

# 2019 Budget In Brief



## **Saanich Council has finalized the 2019 Budget.**

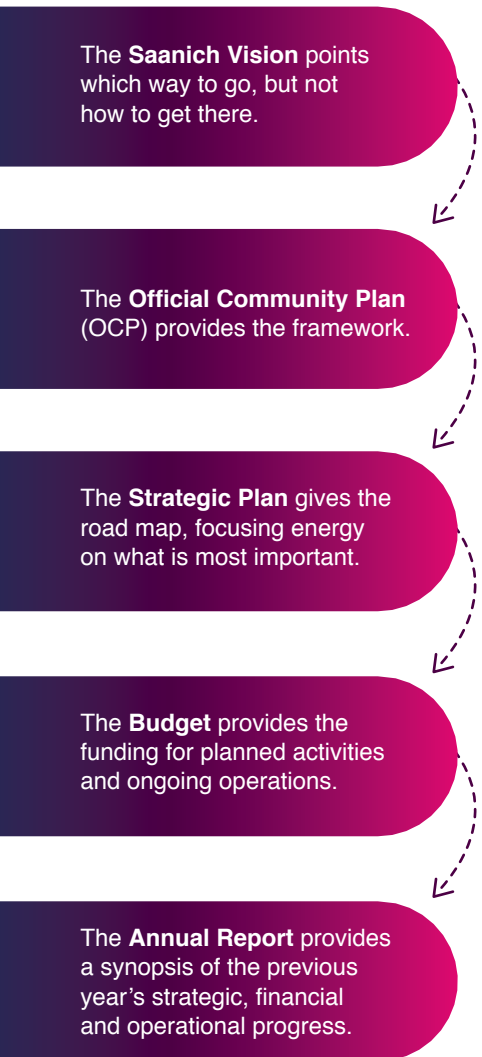
Take a look at the plans the District of Saanich has for the coming year and how taxes and fees you pay will maintain and improve the services you enjoy every day.





## Saanich's strategic priorities

### OUR PROCESS



## Saanich's strategic priorities are aligned with the Official Community Plan

The Strategic Plan is Saanich's roadmap that tells us where we are going and what kind of community we hope to be. Our Strategic Plan is guided by three fundamental elements adopted by Saanich Council:

- **Our vision or Official Community Plan (OCP)**
- **Our mission**
- **Our values**

The Official Community Plan expresses the fundamental values and goals of our community and describes a future view of our community that we are committed to achieving. The OCP embraces three themes that Council and the community identified as core focus areas for Saanich over the next 20 years - environmental integrity, social well-being and economic vibrancy.

Through the Strategic Plan, Council defines the municipality's priorities, processes, and short and long term plans. Council ensures that the five-year financial plan and annual budget processes allocate funds and resources used to achieve our goals.

## The 2019 budget includes many initiatives to continue Saanich's commitment to the community and corporate themes:

### ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

- **Sustainable environment**
  - Replacement of aging asbestos, cement, sewer and water mains, and cast iron water mains
- **Balanced transportation**
  - Investment in road, sidewalk and bikeway additions and improvements

### SOCIAL WELL-BEING

- **Healthy community**
  - Investment in park, playground and trail projects
  - Implement the Older Adult Strategy
- **Safe community**
  - Investment in active and safe routes to schools
  - Increase capacity in Bylaw Enforcement

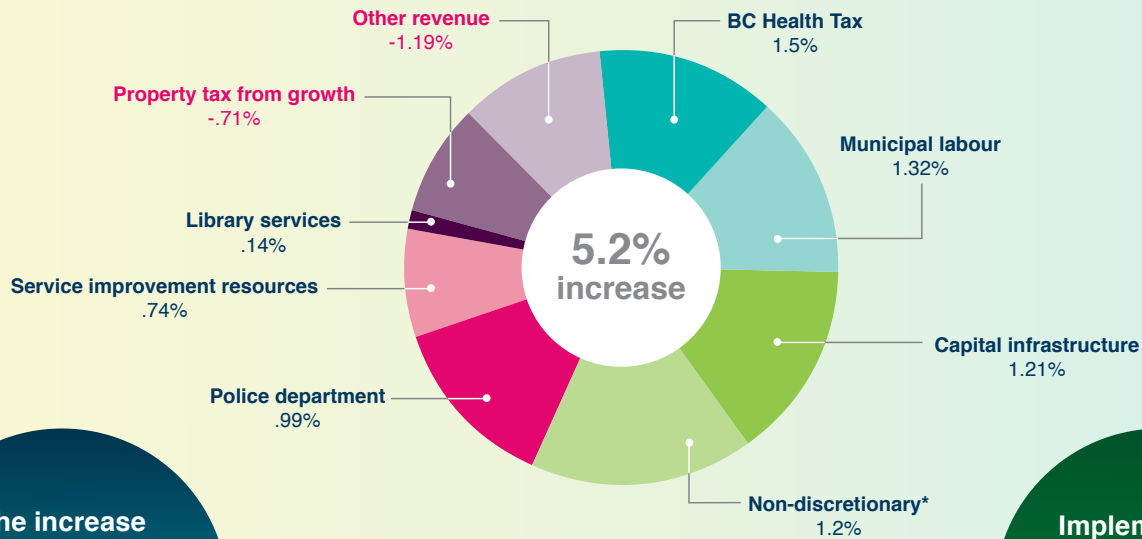
### ECONOMIC VIBRANCY

- **Vibrant, connected economy**
  - Investment in development approvals capacity
- **Service excellence**
  - Strengthen information technology infrastructure and implement service-focused programs and tools
  - Investment in service delivery capacity in community planning and development
  - Improve internal capacity in human resources, safety and finance

# Why did Saanich property tax increase by 5.2%?

The Saanich budget saw an overall net increase in property tax of 5.2%. This increase came from a variety of investments in everyday services you and your neighbours enjoy and also for repair and replacement of the assets that support delivery of those services.

## Municipal property tax increase 2019

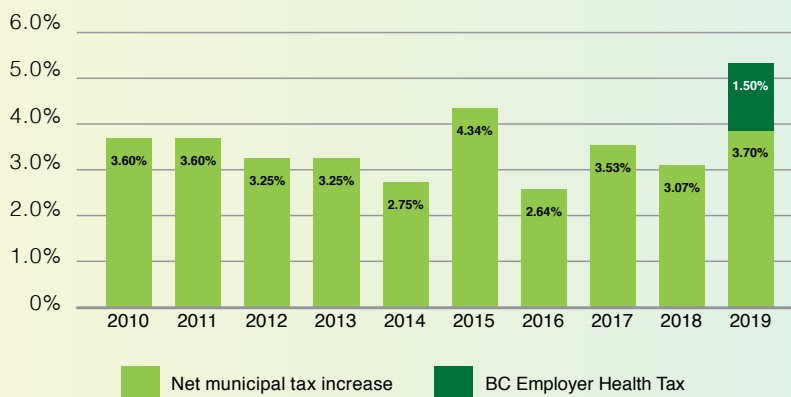


\*Non-discretionary – includes increases to utilities, contracts, insurance, fuel and other costs that are impacted by factors outside of Saanich’s control.

The increase for municipal services resulted in an increase in property taxation of 3.7%

Implementation of the BC Employer Health tax resulted in an increase in property taxation of 1.5%

## Annual property tax increases

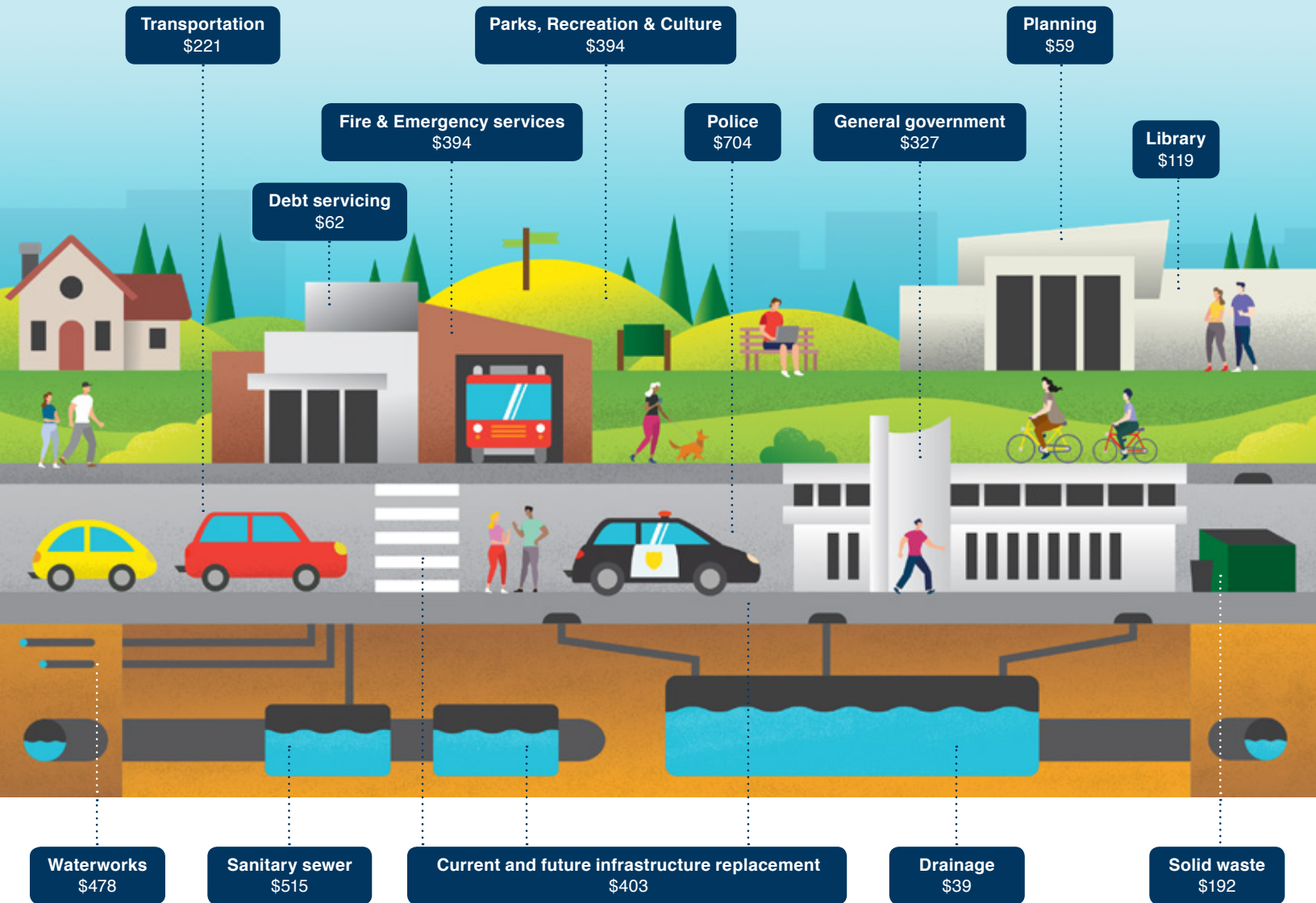


## External senior government-related increases

- **New Provincial Employer Health Tax** – the transition from BC Medical Service Plan premiums to an employer health tax means that a portion of your property tax will now fund provincial health services.
- **The Federal Government** is implementing an [Enhanced CPP Program](#) designed to help increase retirement income for working Canadians and their families. Saanich must pay the increased contribution rate for all its employees.

# What services does the budget support?

The taxes and fees you pay fund a wide variety of municipal services.



## Average taxes and fees = \$3,907:

- Taxes are based on 2019 budgeted municipal taxes for an average homeowner with a property assessment of \$924,100.
- Solid waste fees are based on cart sizes of 120 litres each for garbage and organic per household.
- Waterworks fees are based on the 2018 average homeowner's consumption of 268 cubic metres.
- Sanitary sewer fees are based on the 2018 average homeowner's usage of 162 cubic metres.
- General government includes administration, finance, human resources, information technology, safety, communications, bylaw and inspections services.

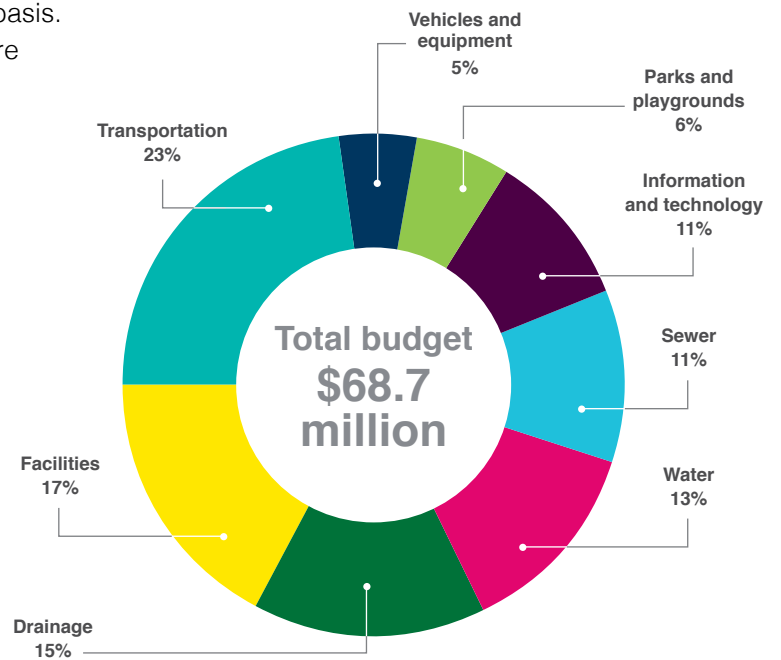
# 2019 Capital budget

## How are the capital projects for the year determined?

Saanich is committed to taking care of the assets we all own, from sewer and water lines to roads, trails, parks, buildings, and vehicles. Proper stewardship means ensuring appropriate funding is available to keep them in good working order and replace them when their useful life is over.

To accomplish that, we establish how much we need to be funding this repair and replacement on an annual basis. The specific projects to be completed each year are determined by considering:

- **Master plans** (The Active Transportation Plan, Shelbourne Valley Action Plan and Parks Management plans, to name a few)
- **Condition assessments**
- **Health and safety**
- **Maintenance history**
- **Risk assessments**
- **Efficiency and coordination** with other capital projects.



## Key 2019 projects

- **Shelbourne Street improvement project**  
Phase 1 - \$12M for road, water, sewer and drain improvements
- **Durrance Road Bridge replacement – \$900K**
- **West Saanich Road/Sparton Road/Prospect Lake Road intersection improvements – \$2.6M**
- **Wilkinson Road upgrades – \$1.1M**
- **Saanich Commonwealth Place mechanical upgrade and lighting replacement – \$4.1M**
- **Tree and trails programs – \$816K**

Wilkinson Road upgrades



Shelbourne Street improvement project



Saanich Commonwealth Place

## 2019 Saanich utilities

### Saanich builds, maintains and operates three underground systems.

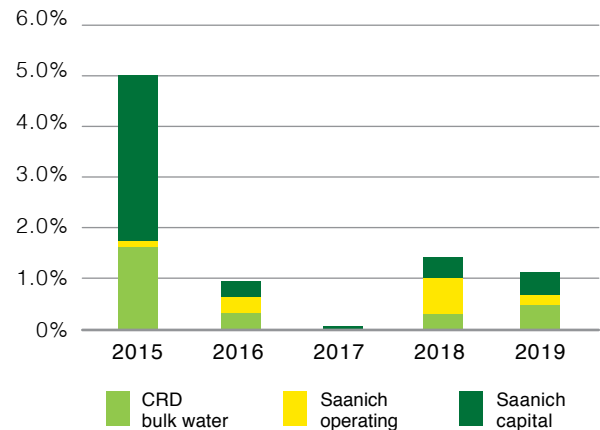
Water and sanitary sewer are utilities funded through user fees and storm drainage is funded through your tax dollars. These underground systems require daily operational repair and maintenance (operating budget) and major repair and replacement (capital budget).

### Working together

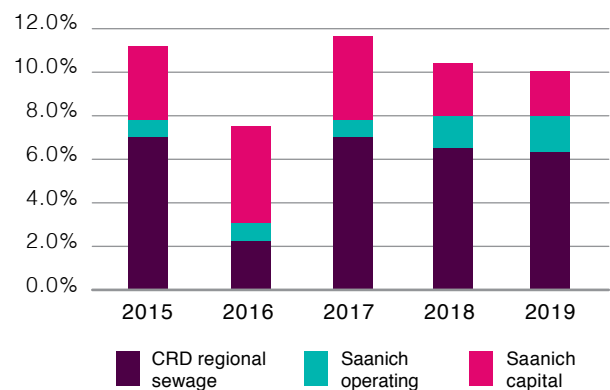
**Saanich works in collaboration with the Capital Regional District (CRD) to provide underground services.** The CRD is responsible for treating, disinfecting and supplying drinking water from a large trunk watermain network that distributes water to all of the municipalities in the region. It is also responsible for the treatment of sewage and implementation of the regional sewage treatment infrastructure. The fees for the CRD portion of the system are collected when you pay your Saanich utility bill, and we pass the money on to them. This streamlines the revenue collection into one bill. Saanich is responsible for the distribution of safe and reliable drinking water, collection of sanitary wastewater and stormwater management services.

## Over time: a look at water and sewer rate increases

Water rate increases



Sewer rate increases



## Significant 2019 capital projects

### WATER

Investing close to \$8.2 million in major repair and replacement in the 2019 budget

- Foul Bay Road water main improvements
- Asbestos, cement and cast iron main replacement at over 13 locations

### STORM DRAIN

Investing close to \$9 million in major repair and replacement in the 2019 budget

- Gorge Road storm drain improvements
- Wood stave and substandard replacement at over 10 locations

### SANITARY SEWER

Investing over \$7.8 million in major repair and replacement in the 2019 budget

- Asbestos cement main replacement at over 13 locations
- Construction of Portage Pump Station
- Lift station condition assessments

# Making decisions with public consultation and support

Our *Community Charter* requires that Council undertake a process of public consultation regarding the proposed financial plan before it is adopted. Each year, Council follows a “Financial Plan – Public Consultation Policy”. In 2018, an additional public engagement campaign focused on strategic and financial planning gathered feedback from the community that helped inform Saanich’s 2019 processes and policies.

## Citizen and business surveys tell us what’s important to you

Traditionally, a statistically valid survey is offered to both residents and businesses in Saanich, for a newly elected Council. Our most recent [surveys](#)—completed in January 2019—are Council’s best source of information and feedback. They assist Council in making important budget decisions by providing broad and representative engagement data.

## A sample of what we heard in our 2019 survey results

Are residents pleased with the overall direction Saanich is taking?

**YES 78%**

Do Saanich residents feel the District of Saanich is doing a good job in general?

**YES 90%**

Do residents and businesses feel they receive good value for tax dollars?

**88%** Saanich business owners strongly or somewhat agree

**81%** Saanich residents strongly or somewhat agree

## Input on taxation and service levels — helping Council make future financial decisions

Here’s what residents think about taxation and levels of service:

- 38%** Maintain same level of services with managed tax increases
- 20%** Reduce services with lower taxes
- 15%** Improve municipal services with higher taxes
- 15%** Introduce new user fees for some services that currently have none
- 12%** Increase user fees for municipal services that currently have fees

## What is your biggest hope for the future? What’s the most important issue facing the District?

Here are the top three answers gathered from 2019 survey results:

### BIGGEST HOPE FOR SAANICH:

- 16%** More affordable housing
- 15%** Protect nature and improve green spaces
- 11%** Improve infrastructure: roads, water, drainage



### TOP ISSUES FOR COUNCIL’S ATTENTION:

- 22%** Housing issues
- 9%** Traffic and traffic congestion
- 9%** Environment and enhanced greenspaces



Your questions and feedback are always welcome. Contact the Finance Department at **250-475-5415** or [\*\*budget@saanich.ca\*\*](mailto:budget@saanich.ca)

More resources are available at [\*\*saanich.ca/shapingsaanich\*\*](http://saanich.ca/shapingsaanich)

