject: "WITHOUT PREJUDICE" RDCO 2024-28 Financial Plan

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

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I have just seen the above for the very first time and am appalled by the contents and the significant impact on the residents of Westside Road. I am not sure why we have not been informed earlier as there appears to have been in the works for some time, this secrecy is not acceptable.

Here are a few issues that need to be addressed and must be rectified.

A). Why is there such a large spike in administrative overhead and why does it impact us so much. The North Westside volunteer Fire Department is hit with a 177% increase from 2020! What is the breakdown for this, where is it going? What is the justification for such a huge increase?

B). What justifies diverting grant funding from local services, this should be allocated equally by resident.

C). Why are we saddled with a \$453,038 deficit after diverting \$4,298,000 to WFN? All done without public consultation and as above should be shared equally by resident.

D). Out of a grant of \$6,950,000 our Electoral Areas only received \$863,810? How did you come to that figure, this is way too low!

My understanding is that both our Electoral Area Directors, Kevin Kraft and Wayne Carson had strong opposition to the cuts to local funding but this was passed and backed by municipal directors, who are supposed to be unbiased and act in the best interests of their constituents, neither appears to be the case.

It is hard to understand how you would take money and give it to other areas leaving one of the smallest areas in a deficit. We would like to see accountability from the Board as a whole for your historical spending decisions.

We are not in favour of this budget and respectfully that you review it again. All we ask is please listen to the input from both our Electoral area directors and distribute a fair budget.

We have suffered enough this year and if this budget goes forth without change, it will be catastrophic and potentially put our home ownership at risk.

Respectfully yours,

Al Huber - President/CEO
[REDACTED] Westside Road North
NuAGE International

Donna Sauter

From: Sue Huber [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 1:08 PM
To: Finance
Cc: Wayne Carson; [REDACTED] Kevin Kraft
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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After reviewing the above and seeing how it detrimentally impacts the West Electoral District we are deeply concerned. Our community has suffered losses like no other recently and to put this financial strain on us is frustrating, unfair and leaves a lot of unanswered questions.

1. Why is there such a huge spike in administrative overhead and why does it impact us so much. The North Westside volunteer Fire Department is hit with a 177% increase from 2020! What is the breakdown for this, where is it going? What is the justification for such a huge increase?
2. What justifies diverting grant funding from local services.
3. Why are we saddled with a \$453,038 deficit after diverting \$4,298,000 to WFN? All done without public consultation.
4. Out of a grant of \$6,950,000 our Electoral Areas only received \$863,810? How did you come to that figure?

My understanding is that both our Electoral Area Directors had strong opposition to the cuts to local funding but this was passed and backed by municipal directors.

It is hard to understand how you would take money and give it to other areas leaving one of the smallest areas in a deficit. We would like to see accountability from the Board as a whole for your historical spending decisions.

We are not in favour of this budget and ask that you review it again, listen to the input from both our Electoral area directors, distribute a fair budget and do not make our community suffer more than it already has.

Regards

Sue Huber, President

Wilson's Landing & Communities Society

[REDACTED] Westside Road N

Kelowna, BC. V1Z 3P8

[REDACTED]

Donna Sauter

From: Teresa Cusano [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 12:51 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan Concerns

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RE: Urgent Appeal for Enhanced Transparency and Accountability in RDCO's Financial Decisions

Dear Finance Department of RDCO,

We are writing to you with a deep sense of concern and urgency regarding the transparency, fairness, and accountability in the financial decisions impacting our community. Our shared commitment to a thriving and equitable community impels us to seek clarity on several pressing matters that have recently come to our attention.

- 1. Administrative Overhead Costs Surge:**We have noted a sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs and would greatly appreciate a comprehensive explanation for this development. Understanding the factors behind this increase will not only address our concerns but will also reinforce the trust we place in the financial stewardship of RDCO.
- 2. Utilization of North Westside Volunteer Fire Department Revenues:**Our community has a vested interest in the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department's crucial role in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire. To ensure transparency, could you provide detailed information on how the revenues generated by this department are being utilized? Specifically, we seek assurance that these funds are earmarked for essential purposes such as equipment and truck replacement, reinforcing our collective commitment to safety.
- 3. Grant Funding Allocation Criteria:**The diversion of grant funding from local services is a matter of great concern. We respectfully request a thorough explanation of the criteria used to justify such decisions. Understanding the rationale behind these allocations is essential for our community to comprehend the broader strategy at play and foster a sense of fairness.

4. **Deficit Burden on Electoral Area West Residents:**The \$435,038 deficit burden placed on residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) raises questions about the historical spending decisions of your Board. We seek clarity on how the Board as a whole, is held accountable for these decisions, as transparency in this matter is crucial for maintaining community trust.

Looking ahead, our apprehensions extend to the RDCO's 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan. As engaged members of this community, we would appreciate further insights and information to better understand the vision and strategies underpinning this plan.

We understand the complexities involved in managing financial matters, and we genuinely appreciate your dedication to the well-being of our community. Your timely response to these concerns will not only alleviate apprehensions but also reinforce our confidence in the RDCO's commitment to transparency and accountability.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these pressing matters. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Teresa Cusano & Melina Cusano

Owners

 Galway Place

Killiney Beach, Vernon, V1H 2G2

Donna Sauter

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 12:46 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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Dear RDCO,

My name is Troy Van Dyk and I live at [REDACTED] Dunwaters Road in Upper Fintry. I will not be paying my property tax this year or any year after until I have some confidence on how my contribution is being spent. The straw on the camel's back is the latest news of how our taxes are going up once again. I have yet to see any improvements in the whole Westside area, not just Westside Road, but our roads in Upper Fintry also. Sure, I understand how you will conveniently say roads are not of your concern and that MOTI is responsible for them. This does not weigh in with me as the money stolen from the People of the Province is squandered away by overpaying any government agency for the work that is not being accomplished. I have no sewer, I do not have roadside garbage collection, we have no stores, gas stations, medical clinic, schools, ambulance station, police station, streetlights, sidewalks, or transit. Most of these things we do not have is something not required out here but is a measuring stick so you can proportionally tax us accordingly. What I am being charged in taxes is like residents in municipalities with all the services mentioned. The questions I have are below. Please try and do your best to answer them with a genuine reply and not some boiler plate excuse. All government agencies are collaborating with each other and want to point fingers elsewhere where it goes in circles forever. With some very big changes coming on the horizon in the world, you ought to start doing the right things now to help the people rather than become part of the problem where justice being served may affect you as well.

1. Why the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs? Call for increased transparency
2. How are the revenues generated by the North Westside Volunteer Fire Department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire used and are they used for equipment and truck replacement?
3. What justifies diverting grant funding from local services?
4. Why are residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? Demand accountability from the Board as a Whole for their historical spending decisions.

Thank you,
Troy

Donna Sauter

From: Lou Cusano [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 12:30 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan Concerns

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RE: Urgent Inquiry Regarding Transparency and Accountability in Financial Matters

To the Department of Finance,

I trust this letter finds you well. I am writing with a genuine concern for the apparent lack of transparency, fairness, and accountability in the financial decisions of the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) that deeply impact our community.

- 1. Administrative Overhead Costs:** I am puzzled by the sudden and significant spike in Administrative Overhead costs. To foster trust and confidence among community members, I believe a comprehensive explanation for this increase is essential. Transparency in financial matters is crucial for building a strong and united community.
- 2. Utilization of Wildfire Revenues:** The North Westside Volunteer Fire Department's commendable efforts in suppressing the McDougall Creek Wildfire undoubtedly play a vital role in ensuring the safety of our community. However, I seek clarity on how the revenues generated from their participation are being utilized. Are these funds allocated appropriately for equipment and truck replacement to enhance the department's effectiveness?
- 3. Grant Funding Allocation:** I am concerned about the criteria used to divert grant funding from local services. Understanding the rationale behind such decisions is pivotal for community members to comprehend the priorities and ensure fairness in resource allocation.
- 4. Deficit in Electoral Area West:** The residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) are burdened with a substantial \$435,038 deficit. As a concerned member of this community, I request a detailed explanation of how this deficit has accrued and what measures are being taken to rectify the situation. Furthermore, how is the Board as a whole holding itself accountable for historical spending decisions that have led to this deficit?

Looking ahead to the RDCO 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan, I am eager to understand the vision and strategies in place. As a stakeholder in our community's well-being, I believe a transparent and inclusive financial plan is crucial for fostering a sense of security and cooperation among residents.

I appreciate your attention to these matters and sincerely hope for an open dialogue to address these concerns. Your commitment to transparency and accountability will undoubtedly strengthen our community and ensure a prosperous future for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Luigi Cusano

Owner

██████████ Galway Place

Killiney Beach, Vernon

V1H 2G2

Donna Sauter

From: Tane Meadows [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 07, 2024 3:09 PM
To: Finance; Tane Meadows
Subject: 2024-2028 five year Financial Plan

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I see our Property tax rising each year but NO improvements and even less Protection for our property, Why the sudden spike in administrative costs? I want transparency!

How are the revenues generated by North Westside volunteer Fire department for their participation in suppressing the McDougall Creed wildfire used ?

With the fire long over with and now NO protection for the next fire and we have NO generators in place or hooked up in the Killiney Beach area why ?

What is the Justification for diverting our Grant money from our local area when there is still need for our area's ?

Why are the residents in the Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10) saddled with a \$435,038 deficit? I would like clarification.

The Park at Westshore is being used minimally where a Pickleball court would be used on a daily Spring/Summer/Fall time activity and bring the community together, right now the people of the Northwest side are having to drive 45 mins just to play pickleball is this making sense for our roadway ? as this will have an impact on it! This is not making smart financial outcomes for most residents living out in this area thus losing some community members in the long run!, eventually they will move closer to town, and especially when they don't feel their homes are not protected because there is NO generators that can protect their homes, and they are paying very High Water/Sewer/Garbage bill that keep rising! and now Taxes that have been rising each year and nothing to show for it! 30 plus year roadways that only get patched badly at best!

The RDCO needs to start being more accountable for their overall choices!

Please answer all my questions.

Regards

Eric and Tane Meadows

email: [REDACTED]

Donna Sauter

From: Carol and Rick [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 10:11 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Increases in taxes

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Hello

I think taxes here are already sky high. Roads suck and we have in Fintry our own water system
We pay high taxes to Kelowna and with no garbage pickup, no amenities and poor roads. And you want to up our
taxes. We have hard enough time here paying what we have etc.
I am not the only one unhappy about this proposed hike.
Maybe there needs to be a change.

Have a Wonderful Day!

Donna Sauter

From: jane graydon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 7:42 AM
To: Finance
Subject: 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan

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Hello,

I am writing to voice my concerns about the 5 year financial plan.

I was shocked to learn of the sudden spike in Administrative Overhead costs. What is the rationale for the increases? As a taxpayer, I would really appreciate increased visibility into the details and rationale.

I would like to understand the justification for diverting grant funding from local services?

As a fiscally concerned citizen, can you please help me understand the \$435,038 deficit that the residents in Electoral Area West outside of WFN (IR#9 and IR#10)?

•
Thank you,

Jane Graydon
[REDACTED] Westside Rd. Vernon

Donna Sauter

From: Alicia Hudson [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 7:08 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Tax increase

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Hello

My name is Alicia Hudson and I live at [REDACTED] Udell Road, Killiney Beach.

I am reading information about the proposed tax increased and am speechless.

How do you justify increasing our taxes by such a substantial amount, as well as the increase to the quarterly bill. We already pay such a huge amount for our quarterly bill, and are constantly on water advisories so what are we really paying for....?

If RDCO spent time improving our area, I can understand the increase but we are just forgotten. Our power goes out multiple times a year, our water under what seems like constant advisory and our roads need a lot of work.

Reading that we are no longer allocated a grant to improve our park at Westshore, yet over 6million of the growing communities fund is kept for Kelowna, Lake Coutury, West Kelowna etc it seems like once again we are the forgotten child of RDCO.

I have in fact called RDCO regarding a bylaw question to which I was told we are not under RDCO. Your own staff don't even realise we are part of RDCO.

Why has the Administration overhead increased by one million? Is this pay increases to the staff? Can there be more transparency on why it is increasing by such a significant amount.

Why are the tax increases not the same across RDCO, make it fair and even.

Regards
Alicia Hudson

Donna Sauter

From: Sharon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 5:55 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Spike in admin overhead

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Why the extraordinary spike in admin overhead?

People with extraordinary budgets will be forced to sell their home and be homeless if this budget is passed.

Thank you
Sharon Schnurr

Sent from my iPhone

Donna Sauter

From: Sharon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 5:51 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Taxes

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It is unfathomable how much of a tax increase there is this year in the North Westside rural broke area. I am very upset with the RDCO. We live here cause we are broke. Just make sure that someone on welfare can afford to pay home taxes please cause I am stretched over my limit as it is.

Sharon Schnurr
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Donna Sauter

From: Gilles Chaput [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 1:09 PM
To: Finance
Subject: 5 Year Plan
Attachments: RDCO 2024_2028 Financial Plan.docx; RDCO Staffing vs Contract Costs.pdf

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Thank you for inviting input on the 2024-2028 Five Year Financial Plan for RDCO.

I have been going through your very detailed and informative documents and have prepared a paper with some comments and questions. I attach hereto the four page paper I prepared (word document) as well as a one page worksheet (PDF document) which is referenced in the paper.

Thank you for considering my comments and questions.

sincerely,

Gilles Chaput

[REDACTED] Guisachan Rd., Kelowna, BC, V1y 9R5
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RDCO
Regional District of Central Okanagan
2024 – 2028 Financial Plan
Input, Comments & Questions

- **Background & Disclaimer:**

I was raised in Manitoba, worked as a CA/CPA in Winnipeg and in Toronto, and retired in Kelowna in late 2009. In my lifetime I have served on committees and have board experience on many organizations including commercial entities (including some national and international), NPOs, charities, Federal & Province of MB government enterprises, and a MB crown corporation. My involvement with municipal government has never been as an elected official or employee, but I specialized for a time as an external auditor of several municipalities (14) and their related entities. I admit that since retiring in Kelowna (14 years ago) I have not paid much attention to municipal government affairs and thus prior to providing this limited input on the RDCO 2024-2028 Financial Plan I firstly needed to understand the RDCO and so I visited your website starting with the “What We Do” section. The 10 page Guide provided very good background and general information as well.

Thus because of my limited understanding of the purpose and mission of RDCO, my comments and questions that follow focus more on the changes being proposed rather than historical or existing operations & finances. (I tried to differentiate questions and comments)

- **Overall Budget Change**

- **Comment:** The “Guide to the RDCO Five Year Financial Plan” provides a lot of very informative detail about RDCO, its purpose, services, funding, etc. It is well prepared and laid out.

At first glance as a Kelowna resident I might not be too alarmed at a 2.2% increase in home taxes except that I must also think about the increases that the Province, SD23, the City of Kelowna and the Strata Corp will need to add to my home taxes and fees (yes, the Strata Corp too is a quasi municipal entity looking after water, sewer, streets, lighting, and so on). Thus it is better for this discussion to look at the 8.5% average increase for RDCO and consider whether all of that is necessary, whether there are economies that can be made in other areas to compensate for new items being added, and whether such increases are sustainable for the rest of the 5 year plan. We may still be living in a growth period in the Okanagan, but one day our grandchildren may be living in an austerity period.

- **Capital Expenditures, Reserves, Borrowing, Debt Servicing**
 - **Comment:** based on my limited knowledge of historical infrastructure investments at RDCO, my nonexistent understanding on long-term needs, and the complexity of funding such items through a mixture of current taxation, use of reserves, and incurring long-term debt, I am not able to comment in these areas and have few questions on those items at this point.
 - **Question:** I did scan all of the Appendices and noted on **Appendix “F” (page 4)** a park land acquisition for 2024 in the amount of \$3.5M+ which I presume would be subject to special discussion and decision by the RDCO Board separate from the Budget and Financial Plan approval.
 - Similarly, the \$7.6M+ expansion of the curbside waste / recycling program for 2024-2025 shown on **Appendix “F” (page 3)** should be subject to special discussion and decision by the RDCO Board separately from the Budget and not automatically approved with the adoption of the Financial Plan.
 - **Comments / Question:** General comments and a question regarding RDCO vehicles. At page 11 of the document entitled “**Regional Board Report – Request for Decision**” is a note under “Administration Service / Building Renovations” about an amount of \$395K for installation of EV charging stations (although not from taxation, but funded by reserves).
 - **Question:** has decision been made or is this necessary?
 - **Comments:**
 - Just like gas station installations are never paid by government or on government land, it seems to me that EV charging stations should not become a RDCO concern or burden on taxpayers;
 - For RDCO-owned vehicles the cost of gasoline, oil and maintenance was presumably always traceable, quantifiable, and used in asset control; likewise for EVs the cost of electricity, charging stations, batteries, and maintenance would need to be monitored per vehicle;
 - Amortization of capital assets is normally done over the useful life of an asset – if this accounting practice was in place for ICE vehicles, it should likewise be implemented for EVs;
 - I don’t know if RDCO has many vehicles, however I believe RDCO should adopt a cautious approach to conversion from ICE to EVs as more experience over time is needed to evaluate the long-term capital cost of EVs and replacement batteries. If RDCO has many vehicles it might consider looking at hydrogen ICE vehicles as well as EVs;

- Alternatively RDCO may consider asking the City of Kelowna if they keep such detailed costing and if so consider adopting a similar policy on vehicles (EV, ICE (gas), and ICE (hydrogen) vehicles) as the City does.

- **Administration Costs**

Other than the following comments / questions on staffing, I did not invest time in detailed reviews of the administration costs or overheads.

- **Comments:** Growth of staffing FTE

When looking at **Appendix “C”** I see that you are proposing new positions that would increase **FTE from 151.3 to 157.4 which is a 4%** increase in personnel. I do not know what the FTE increases have been in the past say five years, but I would be interested in knowing what increases in FTE are being proposed for the next few years in the 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

While I am ill-equipped to opine on how much personnel is required, I am always generally concerned with the “*growth of governments everywhere*” and thus I wonder whether we should be looking for areas where personnel can be reduced in order to accommodate new personnel and in an attempt to keep FTE from increasing.

I would certainly want RDCO to consider putting off these new FTE as follows:

- “Parks services” may be seasonal but as far as I am concerned they are quite good as is, and I would consider putting off the expansion of those services;
- The “victim services caseworker” position seems to me as being an example of overlap and duplication in government – I believe this service is the responsibility of the provincial government and that BC does provide victim services already;
- The “accounting advisor” is noted as “term” but I know that “term” often becomes “permanent” and I suggest instead that this transitional IT service be procured from a contractor;
- The “business development coordinator” position is shown as cost neutral, but I question that in the next section below. I have started to scan the RDCO website and plan to study its purpose, goals, mission in more detail, but in the interim I would also ask whether “economic development” is the responsibility of the individual

municipal governments who are members of RDCO and if so, I am concerned that RDCO involvement in that area risks being duplication and unnecessary.

- **Question:** Staffing vs. Contracting

I find that many organizations tend to oversimplify comparison between in-house staffing versus contracting out. **Appendix “C”** proposes adding a 1.0 FTE to replace contractors at a savings of \$17,000. **Question:** how is this saving (comparing the cost of contract **vs** employee cost) being calculated, does it include all costs related to employee compensation: as an example, I attached a sample worksheet to compare staffing costs to contracting out. In-house staffing is sometimes more expensive than contracting out when **all** costs are considered.

- **Conclusion**

My input is certainly not the result of in-depth review and analysis of the very detailed information you have provided, but just a few points that occurred to me as I perused the documents. As a starting point I always focus my thinking on the sustainability of current programs and services, and then on the long-term impact any new programs and services would have, and finally on whether those programs and services (existing & proposed) are aligned to the organization’s purpose and mission.

In conclusion, I want to thank RDCO for inviting comment and questions on the 2024 -2028 Financial Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Gilles Chaput

Gilles Chaput

██████████ Guisachan Road, Kelowna, BC, V1Y 9R5

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Donna Sauter

From: Reg Volk [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 10:59 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Re Financial Plan

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There needs to be much greater investment in rural fire departments and their satellite halls.

They are the departments that are first on the scene in area forest fires, and can sometimes offer some containment before fires spread too large.

But they often struggle for funding and updating of equipment.

Also, there needs to be a review of RDCO charges to manage community halls. I am aware of a recent \$90 charge just to open and close a community hall. This seems excessive and inhibits community members from using the hall for activities.

And there needs to be a greater effort to set aside larger spaces for rural protection and recreation. Joe Rich is getting totally overwhelmed with logging.

Thank You

Reg Volk

Sent from my iPad

Donna Sauter

From: Igor Afanasiev [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:31 PM
To: Finance
Subject: No tax hikes please

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Hello,

Me and my family are against the tax hike.
Please keep spending under control instead.

Thanks,
Igor

Donna Sauter

From: Tina Chalmers [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:50 AM
To: Finance
Subject: Tax Hike

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I know that taxes have to go up. However, I would say that 5% should be the limit. If the finances are publicly reviewed, and a shortfall in certain areas are evident, then there should be a way for the public to have their input, if the rate is going to increase more. I would like to see what areas are in desperate need for that 8% tax rate. Not only the areas but the **exact** areas and why. There are upgrades and purchases that are necessary, but there are also items that are frivolous and can wait or not be done at all. The books should be open to those taxpayers. We are living in a time where everything is highly overpriced, mainly due to greed of big food companies, the oil companies and government which are taxing us to death but can still fly around in their private jets, go to nice countries for their holidays often using that as an expense, or go out to very expensive meals for a so-called meeting that they can write off. It is time that the regular people who are **paying** these high prices on taxes have a say in the extravagance that is being seen as entitlement by those in charge.

I strongly believe that seniors who are on limited income, and who have lived in their home more than 20 years should be grandfathered in and keep their taxes very low. The increase of taxes are causing some seniors to have to either give up their medication, heat or food, or have to move out and live on the streets, since renting has sky rocketed.

Thank you
Tina Chalmers
Sent from my iPad

Donna Sauter

From: Erin Burton <Erin.Burton@sd23.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 9:07 PM
To: Finance
Subject: potential tax increase

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Can the RDCO board guarantee no salary increase for it's members during the 2024-2028 fiscal plan? The last thing people want to hear is that we're paying 8.5% more in tax to cover increased salaries that are already quite high. Is the increase in tax revenue really going to be used for infrastructure? Also, why don't developers have to contribute more to the city coffers and contribute to parks and recreation/sidewalks/schools directly since it is the developers that are essentially increasing the population?

Erin Burton

I acknowledge that I live, work, play and learn on the unceded traditional territory of the Okanagan Syilx people.

Donna Sauter

From: Kelowna Tree Guy <kelownatreeservice@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:58 PM
To: Finance
Subject: Proposed 8.5% property tax hike

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Hello

I live on June Springs. Have you guys lost your minds??? Its hard enough to pay bills and buy groceries.....and you people want to hike our property taxes by 8.5%.....??????? for what?

--

Rob's Tree Care LTD

Brad Zazulak - Owner/Operator

Cell : 250-212-8656

Email : kelownatreeservice@gmail.com

" For all your tree care needs"

Donna Sauter

From: Craig Thomas [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:26 PM
To: Finance
Subject: Possible 8.5% tax increase

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We are breaking under the weight of inflation and high interest costs. An 8.5% increase in RDCO property taxes is more than we can absorb. If implemented, it will certainly help push us into a gull blown recession

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FORUM TOPIC

Budget and five-year financial plan - share your comments and questions

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19 January 24 [REDACTED]			Unfortunately costs have risen in recent years for a variety of reasons. However to increase the taxation during an economic downfall for most residents of the Greater Okanagan Region is ridiculous. The motto appears to be tax tax tax in Canada. British Columbia more so even with provincial sales tax thrown in for good measure. Perhaps RDCO could instill financial prudence instead. What a novel idea!
AGREES 1	DISAGREES 0	REPLIES 0	