



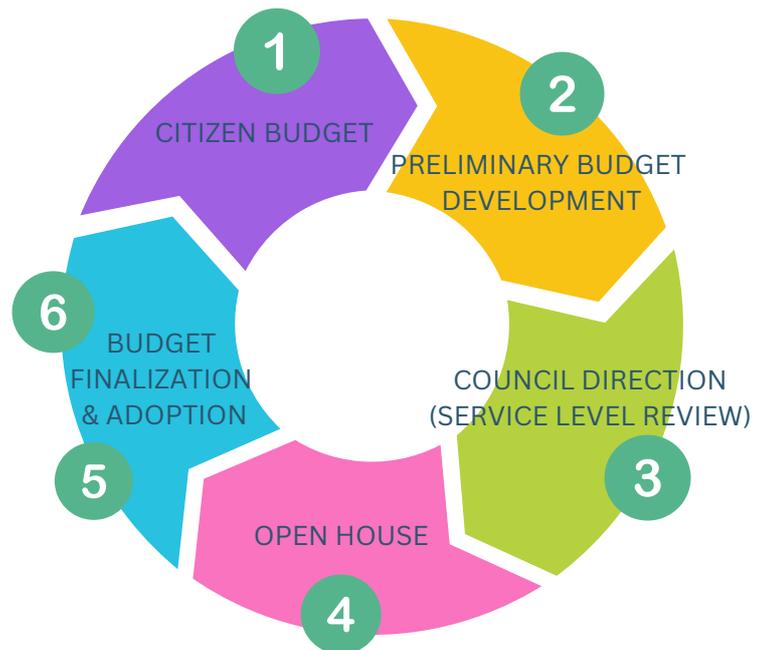
# 2024 Budget Information

## Budget Process 2024

The budget conversation takes place over several months and includes both opportunities for consultation and education. Resident input lays the foundation for our budget development.

What We Heard through phase one budget consultation is combined with master plans to refine the District's five-year financial plan and detail the budget for the year ahead.

- 1 Annual Budget Survey**  
June–August 2023; What We Heard  
Available November 2023
- 2 Preliminary Budget Development**  
November–December 2023
- 3 Council Direction on Service Levels**  
January 2024
- 4 Budget Readings**  
February 2024
- 5 Budget Open House**  
March 2024
- 6 Adoption**  
March 2024



## Inside

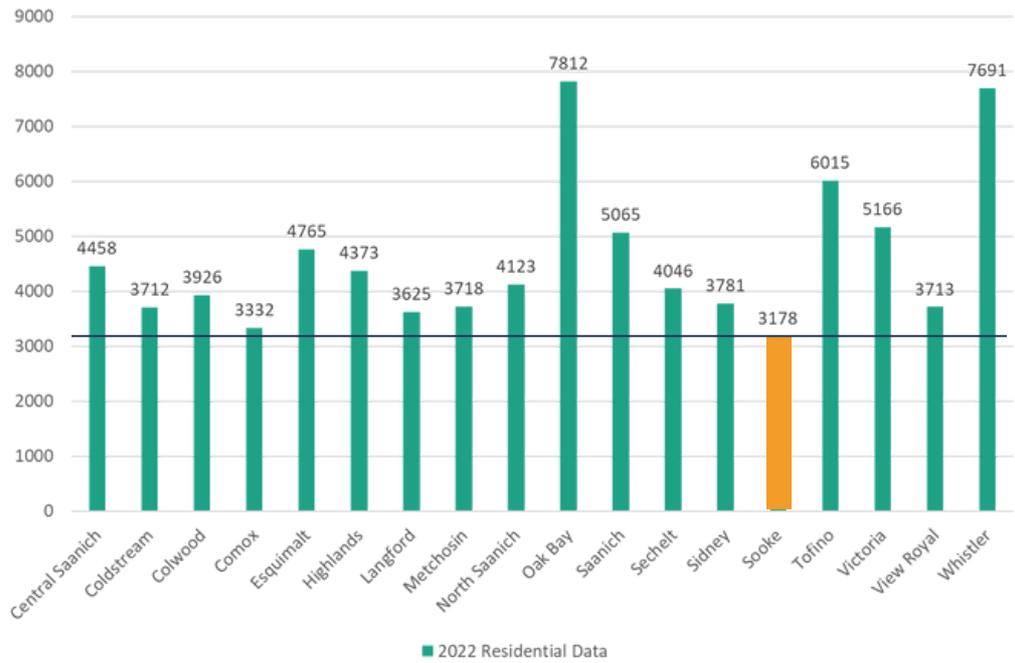
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Updating the District's budget is a year-long, cyclical, process. It starts each year with the Annual Budget Survey in mid-June where residents can provide input on budget priorities and service levels.

## How do District property taxes compare to other municipalities?

The District of Sooke is committed to ensuring fiscal responsibility while responding to the needs of a growing community.

**DID YOU KNOW:** Sooke taxes and charges are among the lowest when evaluated against neighbouring municipalities and those with comparable populations and geographic size. Please note that this is not a direct comparison as services vary between municipalities.



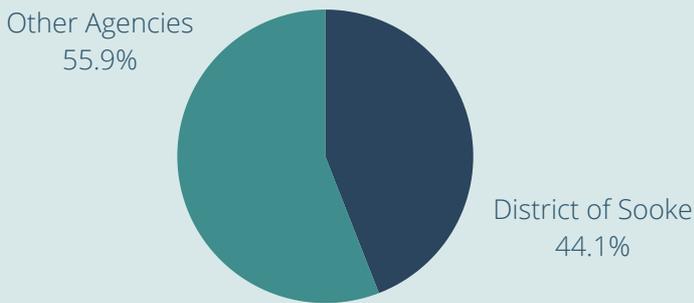
Source: Government of British Columbia, Municipal taxes and charges on a representative house (2022)

Note: Representative house value is generally the average assessed value for each community

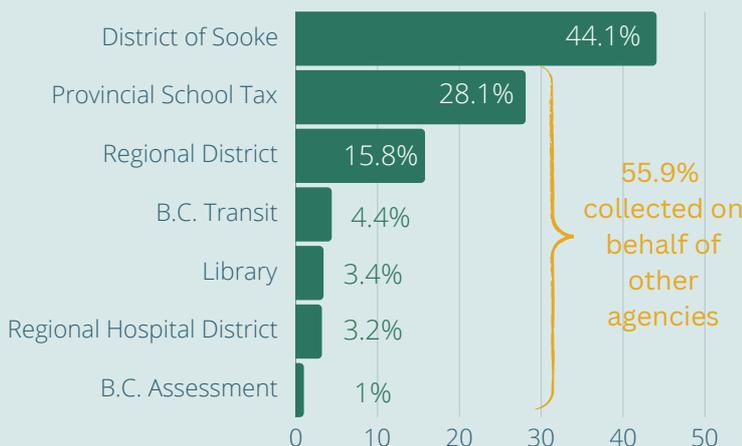
This information is based on provincial data of taxes and charges on a representative house (2022).

## Less than half of your tax bill is municipal tax.

55.9% of the charges on your property tax bill are collected for **OTHER AGENCIES** over which the District has no direct control. It all goes on one tax notice so you don't have to deal with multiple bills.



## Tax Bill Distribution by Agency



## Resident Priorities

We're listening.

Through 2024 Phase One Budget Engagement you let us know about your top priorities:

- traffic management and planning, including the ability to safely walk and bike around town;
- Emergency response services (police and fire)
- Parks and greenspaces (including care for the environment)
- Health and Wellness Services; and
- Community planning.

### Current actions:

- Church/Thrup Roundabout (critical step to future Phillips Road Connector to assist with traffic flow off of Highway 14)
- Charters Road Corridor – structural repairs + sidewalks and bike lanes
- 24/7 fire rescue services
- 24/7 police services
- Little River Pedestrian Crossing to 100% Design
- Ravens Ridge Park Enhancements
- Standing Committee on Community Health Centre
- Hiring of a Manager of Community Planning and Community Economic Development Officer

See the 2024 Budget What We Heard Report at [letstalk.sooke.ca/budget](http://letstalk.sooke.ca/budget)

# FAQs

## What is an operating budget?

The operating budget outlines the District's day-to-day investment plan to implement Council's goals and priorities. It is based on day-to-day operations of programs and services, such as road maintenance, parks, and fire and police services. Examples of operating expenses include salaries and wages, insurance, supplies, fuel and utilities. Contributions to capital reserve funds and debt servicing payments are also made from the operating budget.

## What are the District's Operating funding sources?

The District's operating budget is funded through property tax revenue, user fees, grants/subsidies, transfers from contingency reserves and other revenues such as investment income and fines/penalties. Annual operating costs are approximately \$10 million.

## What is a capital budget?

The capital budget outlines the District's capital investment plan and related funding for assets and other programs, such as water and sewer infrastructure, roads, arenas and parks, which will provide or support services to residents over many years. The District seeks grant funding to assist with the significant costs for capital projects wherever possible.

## What are the funding sources for capital projects?

Funding sources for capital projects include:

- Capital Levy
- Development cost charges
- Other government funding
- Reserves and reserve funds, subject to adequate balances
- Debt financing, provided that all other funding sources are exhausted

## How successful has the District been with grant applications?

To manage tax increases and maximize the return on each dollar from residents, grants have proven to be a considerable funding source for the District. For example, in recent years District revenue from grants exceeded revenues from residential property taxes. Projects such as Otter Point Road corridor improvements including sidewalk additions and the multi-use sports box were funded predominantly through grants and not property taxes.

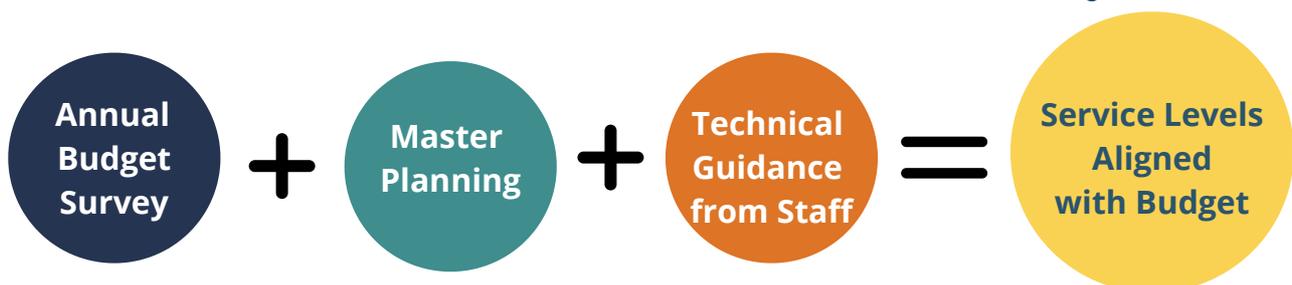
## What are District services? How are services and service levels determined?

Municipal services are the activities, work or facilities provided to residents on behalf of a municipality. Services in Sooke funded predominantly by property taxes include municipal roads, underground services, parks, fire and policing (contracted service with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police). Services in Sooke funded predominantly by user fees include sewer, and planning and development services including building permits. District service levels are evaluated annually through the District's open budget process with the Mayor and Council as the ultimate decision makers.

Consideration for expanded service levels may include enhanced road maintenance, yard waste removal or other initiatives identified through master planning process.

## What are fixed costs?

Fixed costs are non-discretionary expenses that the District is unable to reduce due to contract commitments or rising costs in mandatory expenses. For 2023, these types of expenses include Property insurance (rising costs) and insuring additional assets, and contracted service agreements.



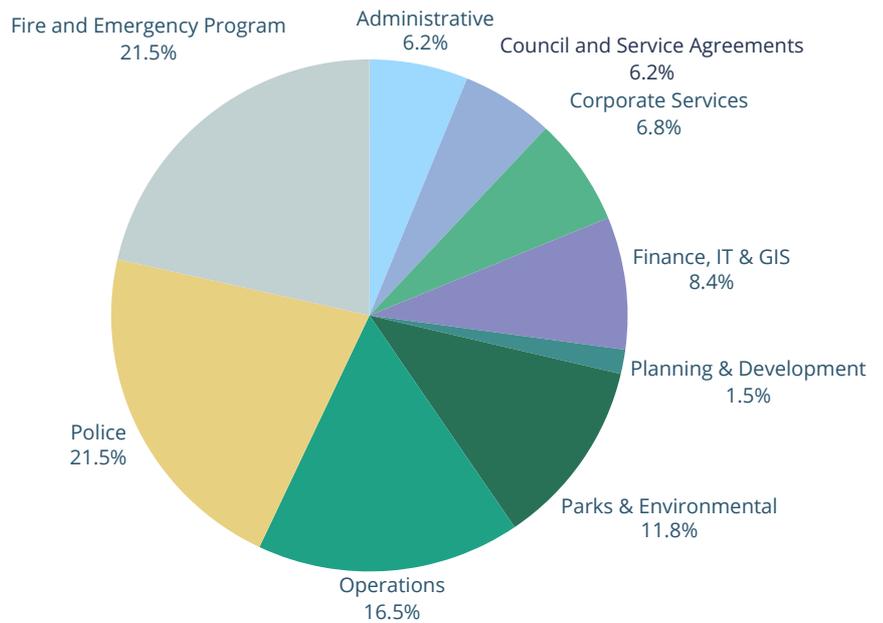
*How service levels come together with the municipal budget*

## Distribution of Sooke Taxes Between District Service Areas

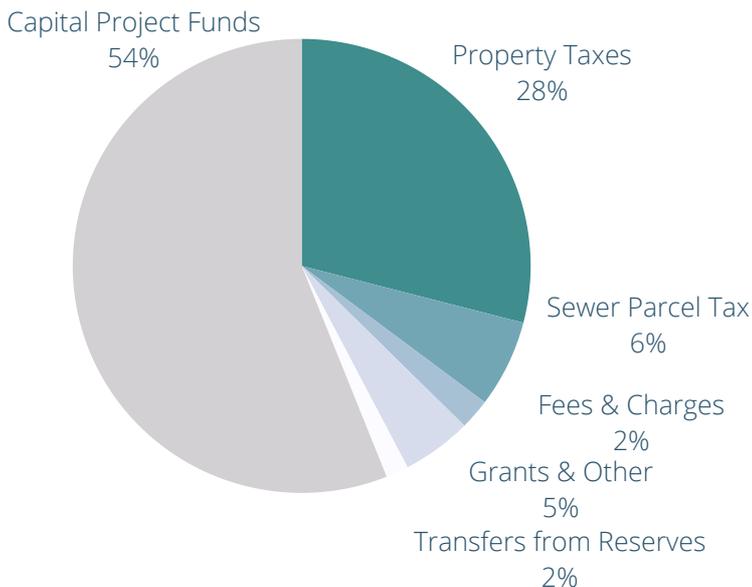
This chart displays an approximate distribution of tax dollars between service areas within the 2023 budget.

Approximate values (2023 Budget):

- Police: \$2.3 million
- Fire Rescue and Emergency Program: \$2.3 million
- Operations (Roads and Underground Services): \$1.8 million
- Parks & Environmental Services: \$1.3 million
- Finance, IT and GIS: \$900,000
- Corporate Services, including Bylaw: \$750,000
- Administrative: \$675,000
- Council & Service Agreements: \$630,000
- Planning & Development: \$170,000



## What other funding sources, in addition to property taxes, are available to the District?



Property taxes are one of several funding sources for District services. For example, other sources include (2023 Budget):

- Sewer Parcel Taxes: \$2.4 million
- Fees and Charges: \$837,000
- Licenses and Permits: \$1.1 million
- Grants and other, i.e. Community Building Fund, Small Community Fund: \$1.9 million
- Transfers from Reserves: \$615,674
- Capital Funds: \$21,609,607

## What other key milestones take place after the budget is approved?

- District receives third-party (e.g. Schools, Capital Regional District, Hospitals) tax information in the Spring.
- Tax Rate Bylaw brought forward in May
- Property tax notices mailed in late May/early June
- The property tax payment period closes July 2, 2024
- Budget 2025 preparations begin with an Annual Budget survey, taking place from mid-June to mid-August