

Ask questions or share comments on the proposed 2023 Financial Plan

Date of contribution	Guestbook Entries	Login (Screen name)
Mar 03 23 07:27:34 am	So 9% tax increase comes on top of the increased property value by 33%. So the city literally gets 45% more in \$\$ value. If it's not a rip off then what is a rip off???	Alexander
Mar 03 23 10:15:58 am	An 11.44% increase in Municipal Operations seems too high! What is costing so much more next year? Please, where can I find this answer?? I was expecting a tax increase of perhaps around 5%!	Gayle Greveling
Mar 03 23 11:54:58 am	I'm tired of Gov't misspending and mismanagement of funds. It seems the answer is to just keep taxing the people more! With all the other increases that people are forced to pay, where is the breaking point where we are forced to sell and move because people cant afford their homes anymore? It's hard to live and keep up with all the interest increases, mortgage payments, gas, food, utility, service, ie plumbers, electricians, increases never mind another 9% property tax increase I DISAGREE with your INCREASE. With all the High rise buildings and new homes being built some commercial as well, I would suspect there is a huge increase in your tax base already. How is that money being managed? I have been on many committees and funny when they have a budget they always make sure they spend it to in order to get their budget in the following year. If I ran my house hold like that I would be in foreclosure. Unfortunately I can't go to my boss and just say hey things are costing more I want more money. So maybe the city should learn to work with what they have and stop the over spending.	Tax Tax

Mar 03 23 12:54:59 pm	<p>Taxpayers want LESS Govt not more. You have too many employees who are overpaid for what they provide in utility especially at City hall level. Clean house as no one needs most of these positions.</p> <p>The Mayor ran on fiscal responsability Get the increases down to 3% or prepare for pressure from your base,</p>	JL Gray
Mar 03 23 12:56:08 pm	Good day. Specifically what costs justify the 11.4% increase in municipal operations. Who is getting earnings increases?	BobbyD
Mar 03 23 03:53:12 pm	Please trim the fat rather than just continue to pass on these higher costs. I believe you could get each department to decrease their budget by a mere 4% to keep the increase to less 5.5%. Be better than the other municipalities and show restraint in these tough times. Megan we are watching and trusting you on this one. It was why your were elected. Good Luck!	D Hadley
Mar 03 23 03:59:50 pm	Megan, we elected you to solve this very problem. Make us proud- Please take the lead and don't do what the other municipalities have done. Trim the fat, ask each department to cut costs a mere 4% this will keep the tax increase to less 5.5%.	Hs@050565
Mar 04 23 01:10:04 pm	<p>The 11.44% increase in municipal operations is substantially higher than the rate of inflation. Lack of an overview explanation means we must assume there are no improvements planned so is this due to poor expense control?. The focus of the elaborate plans seem to be on numbers and percentage increases without specific explanation of why costs are exceeding inflation by such large amounts. For example why is the water utility charge increasing by 12.55% ? You note that well #5 is being replaced but do not indicate if this accounts for the increase or not. The overall impression is that you are spending a lot of time and money on producing elaborate plans instead of focusing on getting the job done. For example, why can you not fix the paving on Thrift Ave between Best and Findlay? It has been a washboard for years despite or because of the existence of your so called road maintenance department in Engineering. The good news is you are not planning to change the police force so we are at least avoiding those costs. Now we can say that our tax increases are less than Surrey so we should be thankful for small mercies.</p>	Craig Curtis

Mar 04 23 02:03:45 pm	Please Meghan and new council. I voted for you to take care of this very issue and with climate change there needs to be some targeted effort in our city as we are most vulnerable. Do a review and shape the finances to serve our wonderful city and community.	Nicole
Mar 05 23 10:31:01 am	No space to copy previous 15 years of pointing out need for effective Pier Management Plan that spells out destructive testing regime (first proposed in 1998) and rotational structural component upgrade budgeting to successfully resist storm events.	David Riley
Mar 05 23 04:36:49 pm	Hi council and Mayor Knight, Just like most households with a budget crunch can not just raise their income; the same should apply to all forms of government. If the government is facing a budget crunch then council needs to cut spending not raise taxes; just as households will have to do in response to your tax increase. More importantly what can residents expect to see with this tax increase? it seems budget creep is an issue at White rock. You are going to have to make tough decisions for the future of White Rock residents which may include items such as privatizing municipal operations since a small city can not afford to replicate a whole working apparatus. Tender out garbage and recycling, development services, amalgamate operations with other cities that aren't a viable financial option. Cut capital expenses and salaries before you raise taxes. Residents will only accept a tax raise if they see that the city is a lean operation.	White Rock resident
Mar 06 23 07:33:47 am	I completely disagree with the increase! Time to get creative in seeking funding from the Provincial and Federal Governments. I would like to see more involvement from the local MLA and the Federal MP representing White Rock to get the funding that other cities in BC get.	No Increase
Mar 07 23 07:18:15 am	Surrey managed this: The tax-hike reduction would be made possible by \$89.9 million coming to Surrey as part of the B.C. government's "growing communities" fund, which is designed to help with infrastructure and other costs in the fast-growing municipality. "Since the proposed budget was made public two weeks ago, the city has secured nearly \$90 million from the province of British Columbia," said Surrey Mayor Brenda Locke. Will White Rock do the same?? Did we get any funding? If so how much?	No Tax Increase

Mar 08 23 12:38:39 pm	<p>I have a question about one of the projects mentioned in the drafted 2023 Financial Plan. Specifically, in the Asset Improvement Program on p.156 the report mentions Finlay Street Beach Access Ramp to increase beach accessibility. Could you direct me to the correct department to get more information?</p> <p>As a white rock resident who is very invested in accessible beach access points, I was hoping to hear more about what specific improvements will be made and the timeline for project completion.</p>	Sarah
Mar 08 23 05:40:00 pm	<p>As a long time user of the Coldicutt ravine park to access the beach and just to hang out at the bench half way down I am disappointed to see no budget to maintain and repair the the access to this iconic White Rock park. Many of my neighbours feel the same way. With the last 5 or 6 OCP's calling for more parkland in White Rock it seems counter productive to remove this park from the park inventory. Do to the loss of funding for the Helen Fathers Park, might I suggest you use the money from that project to upgrade Coldicutt Ravine and rename it the Helen Fathers Park.</p> <p>Seems like this would save the city and the the taxpayers money and therefore would be a prudent decision. If the ravine were to collapse the clean up costs to get the storm water flowing in a controlled manner the cost of this would be prohibitive.</p> <p>I also do not see a plan or budgeting for the replacement of all water pipes in the city, which is an item that everyone knows or should know is should be very high priority. When the wells stop producing sufficient water and we will hook up to either Surrey or Metro water this will need to have been done. We have run out of water once already [5 corners fire].</p>	andrew
Mar 10 23 08:44:26 am	<p>Are their any other sources of income that can be used to pay for these items? We already pay proportionately much higher property taxes in WR. What about increasing DCC's instead? This is a huge hit to people already struggling with an enormous increase in mortgage rates and grocery costs.</p>	Finn's person

Mar 10 23 09:18:23 am	I am opposed to increasing property taxes for this financial plan or any other. For the 15 years I have been a homeowner in White Rock, City council has increased its budget at rates well above inflation every year (as far as I recall). I no longer find that acceptable. Difficult tradeoffs can and should be made so that local homeowners aren't perpetually forced to devote an ever increasing portion of their own budgets to the City's bottomless appetites. Fiscal irresponsibility is a compounding problem, and I want council to stop it.	Jason
Mar 10 23 10:59:30 am	We elected this council to begin to get management of the city under control. It is easy to raise taxes but it shard to make tough choices to hold the line and that was the expectation.Now is certainly not the time to add staff when staff issues came up time and agin during the run up to the election. Many of us were unsatisfied with the coordination and usage of the present staff. This council needs to go through the budget line by line and make amendments to keep the raise to inflation or less. If we can't afford to be a city do we have to look at other choices?	abs156
Mar 10 23 12:03:51 pm	You ran on this very thing ,criticizing the last administration on high taxes ,taxes are one thing if as residents we could see improvements for higher taxes it would be easier to accept.Already money has been spent on consultants ,something which you criticized the last bunch for .Same old same old ,another one term mayor hopefully one day the taxpayer will get someone who at least try's to live up to their promises.	John Warren
Mar 10 23 02:24:24 pm	I think this tax increase is unacceptable, especially as many White Rock residents are seniors on a fixed pension income. We have to trim our expenditures to fit our costs, why can't you ? It seems to me that so many private companies are raising their prices because the whole world is looking at increased costs and hoping to get away with increased profits, just like grocery companies and energy companies seem to be doing. We elected you to manage costs sensibly and, if you cannot do that, we can just as easily unelect you.	Alan Gray

Mar 11 23 01:31:41 pm	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I think we all agree that these are unusual and difficult times financially at all levels. Speaking as someone who is retired and therefore on a fixed income, as many people are in White Rock, these times require not only a thoughtfulness and "pulling back" when we're at the grocery store but also in government. It's not business as usual. I suggest that council suspend program funding for anything that is not essential temporarily until this crisis passes. This needs to be reflected in any proposed increase to our already very high taxes. An almost \$40 increase a month is absolutely too high.</p>	Rose Marie
Mar 11 23 04:39:37 pm	<p>I honestly cannot believe White Rock , being a growing high density small city can justify a 9% property tax increase. You say it's for " police and asset improvements " Take a good look at the front of our one and only police station. It's falling apart. What an embarrassment.</p>	Mike - I've lived here for 50+ years
Mar 11 23 05:58:29 pm	<p>Under WHITE ROCK FINANCIAL SERVICES on page 53 and 54 there is mention of a "implementation of the new financial system" -- I am wondering if this is regarding the potential widespread global adoption of Digital Currencies, more specifically ISO 20022, the standard that is said that will be used for global payments and trading.</p> <p>If this is not what the Financial Plan document is outlining, perhaps the proposed "new financial system" could be a potentially waste of finances if we are just going to be switching to digital currencies in the near future. Is White Rock/BC going to move forward with the use of Central Bank Digital Currency? Is that something that has even been discussed at council?</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>	Adam

<p>Mar 12 23 05:28:25 pm</p>	<p>Council members - I am astonished with your proposal to boost White Rock taxes by a whopping 9% for single family households combined with a further 5% for utilities. This is completely irresponsible, given you were just elected in the fall. Clearly you are not up to the task of keeping taxes affordable for city residents. During Covid, the City was essentially shut down to the public, yet the council of the day still hiked taxes in both years. At times, it felt like we, as taxpayers, were working for the benefit of the employees first and the needs of taxpayers and the community came second. I recently retired as CEO of a large corporation and I can tell you that while navigating inflation and labour shortages, the price increase we put through to our customers averaged 3% for the past three years. It comes down to making tough choices and in many cases learning how to say no, or at least negotiate more firmly. It also helps to come up with more creative solutions. It appears all you have done is to take what you spent last year, add 9-10% to most costs and presto, you have your new budget. We have been taxpayers for a SFH in White Rock for 8.5 years and despite the obvious increase in the tax base through development, you are unable to control spending at the City level. You simply have to cut the cost base for operations by at least 5%, or I suggest that we have another election and elect people who are prepared to make the tough decisions necessary to reduce the tax hit for people struggling to meet their monthly budgets in this city. If you are so inclined to want to reduce taxes, but don't know how to do it, I will volunteer my time to assist you in this task.. I have overseen annual budgets as high as \$400 million, so I think you could use some help, because the approach you are taking makes me believe we don't have competent people at City Hall at both the CAO level and on council. Other municipalities like Port Coquitlam have managed to keep tax increases reasonable in this time of inflation, and it is time for White Rock to follow suit.</p> <p>Regards, Rick O'Connor 15122 Victoria Avenue.</p>	<p>Rick O'Connor</p>
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Mar 12 23 08:46:42 pm	I agree with the increase. I have been living here for about 7 years in a strata. Over that time, I have seen services decrease and the city often looking unkempt. It is unrealistic to imagine that with costs going up everywhere, that a small city with a limited tax base can manage to deal with rising costs without taxes increasing. I want to mention that I would much prefer to have had the City develop its own infrastructure, rather than choose to have a mix of private contractors doing solid waste pickup. It is costing me more as a strata owner, with poorer service and the sad knowledge of living where much is not recycled properly.	Linda Rubuliak
Mar 13 23 10:21:21 am	I totally understand we are in hard times and high inflation rates. I, as a resident, am fully aware of this and cannot support this being reflected with higher taxes. Like myself, the city needs to cut back on costs, ie. salaries or take a good look at where this could happen. With all the new highrises built and being built in our beautiful seaside community, this was supposed to increase our tax base...so where is all that money going? We have to put up with the change in our lovely city, increased density and not attractive high rises, for what? it seems. Please get back to the table to discuss ways of cutting back this proposed tax increase, ie. creative budgeting, as I have to in my personal life. Thank you.	Colleen
Mar 13 23 02:53:37 pm	We are opposed to the extent of the increase. We realize that inflation has an impact on the cost of services but the rate is too high. It will be especially onerous for those in our community who are on a fixed incomes and are already struggling to cover the costs they carry already.	Delores
Mar 13 23 11:32:50 pm	I am opposed to the suggested large increase in taxation. I have lived for many years on a fixed income as have many of my neighbors. I have learned to cut costs when I have new or increased expenses. There is a process called zero-based budgeting that should be implemented for your managers in order to get your costs under control. Simply, it requires managers to justify all of their requested budgets, and NOT pile new costs on the assumption that previous budgets are fixed and should increase for inflation. The system will actually result in cost savings that can be used for new expenditures.	fspencer

<p>Mar 14 23 02:48:05 pm</p>	<p>Not sure what happened to my last submission somehow it was deleted. To reiterate this council promised to get staffing under control yet I don't see that as a priority. Between parking and bylaw staff [10] you would think they would act on the infractions that go on everyday and not just drive past them. Our mayor and council answered many of my questions in the run up to the election and in examining the plans most have been ignored. Tax and tax seems to be the only answer, without question White Rock is the most unkempt 'city' in the lower mainland yet we have all kinds of staff that drive around the 20 square blocks and see nothing. Likely the staff is not to blame but the administration must have there own priorities, and not the citizen's. Losing funding for Helen Father's park is a disgrace again whose job was that? The new council needs to get the city under control, as they promised.</p>	<p>abs156</p>
<p>Mar 14 23 06:22:48 pm</p>	<p>Well I am glad I sent an inquiry into the staff and Council about the \$5.7 million Provincial grant they received because now they are talking about using it to reduce taxes which they should have done without me mentioning it. I am taking the credit for it! You don't have to beg the people you voted for to cut taxes ,you have a right to demand it . We are still paying lots of taxes for positions that the City never bothered filling. So far it has been a very lackluster performance by this Council on reducing taxes especially since for the second time the council decided unanimously to abandon Multi-family Solid Waste pickup . I hope we don't have to wait 4 years and elect another new council in order for the City to do something beneficial for us all instead of using their monopoly to just tax us and be done with us. Multi-family Owners should get a tax break every year since the City is not providing us with essential solid waste pickup.</p>	<p>sunnyday</p>

<p>Mar 15 23 07:19:08 am</p>	<p>March 15, 2023, Mayor and Council, I attended the City Council Meeting on Monday evening with the intention of following up on my questions from May 2022, July 2022 and December 2022 about Staffing levels at City Hall. Due to the strict observance by the Chairperson of the 2 minute time limit for the Q/A period I was unable to ask my question. It is challenging to understand why that same evening City Council found the time to discuss increasing the parking rates by .25 cents per hour for 27 minutes and “dining on the pier” for an additional 10 minutes but could not find 2 minutes to accommodate a question about the expenditure of 28 million dollars of tax payers money. A question that has been asked and never fully answered for more than a year. My question on Monday evening was; will City Council introduce a motion directing City Staff to provide a spreadsheet of information about staffing costs at City Hall prior to the scheduled Finance and Audit Public Hearing on March 27? I ask the question again now with the following detailed specificity that the 2 minute time limit for my question would not have allowed me to ask on Monday evening. The information I am seeking is as follows: a spreadsheet that lists all of 180 positions referenced in the “Workforce Summary” on page 36 of the 2023 financial plan. The list should include the department, the job title, a brief job description, the total salary budgeted and the amount paid out for each position in 2021 and 2022. An estimate of the cost of benefits should also be included. Background: This information was originally requested by City Councillor Dave Chesney in March of 2022 at teach of the Finance and Audit meetings held with City Staff on March 1, 2 and 3 of last year. As a result of those requests a spreadsheet was provided to City Councillors in May of 2022. I requested a copy of that spreadsheet on numerous occasions but was denied access as I was advised by the CAO Guillermo Ferraro that it was considered “confidential” and that I would “need to go through an FOI” to obtain the spreadsheet.</p> <p><i>CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE</i></p>	<p>Gary Gumley</p>
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<p>Mar 15 23 07:19:08 am</p>	<p><i>CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE</i></p> <p>In December, 7 months later, I was provided with that list of staff positions. The list contained only 119 positions of the 180 positions currently outlined in the financial plan and included no salary information. Since then, I have repeatedly requested that the full list of positions including the salary and benefit costs, brief description and an indication of the amount of compensation paid for all the positions in 2021 and 2022 be provided for all interested residents to review. I have received confirmation from City Staff that the total amount of compensation that will be allocated to salaries and benefits in 2023 is 28 million 657 thousand dollars!! That equates to over 2 million dollars per month for the 180 staff members. Why is the new City Council not asking for a detailed review of the 180 positions that cost the taxpayers 2 million dollars per month? More importantly why isn't there a document readily available that provides information about all the staff positions and how much was paid for those positions every year? We are continually being told that there are significant staff shortages and a number of high profile positions were vacant at times throughout last year. Surely the expenditure of 28 million dollars deserves a detailed analysis by the new Mayor and City Council. Let's be clear here, I am not asking for a dramatic reductions in City Staff but surely a detailed analysis of the 180 positions at City Hall could result in some efficiencies and cost savings being identified and targeted for a fiscal impact review? Gary Gumley - White Rock Resident</p>	<p>Gary Gumley</p>
<p>Mar 15 23 11:30:02 am</p>	<p>The financial plan is unfair to strata owners who have less property and require less actual utility support than large single family homes who have a much greater usage of water and services as well as a much larger property size. The council is specifically asking for a larger increase than the actual inflation increase in 2022. Moreover, they have made no actual plans or initiatives to show that the money they currently have or will get in 2023 have been audited correctly to ensure that waste and mismanagement are minimized. We have no proof that the city council is actually using the funds correctly.</p>	<p>mlcp777</p>
<p>Mar 15 23 02:53:06 pm</p>	<p>It makes no sense to increase strata owners taxes more than single family homes. They have less strain on city resources such as roads and sewers, and don't even get their refuse removed. To think that water usage should go up 12.55% for strata is insane. What lawns are they watering?? If anything the single family homes should be paying more. That type of living is unsustainable and the strata should not be subsidizing such lavish lifestyles.</p>	<p>Michael Citizen</p>

<p>Mar 15 23 05:15:10 pm</p>	<p>Why the water utility of Strata increase by 12.55% for strata whereas single unit home is only 6.56%? Can't understand why the property tax increase will be higher on a Strata than Single Unit home. Why police service increase is only 4% whereas Municipal Operations and Asset Improvement is more than 10%. Municipal Operations/Asset Improvement should not be increased to more than annual inflation, I have to cut down my spending in order to survive this inflationary period and I would expect our council will do the same and cut down its expenses or scale back whatever improvement you planned.</p>	<p>EE</p>
<p>Mar 16 23 09:29:20 am</p>	<p>Wow! What an insult to the White Rock Taxpayers. Due to this Council's superficial engagement with reviewing the budget the over spending and lack of accountability continues unabated. What happened to all that so called "Business Acumen" they were espousing before the election? I see no evidence of it with this budget. In fact they refused to go over it line by line with each department. Williams Lake has had 0% property tax increases over the last 10 years. In fact last year their council implemented a 10% decrease because they factored in increased property assessments . This Council mentioned nothing about that major point . It's a double dipping property tax increase.They raised the percentage of increase to an obscene level and will skim more from you as your BC Property Assessments have gone through the roof. The City may have won an award for their 2022 Budget Report but the Council of the day did nothing with the report and this Council is continuing on with the tradition. This new Council blames the last Council for leaving such a fiscal mess but in actual fact when they had the opportunity to correct it they turned their backs ,threw their hands in the air and dumped it all on staff's lap with no directions given. To make matters worse they abandoned Multi-family solid waste services for a second time without in so much as a comment . White Rock Taxpayers you are on your own with this bunch!</p>	<p>sunnyday</p>

<p>Mar 16 23 08:37:26 pm</p>	<p>Property Taxes in White Rock are too high to start with, the city needs to make cuts, just as we have to make cuts in order to deal with price increases all around us. What happened to the big surplus we were told about at election time ? What is happening with the huge "VOLUNTARY/MANDATORY" contributions from the developers ? A \$60,000 charge for consulting is ridiculous. Cut all frivolous expenses, no conventions to attend,. How many vehicles does the city own or lease ? Why new garbage trucks ? Would it be more cost effective to contract recycling/garbage collection ? The City needs to run like a business, it has to operate with the available revenue, not just turn around and hit the residents with another tax increase. What can we do to pay for higher prices and taxes ? Cut back on Medications ? Food ? lower Heat in the House ? drive less km's with our car ? no more going to restaurants ? WE ARE DOING ALL OF THIS !</p>	<p>Hans - 27 years in White Rock</p>
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