

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: January 13, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Candice Gartry, Director, Financial Services

SUBJECT: Draft 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council:

1. Receive the January 13, 2025, corporate report from the Director of Financial Services, titled “Draft 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan;” and
2. Provide feedback to staff on the Draft 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this corporate report is to introduce the Draft 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan for Council’s review and feedback. The Financial Plan document, attached as Appendix A, includes a proposed 4.94% average property tax rate increase for 2025. The proposed property tax increase for 2025 has been included as a separate agenda item for consideration at the January 13 Council meeting in the corporate report titled ‘Updated 2025 Operating Budget and Tax Considerations.’

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2024-392 December 9, 2024	<p>THAT Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive the corporate report dated December 9, 2024, from the Director of Financial Services, titled “2025 Operating Budget and Tax Considerations” for consideration; and. 2. Direct staff to bring forward a proposed City 2025 operating budget with options for consideration resulting in a below 5% tax increase. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p>

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Section 165(1) of the *Community Charter* states that:

A municipality must have a financial plan that is adopted annually, by bylaw, before the annual property tax bylaw is adopted.

Section 197(1) of the Community Charter states that:

Each year, after adoption of the financial plan but before May 15, a council must, by bylaw, impose property value taxes for the year by establishing tax rates for

- (a) The municipal revenue proposed to be raised for the year from property value taxes, as provided in the financial plan, and*
- (b) The amounts to be collected for the year by means of rates established by the municipality to meet its taxing obligations in relation to another local government or other public body.*

Further, Section 173(1) of the *Community Charter* states that:

A municipality must not make an expenditure other than one authorized under subsection (2) or (3).

The purpose of this report is to introduce the Draft 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan (“Draft Financial Plan”).

In 2024 Council passed Bylaw No. 2496 which adopted a five-year Financial Plan for the City for the years of 2024 through to 2028. The budget amounts included in that five-year Financial Plan provided for an average 7.51% property tax increase in 2025.

The Draft Financial Plan document, attached as Appendix A, incorporates the operational budget items for 2025 as discussed at Council’s December 9, 2024, regular meeting, which provided for a revised average property tax increase of 5.50% for 2025. At this same meeting, Council directed staff to take another look at the 2025 budget and bring forward a budget for 2025 that incorporates an average property tax increase of less than 5% for 2025. These additional proposed budget reductions for 2025, referred to as ‘SLT Proposed Additional Budget Reductions for 2025’ listed in the ‘Updated 2025 Operating Budget and Tax Considerations’ corporate report, also on this Council’s agenda for January 13, 2025, have been included in this Draft Financial Plan, the result of which is a proposed average property tax increase of 4.94% for 2025.

The Water Utility rates included in the Draft Financial Plan reflect those approved at Council’s December 9, 2024, regular Council meeting. The other non-water utility rates for 2025 reflected in the Draft Financial Plan reflect those that have been proposed in the corporate report titled ‘2025 Annual Utility Rates Bylaws,’ also on this Council’s agenda for January 13, 2025, under a separate item.

The capital expenditures included in the Draft Financial Plan for 2025 are considerably lower than the 2024 amounts because the 2025 amounts do not include budget for items not completed in 2024 and carried forward to 2025. Once year-end has been completed in April, the 2025 amounts will be updated to include any budget carry forwards.

Should Council not approve the average property tax increase and utility rate increases for 2025 proposed and included as separate agenda items for tonight’s meeting, or should Council approve different rates, the Draft Financial Plan will then be updated to reflect those approved rates.

This Draft Financial Plan has been prepared in a similar format to the prior year’s Financial Plan, which was awarded the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for a third year for its 2024 Five-Year Financial Plan.

Community Engagement

A public survey on the City’s 2025 budget was made available for responses and comment(s) from June 21, 2024, through to August 25, 2024, via the City’s *Talk White Rock* platform. The results of the survey were reported back to Council at their September 9, 2024, regular meeting.

Upon publication of this evening’s meeting agenda, the Draft Financial Plan (Appendix A) was made available for public comment via the City’s *Talk White Rock* platform. The public comment period will be open until the morning on January 30, 2025. The public comment results will be presented at Council’s February 10, 2025, Regular Council meeting.

Next Steps

Based on the direction received from Council at this evening’s Regular Council meeting, the budget and Draft Financial Plan will be updated. The next draft of the 2025 – 2029 Consolidated Financial Plan will be presented to Council at its February 24, 2025, Regular Council meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Property Taxes

The Draft Financial Plan, attached as Appendix A, reflects an average property tax increase of 4.94% for 2025. When combined with the proposed utility rate increases, the Draft Financial Plan reflects a combined 7.90% property tax and utility fee increase for 2025 for an average single-family household.

Budget Impact to Average Single-Family Household in 2025					
	2024	2025	Change \$\$	Change %	
Property Taxation					
Municipal Operations	\$ 2,406	\$ 2,511	\$ 105	2.35%	
Police Service	1,113	1,186	73	1.63%	
Asset Improvement	966	1,009	43	0.96%	
Total Property Taxes	\$ 4,485	\$ 4,706	\$ 221	4.94%	
Utilities					
Drainage Utility Charge	\$ 612	\$ 651	\$ 39	1.88%	
Solid Waste Utility Charge	412	429	17	0.82%	
Sanitary Sewer Utility Charge	293	394	101	4.86%	
Water Utility Charge	760	900	140	6.74%	
Total Utilities	\$ 2,077	\$ 2,374	\$ 297	14.30%	
Total Annual Cost	\$ 6,562	\$ 7,080	\$ 518	7.90%	

For an average multi-family (strata) household, the Draft Financial Plan reflects a combined 11.10% property tax and utility fee increase for 2025.

Budget Impact to Average Multi-Family (Strata) Household in 2025					
	2024	2025	Change \$\$	Change %	
Property Taxation					
Municipal Operations	\$ 938	\$ 979	\$ 41	2.35%	
Police Service	434	462	\$ 28	1.63%	
Asset Improvement	376	393	\$ 17	0.96%	
Total Property Taxes	\$ 1,748	\$ 1,834	\$ 86	4.94%	
Utilities					
Drainage Utility Charge	\$ 184	\$ 195	\$ 11	1.38%	
Sanitary Sewer Utility Charge	293	394	101	12.66%	
Water Utility Charge	321	405	84	10.53%	
Total Utilities	\$ 798	\$ 994	\$ 196	24.57%	
Total Annual Cost	\$ 2,546	\$ 2,828	\$ 282	11.10%	

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

No specific legal implications to note. Council approval required to authorize the budget, utility charges and property taxation rates. Financial Plan Bylaw, and property tax rates, must be adopted prior to May 15 in accordance with the *Community Charter*.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

A public survey on the City's 2025 budget was made available for responses and comment(s) from June 21, 2024, through to August 25, 2024, via the City's *Talk White Rock* platform. The results of the survey were reported back to Council at their September 9, 2024, regular meeting.

Upon publication of this evening's meeting agenda, the Draft Financial Plan (Appendix A) was made available for public comment via the City's *Talk White Rock* platform. The public comment period will be open until the morning on January 30, 2025. The public comment results will be presented at Council's February 10, 2025, Regular Council meeting.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

All departments have been involved in preparing the Draft 2025 – 2029 Financial Plan.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The budget adjustments and additional budget items listed in this report align with the following Council Priorities:

Community:

Objective 1 – Encourage positive community gathering by designing and implementing inviting public spaces and beautification projects.

Objective 2 – Plan for adverse weather impacts to protect community safety.

Organization & Governance:

Objective 1 – Increase revenue from City programs, assets, and services.

Objective 2 – Improve permit process to reduce wait times.

Objective 3 – Realize service delivery efficiencies via digital transformation and align existing processes with best practices.

Objective 4 – Sustain and nurture the established partnership between the City of White Rock and the Semiahmoo First Nation

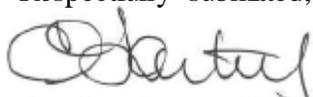
OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

This corporate report and the attached Draft 2025 – 2029 Financial Plan has been provided for Council receipt and feedback.

CONCLUSION

This corporate report and the attached Draft 2025 – 2029 Financial Plan has been provided for Council receipt and feedback.

Respectfully submitted,



Candice Gartry, CPA, CGA
Director, Financial Services

Comments from the Acting Chief Administrative Officer

This corporate report is provided for information and Council's comments and direction to staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Gordon', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jim Gordon
Director, Engineering & Municipal Operations and
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Draft 2024 – 2028 Consolidated Financial Plan-Jan 8 2024