

# 2023 Budget In Brief

## **Saanich Council has finalized the draft 2023 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

The **Saanich Vision** points which way to go, but not how to get there.

The **Official Community Plan (OCP)** provides the framework.

The **Strategic Plan** gives the road map, focusing energy on what is most important.

The **Budget** provides the funding for planned activities and ongoing operations.

The **Annual Report** provides a synopsis of the previous year's strategic, financial and operational progress.

**89% of residents rate the quality of life in Saanich as good or very good.**

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

The Strategic Plan is Saanich's road map that guides the activities during Council's four-year term in office and beyond. The Strategic Plan goals, initiatives and actions will move Saanich toward its future vision as outlined in the Official Community Plan (OCP).

The OCP provides direction, focus and guidance on how to manage future growth and change in our community. Our OCP places emphasis on three themes:

- **environmental integrity**
- **social well-being**
- **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.

## What are the most important issues currently facing the District of Saanich?

Here's what we heard from you in our 2022 Citizen and Business Surveys.

The survey was completed by 316 respondents and of all the topics, residents rated Saanich highest on measures related to quality of life. A majority of residents feel safe in their neighbourhood (77%), feel a sense of belonging (64%) and agree that Saanich services are responsive to the needs of a diverse population (62%).

Respondents from the citizen survey said affordability (housing and tax increases) and transportation and infrastructure (e.g., traffic, bikes lanes, etc.) are the most important issues currently facing Saanich followed by planning and development (including density).

Also worth noting were the number of comments related to road and sidewalk improvements. The provision of road and sidewalk and cycling infrastructure is a high priority for Saanich residents.

Residents are largely satisfied with the overall quality (68%) and level (67%) of services provided by Saanich. Share your input on Saanich's financial future via our regularly scheduled surveys. The next one will take place within 2024.

# Moving the Strategic Plan forward in 2023

The 2022 budget saw a renewed commitment to moving our community forward. In 2023 Council has continued to take strides towards implementing Saanich's Strategic Plan goals and initiatives by allocating the following funds in the Draft Financial Plan



## Affordable Housing, Land Use and Infrastructure Management

- \$15,238,000 to continue replacing asbestos cement sewer mains and asbestos cement and cast iron water mains
- \$1,584,000 for Information Technology infrastructure upgrades



## Climate Action and Environmental Leadership

- \$4,478,000 for park, playground, trail and other park infrastructure replacement
  - Park Renewals phases at Fowler and Lochside
  - Mount Doug and Arbutus Cove Washroom additions
  - Wedgewood Tennis Court reconstruction
  - Garry Oak and Aspen restoration projects
  - Various tree planting projects
- A minimum of \$18,199,000 of road, sidewalk and bikeways additions and improvements in areas such as:
  - Shelbourne Street Improvement Phase-2 2.5km sidewalk, 2.8km cycling
  - Sinclair Road Phase-2 1.9km sidewalk, 1.9km cycling
  - Gorge Road (Tillicum Road to Harriet Road) 450m sidewalk, 1.7km cycling
  - Cadboro Bay (Walema to Rambler) 500m sidewalk, 690m cycling



## Economic Diversification

- \$77,600 to continue to support the implementation of the Economic Development Section



## Community Well-being

- \$1,598,000 in funding to provide fleet, IT and other capital replacement for protective services
- \$280,000 in funding to hire one additional 24/7 firefighter (5.25 FTE) partial
- \$150,000 in annual funding for the Active and Safe Route to School Program
- \$1,155,000 in various road improvements to Bus Stops, Signals and Street Lights:
  - Intersections and traffic signal program
  - Street furniture program
  - LED street light program

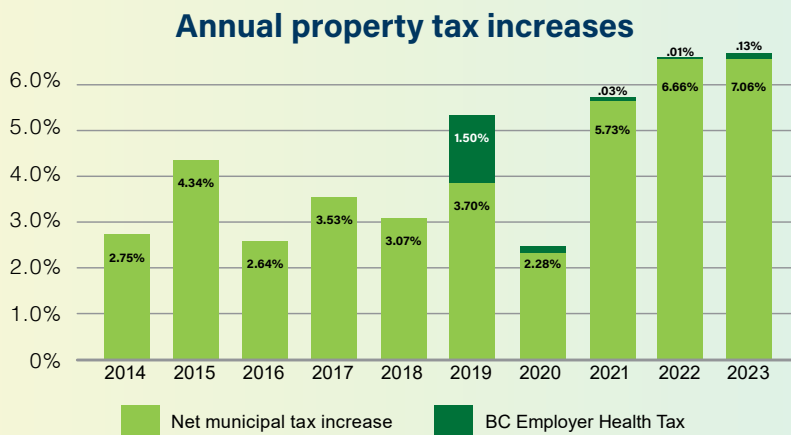
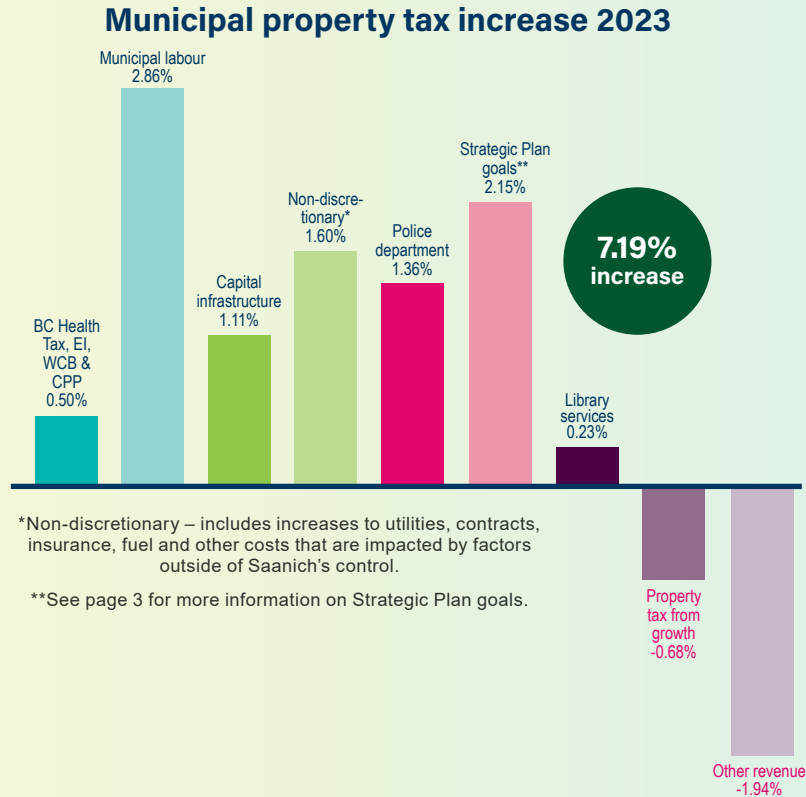


## Organizational Excellence

- \$933,200 in funding to maintain new assets added in the prior year and to offset inflationary costs to maintain service levels
- \$4,818,000 for operations Business Systems upgrades

# Why did Saanich property tax increase by 7.19%?

The Saanich budget saw an overall net increase in property tax of 7.19%. This increase came from a variety of investments in everyday services you and your neighbours enjoy, for the repair and replacement of the assets that support delivery of those services and funding to move forward with Strategic Plan goals.

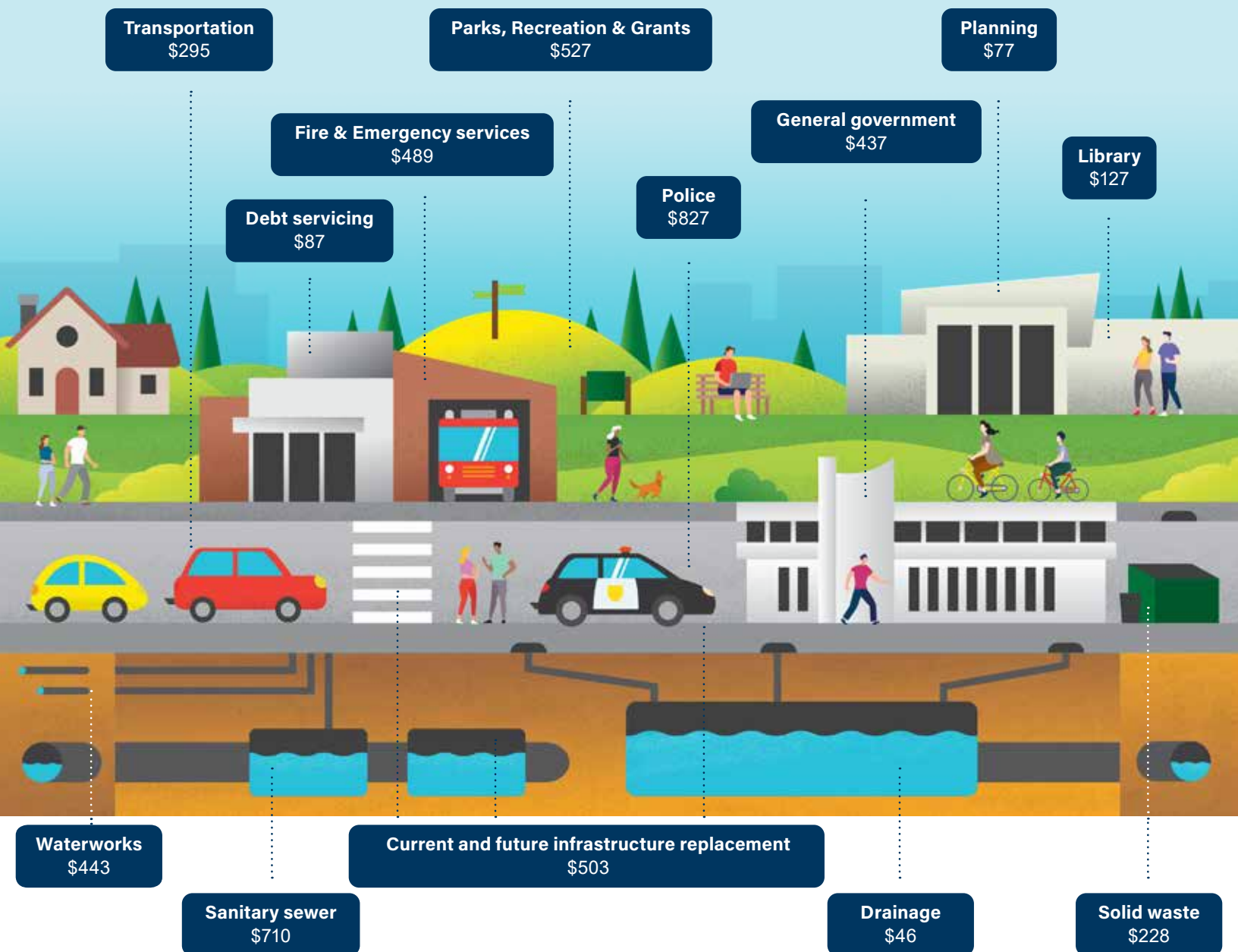


## External senior government-related impacts

- The COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant** – The Federal and Provincial Governments provided the District a one-time COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant of \$7,453,000. These funds were used in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and will be used in 2023 to address revenue shortfalls and additional operating costs associated directly with the pandemic.
- The Federal Government** is implementing an [Enhanced CPP Program](#) designed to help increase retirement income for working Canadians and their families. Saanich must pay this 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.



## Total taxes and fees of \$4,796:

- Taxes are based on 2023 budgeted municipal taxes for an average homeowner with a property assessment of \$1,306,800.
- Sanitary sewer fees are based on the 2022 average homeowner's usage of 184 cubic metres.
- Solid waste fees are based on cart sizes of 120 litres each for garbage and organic per household.
- General government includes administration, finance, human resources, information technology, safety, communications, bylaw and inspections services.
- Waterworks fees are based on the 2022 average homeowner's consumption of 201 cubic metres.

# 2023 Capital budget

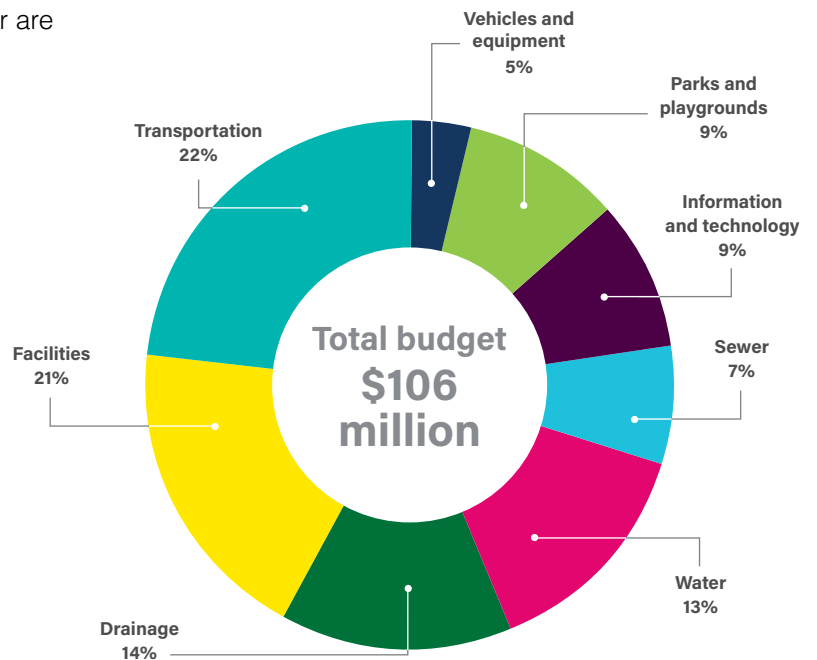
## How are the capital projects for the year determined?

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 2023 projects

- **Shelbourne Street Improvement Project Phase 2** – \$22.8M
- **Sidewalk and cycling Installation Program** – \$3.6M
- **Fleet, IT & other capital replacement for protective services** – \$1.6M
- **Lochside/Fowler Park Renewal Phase 2** – \$850K
- **Parkes HVAC upgrades** – \$3.1M
- **Tree and Trails Programs** – \$1.3M

Lochside Park



Protected bike lane



Cedar Hill Recreation Centre

For detail on more capital projects go to the [Capital Projects Guide 2023](#)

## 2023 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).

### Water rate increases

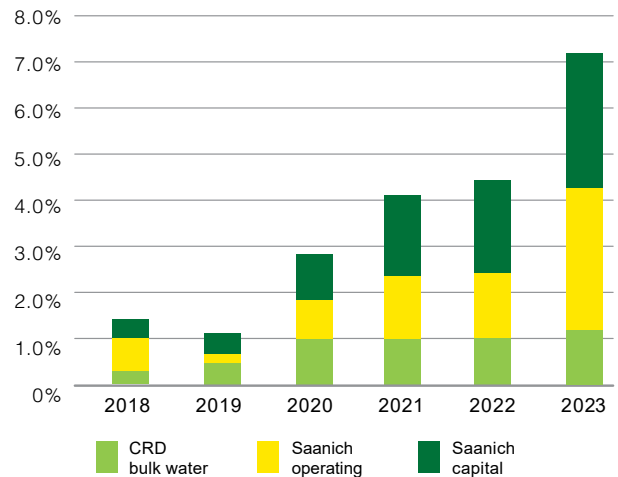
Although regular water consumption has reduced, the overhead costs remain the same. Over 70% of the water rate increase is to offset the annual cost of delivering the water services.

### Working together

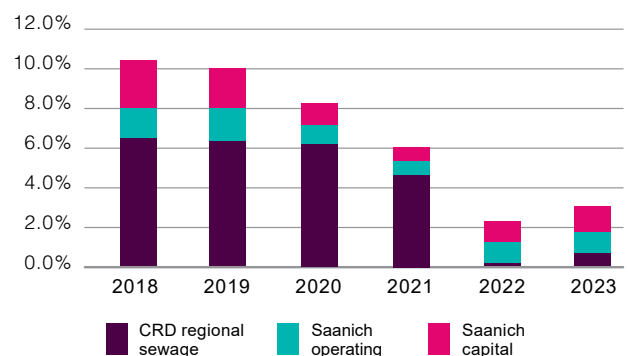
**Saanich works in collaboration with the Capital Regional District (CRD) to provide underground services.** The CRD is responsible for treating, disinfecting and supplying drinking water from a large trunk watermain network that distributes water to all of the municipalities in the region. It is also 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 2023 capital projects

### WATER

Investing \$14.3 million in major repair and replacement in the 2023 budget

- Shelbourne street improvement project- Phase 2 (North Dairy Rd. to Pear St.)
- Water meter replacement
- Asbestos, cement and cast iron main replacement at over 14 locations

### STORM DRAIN

Investing \$14.3 million in major repair and replacement in the 2023 budget

- Shelbourne Street improvement phase 2
- Mt. Doug Creek and Gorge Road
- Substandard replacement at over 15 locations

### SANITARY SEWER

Investing \$7.3 million in major repair and replacement in the 2023 budget

- Asbestos cement sewer main replacement at over 9 locations
- Albina Lift Station mechanical replacement
- Shelbourne street improvement - phase 2 and Albina-Gorge geotechnical remediation

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)**

