



Duncan City Hall - Watercolour by Robert Amos, reproduced by permission of the Heritage Society of BC.

Beneath the Clocktower

Your Insight into Issues and Events at Duncan City Hall
May 2010

City Of Duncan 2010 Budget and Tax Rates Incorporate Year Two of Policing Costs Phase In

Although the costs for 2010 are up in large part due to policing, this is an exciting time for the City: greater influence in policing, additional planning capacity, new engineering capacity to insure best practice in asset management, road improvements, park improvements, tourism infrastructure, environmental stewardship and organics collection.

“The 2010 budget was the second challenging year in a row due to new costs of providing Municipal Police Services. Council wished to ensure that these costs would be implemented over a number of years, rather than all at once,” commented Mayor Phil Kent.

Mindful of the current economic climate, Council worked to find a balance between important initiatives and taxes. Trimming of some budgets such as legal and snow clearing, increased revenues such as land leases and use of surplus for onetime costs like redressing the McAdam Park sports fields, has enabled some new items while keeping the increase in municipal tax collected (excluding policing) to 3.9%.

Significant Capital items for 2010 include:

- Continuation of the Centennial Park Revitalization
- A traffic light at the Cowichan Way, Trunk Road, Duncan Street intersection
- Multi use trail from Downtown to Cowichan Commons

2010 Average Home Assessment & Taxes

The average home assessment increased from \$256,116 to \$261,722 in 2010 (+2.2%). The Municipal tax increase on the average home is \$109 (11.9%) and is largely due to the cost of Policing (\$76 = 8.3%).

2010 Average Business Assessment & Taxes

The average Business assessment increased from \$372,344 to \$381,910 (+2.6%). The Municipal tax increase on the average business is \$484 (11.0%) and is again largely due to the cost of Policing (\$352 = 8.0%).

Budget Items/Changes

Policing – In 2009 Council negotiated transitional funding totaling \$700,000 to soften the immediate tax impact, and phase in the increases. 2010 is the first full year of Police Costs, and total costs are budgeted at \$1,036,367 (\$676,240 from property taxes and the remainder from Provincial Transition funding, keeping the tax increase down to the 8.3% as previously noted).

Aquatic Centre – 2009 saw a large increase to the budget for Aquatic Centre operations. Even with an increased budget, expenditures were higher than anticipated. Discussions are ongoing with North Cowichan on the City’s level of input into the budget for the Aquatic Centre.

Director of Development Services – responsible for projects such as reducing the City’s organizational and community carbon footprint as required by Bill 27 and the Climate Action Charter, the Urban Forest Strategy and development procedure improvements. This position is shared with the Town of Lake Cowichan which pays 2/5ths of the position’s wages and benefits.

more over...

REMINDERS

Please Do Not Give Directly To Panhandlers

The City of Duncan supports initiatives that provide services to the homeless and persons with serious health and addiction issues.

Assistance is provided for many people through local charities and organizations. Please donate directly to your favourite local charity.

Customer Friendly Parking

If you get a ticket because you are a frequent shopper or park over the three hour limit, remember that the City is customer friendly.

Please come in to City Hall or phone us at 250-746-6126 if you feel you have been ticketed unfairly.



Also, please respect that striped parking spaces are for micro cars and motorcycles and blue spaces are handicapped spaces. You will get a ticket if you park in one of those spaces and your car does not fit the category.

Yard and Garden Waste

Free yard and garden waste disposal is available at the Bing’s Creek Solid Waste Transfer Station on Drinkwater Road.



Please remember that open burning is not permitted within the City limits.

Comments, questions or concerns about this newsletter?
Phone 250-746-6126 or email suggestionbox@duncan.ca

City Budget Items/Changes, *continued*

A planning summer student funded from surplus for 2010 will assist the Director of Development Services in implementing the goals and vision from the Official Community Plan including Zoning Bylaw amendments.

Accountant/Office Manager – now in place to continue improvements to office efficiencies, including higher levels of service to the public, other departments and Council.

Engineering Technologist – hired in May of 2009, 2010 is the first full year of this position. Substantial progress has been made on in-house design work (Brae Rd and Beech Ave water mains) and in overall asset maintenance, evidenced by more detailed and longer term capital plans in the capital budgets for water, sewer and roads.

E3 (Energy Environment Excellence) Program for the City vehicle fleet – a budget item has been added to implement this program which generates reports and recommendations for reducing fuel, operating and capital costs as well as emissions.

Centennial and Kinsmen Parks – North Cowichan is providing a \$12,500 annual contribution for Centennial Park and the City is continuing to contribute to the operation of Kinsmen Park playground.

Commissionaire day patrols – are being budgeted due to continued issues in the Downtown parks and core.

Totem Maintenance – \$52,821 allocated for 2010. Future years established at \$25,000 annually.

Museum funding and Totem Tours – now annual budget items, no longer grants.

Parking Fees – All day parking fees increased in 2010 to \$2 per day and the monthly passes increased by 50%. This change is intended to encourage merchants, business owners and other regular all day parkers to commit to the strategy of leaving free on street parking for customers of the downtown.

Environmental Committee – \$14,848 in unspent funds from this newly established committee have been carried over. The 2010 budget of \$44,858 will fund projects such as an Integrated Sustainability Plan, the Woodstove Exchange Program, and the Urban Forest Strategy.

Centennial Park Revitalization – Council was successful in securing additional grants towards the costs of Centennial Park and the Duncan Lions Club has sponsored the Spray Park. This has enabled the continuation of the revitalization of this core park.

Cowichan Way, Trunk Road, Duncan Street intersection – A traffic light at this busy intersection is now under construction. Other initiatives such as the Duncan/Canada one way couplets and other upgrades will be considered pending grant applications.

Organics collection and waste resource management – 2010 should see the implementation of these initiatives.

Future Budget Items

Annual paving budget of \$300,000 is continued plus additional surplus amounts from the 2009 budget. Implementation of new five year capital road plan. Gateway road construction of \$1,000,000 is being considered for 2012.

If you have any questions regarding the budget or tax rates please contact Peter de Verteuil, Director of Finance, 250-746-6126.

Limited Number of Rebates Available for Wood Stove Exchange Program

The Wood Stove Exchange Program is offering a \$400 rebate on the purchase of a new replacement woodstove to improve air quality in our community. The rebate includes \$250 from the BC Ministry of Environ-

ment, \$100 from the City of Duncan and \$50 from participating retailers.

For more information or to apply, please contact Andy Daniel at North Cowichan, 250-746-3130.

Please Complete Smoking Bylaw Survey by June 30

City Council is asking for your input on the regulation of second-hand smoke in our community.

A draft Bylaw has been prepared for comment and you are encouraged to give your views and opinions to assist Council in its consideration of this important issue.



Please complete the short survey at www.duncan.ca to give City Council an indication of whether more stringent laws are desired by residents, business owners and visitors to the City.

Municipalities with similar Bylaws	Year Instituted
North Vancouver	2010
Pemberton	2009
Port Moody	2008
Surrey	2008
White Rock	2008
Whistler	2009

For more background information, please visit our website at www.duncan.ca.

If you do not have access to the web, please phone City Hall and ask to have the survey form mailed to you or you can pick up a form at City Hall, 200 Craig Street.

New Rules for Smoke Alarms

Changes to the BC Fire Code require that every private home built before 1979 must have smoke alarms installed by May 1, 2010.

Owners of these older buildings are now permitted to install battery-operated smoke alarms, rather than connecting smoke alarms to the buildings' electrical system.

The new law will increase public safety and awareness, helping to reduce the health risks and property damage caused by fire in older buildings. Smoke alarms should be located within five metres of any bedroom door and on each floor level.

The Fire Department encourages you to ensure your smoke alarms are up to date and that batteries are checked regularly.
