

**OVERVIEW**

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Below are questions that have been submitted to staff by candidates during election period, as well as the answers provided to them by staff. This information is being provided to all candidates that have filed nomination papers, to ensure that the same information has been made available to all candidates.

City reports and publications can be found here: <https://duncan.ca/city-hall/mayor-council/reports-and-publications>

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**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

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**What percentage wage increase each year in the CUPE contract from 2021 to 2024?**

The CUPE contract establishes a 2% wage increase each year from 2021 to 2024.

**How many bylaw employees does our City have working patrolling our streets? Do they all work a 35 hour week?**

There is one full time (37.5 hours/week) Streets and Parks Patroller, and four casual (varying shifts) Streets and Parks Patrollers. There are between 95 and 120 hours of patrol scheduled each week.

Also, both the City's Manager of Building and Bylaw Services (35/hours per week) and the Bylaw Supervisor/Fire Inspector (35/hours per week) conduct regular patrols and investigations.

**Does the 95 to 120 hours per week already include the one full time employee at 37.5 hours?**

Yes, the 95 to 120 hours of patrols scheduled each week includes the 37.5 hours/week of patrols conducted by the full time Streets and Parks Patroller.

**I am hearing on the local grapevine that many of the units/apartments at the new BC Housing facility on Paddle Road have been damaged to the point they are uninhabitable. Is this true?**

**If so, what plans are being made to prevent this happening at the BC Housing facility currently under construction on White Road in Duncan?**

Because this question isn't related to City operations, the question was posed to Lookout Housing and Health Society, the Operator at Sq'umul'Shelh Lelum' – Paddle Road Supportive Housing. Here is the response from Lee King, Director of Operations – Vancouver Island:

*I can confirm that none of the 52 units at this project have ever been unliveable since the site opened April 2022.*

*This new build project, developed through BC Housing and operated by Lookout Housing is proving to be another successful addition to the affordable housing stock in the Cowichan Valley. It is professionally staffed daily and has a F/T onsite manager.*

**Does the City have a bylaw prohibiting short-term rentals?**

No, the City does not have a bylaw prohibiting short-term rentals. In past scans of short-term rental websites, there were very few short-term vacation rentals observed operating in the City; although, a brief scan shows that there are more operating currently. If Council directs staff at a future Council meeting to investigate further, staff can prepare a report outlining options for regulation and enforcement.

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CON'T

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### **If someone can't make it to the voting opportunities in October, can they still vote?**

No, the City is not offering mail ballots for this election and the City has not offered mail ballots in past elections. Election procedures are established by [bylaw](#), as authorized by the *Local Government Act*. The City's current Election Procedures and Automated Vote Counting System Authorization Bylaw (election bylaw) was adopted in June, 2022.

At the end of 2021, the provincial government amended the *Local Government Act* to provide local governments with the option of offering mail ballots to anyone who chooses to apply, previously only those electors who were unable to go to a polling station were eligible to use mail ballot voting, if authorized in a local government's election bylaws.

When staff researched adding provisions to authorize the use of mail in ballots for the 2022 general election, staff felt that the number of mail ballots returned would likely not justify the cost of preparing and administering the mail ballots. When Council considered the election bylaw in May, 2022, they did not direct staff to include mail ballots.

Staff intend to monitor the use of mail ballots in neighbouring jurisdictions during the 2022 general election and provide for further consideration of the use of mail ballots in the 2026 general election, if warranted.

### **How many early voters turned out in the last election?**

There were 304 voters at the advance voting opportunities for the 2018 General Local Election.

### **How many individual households are there in Duncan?**

According to the [2021 Census](#), there are 2,455 occupied private dwellings in the City of Duncan.

There is more information about housing in the [City of Duncan - Housing Needs Assessment Data Report](#).

### **How many of those households are single family home in low density neighbourhoods?**

According to the [2021 Census](#), there are 1,025 single-detached houses in Duncan, most of which are located in the [low density residential zone](#).

### **How many of those households are condos, apartments etc.?**

According to the [2021 Census](#), there are 1,075 apartment dwellings in the City of Duncan, which includes both strata units and apartment units.

### **How many of those households are headed by seniors or are held by individual seniors?**

According to the [2021 Census](#), 35.9% of the population is 65 or older. The average household size is 1.9. According to the [Housing Needs Assessment Data Report](#), "in general, jurisdictions with smaller households tend to be more senior in age composition."

### **What is the age breakdown of the listed occupants of individual households?**

The 2021 Census does not provide information about individual households, nor does the City of Duncan collect this information. The [2021 Census](#) does include general information on family characteristics.

### **Can a non-Canadian Citizen, but a resident of Duncan, vote?**

To qualify as either a resident or non-resident property elector, you must be a Canadian citizen (section 65 and section 66 of the *Local Government Act*).

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**Is early voting all taking place at the Fire Hall?**

Both advance voting opportunities will take place at the Duncan Fire Hall, 486 Duncan Street, between the hours of 8:00 am – 8:00 pm on October 5<sup>th</sup> and October 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Does the Advisory Design Panel address affordable housing in their review of plans?**

The Advisory Design Panel provides recommendations to City staff and Council on the design of development proposals and compliance with the development permit area guidelines in the Official Community Plan (OCP). The Panel's review does not address affordable housing.

**Is there a percentage of each proposed application for an apartment building designated affordable?**

It is not currently a requirement that a percentage of dwelling units in a new apartment building be designated affordable. The City's zoning bylaw does, however, include density bonus provisions, which means that a developer is entitled to a higher density if they provide amenities or affordable housing. Where rezoning applications or variances are sought to increase density, the City may also choose to negotiate with a developer for the provision of voluntary amenities or affordable housing.

The City's draft OCP that has received 2 readings from Council includes the following housing policy statement:

*14. The City will seek to facilitate the development of affordable housing units. This could be accomplished through community amenity contributions as part of the rezoning process or through zoning bylaw regulations as requirements or density bonusing provisions.*

At the time the zoning bylaw is updated, Council can direct that affordable housing is required under an increased number of circumstances.

**I am trying to understand the CVRD referendum question and the tax effect on the taxpayers of Duncan. Will this increase or decrease Duncan property taxes?**

The following page from the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) explains that the City's residential taxpayers will see a decrease in their taxes of \$17.94 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

<https://www.planyourcowichan.ca/31517/widgets/130917/documents/87439>

General information on the referendum is available here:

<https://www.planyourcowichan.ca/recfund>

By voting YES for regional recreation funding services at the election, Duncan Taxpayers will save \$280,000 each year.

The proposed funding changes would be phased in over three years to ease the impacts on taxpayers in the areas of the CVRD that will have increases.

The cost of operating some of our region's most-used recreation facilities puts an unfair financial burden on the City of Duncan and some other areas in the CVRD. The new usage-based funding model will fix this and make funding fair and sustainable.

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CON'T

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**Has the City of Duncan done any studies on potential effects of the proposed CVRD Bylaw that is the subject of the Referendum Question being posed in this election by the CVRD? Will this increase Duncan property taxes? If so by how much? Will it decrease Duncan property taxes? If so, by how much?**

While the City has not done studies to determine the effect of this proposed new funding model, the CVRD has calculated the impacts on each jurisdiction (available on the [CVRD Plan Your Cowichan](#)). By voting YES for regional recreation funding services at the election, Duncan Taxpayers will save \$280,000 each year.

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Currently, some areas of the CVRD don't pay for some facilities but actually make up a larger percentage of the facility users than City residents. As an example, Electoral Area B (Shawnigan Lake) makes up 7.2% of the users of the Cowichan Community Centre (CCC), but do not contribute to its operations; whereas Duncan residents make up 7.0% of the users of the CCC but our taxpayers contribute \$523,033 per year to its operations.

Conversely, the City of Duncan residents currently makes up 1.7% of the users of the Kerry Park Recreation Centre, but does not currently contribute to its operations.

Similarly, Electoral Area E (Eagle Heights) makes up 7.55% of the users of the Cowichan Aquatic Centre (CAC), but only contributes \$26,988 per year to its operations; whereas Duncan residents make up 8.80% of the users of the CAC and contribute a disproportional amount of \$360,740 per year.

The new funding model will redistribute the costs based on who uses the facilities.

See the attached link for a full breakdown of what the area by area usage of facilities is and what those areas currently contribute.

<https://cvrld.primegov.com/meeting/attachment/13268.pdf?name=2022-05-11%20COTW%20RPT%20Reg%20Rec%20Financial%20Implications%20-%20ATT%20F>

By voting yes to this new funding model, residents in the Cowichan Valley will pay more fair and equitable portions of regional recreation costs.

As stated on the [CVRD Plan Our Cowichan](#), "the CVRD and its municipal partners have spent the last 7 years doing extensive research into potential funding models and how to improve regional recreation services in general... The usage for this funding model is based on regular data collection survey cycles at each of the 9 regionally significant recreation facilities. The CVRD and its municipal partners did a usage study in 2017 and another in 2021/2022 that combined to provide the average percentage of usage of each facility, per jurisdiction. If this funding model is adopted, then a usage study will be conducted every 5 years, and will keep an ongoing rolling average based on the most recent 3 data collection cycles."

**Could you please tell me what the average income is within the city of Duncan?**

According to the [2021 Census](#), the average total income of economic families in private households in 2020 was \$85,600; the average total income of couple-only economic families in 2020 was \$78,000; the average total income of couple-with-children economic families in 2020 was \$112,400; the average total income of one-parent economic families in 2020 was \$65,500; and the average total income for persons aged 15 years and over not in economic families in private households was \$40,240.

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**Can you please clarify if the city has planned joint meetings protocol with Cowichan Tribes and, if so, for how long has the City been having joint meetings and how often do the meetings take place?**

The City had its first joint meeting (a breakfast meeting) with Cowichan Tribes in early 2017, and then another breakfast meeting in early 2020.

The City's current strategic plan envisions one joint breakfast meeting per year, but this has not been achieved due to different election cycles, scheduling issues, changes to senior leadership at Cowichan Tribes, and more recently, COVID-19.

The City does not have a joint meeting protocol with Cowichan Tribes, but typically have:

- Opening
- Brief self-introduction from each Councillor
- Brief summary by Cowichan Tribes General Manager of current projects/focus of Cowichan Tribes
- Brief summary by City CAO of current projects/focus of City
- Discussion

The City has not typically had specific items of discussion like in the protocol with the Municipality of North Cowichan.

The City's current strategic plan includes the following initiative "8.2 Work with Cowichan Tribes to build and strengthen the relationship" and includes the following actions:

- Update service agreements with Cowichan Tribes
- Continue to work on joint projects for mutual benefit (e.g. Allenby Road, Active Transportation Plan, Indian Road water, Boys Road sewer)
- Hold Joint breakfast annually
- Meet with Band Manager 2 times annually

"Work with Cowichan Tribes to build and strengthen the relationship" was also an objective in the City's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan.

**Can you please tell us what communications were sent out for the Official Community Plan consultation process?**

Public communications regarding the Official Community Plan consultation process:

- 2021 – 2022 - Posts on City's website
- 2021 – 2022 - Posts on City's Facebook page
- 2021 – 2022 - PlaceSpeak consultation page (110 connections, 18 comments, and 1,921 views) continuously advertised in all communications;
- 2021, March - Clocktower Newsletter sent by mail to all Duncan addresses
- 2021, May - June - Online and print community-wide survey promoted on the website, Facebook and at the pop-up event
- 2021, June - Pop-up event was held at the Farmers Market
- 2021, September - Clocktower Newsletter sent by mail to all Duncan addresses
- 2021, October - Stakeholder workshops x 3
- 2021, December - Clocktower Newsletter sent by mail to all Duncan addresses
- 2022, February - March - Online and print community-wide survey
- 2022, February - Postcard sent by mail to all Duncan addresses advertising community-wide survey and virtual open house
- 2022, March - Clocktower Newsletter sent by mail to all Duncan addresses
- 2022, March - Virtual open house
- 2022, August - Advertisements for Public Hearing in Cowichan Valley Citizen

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CON'T

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**Could send me a link to the drawings for the playground in McAdam Park as well as the link for the over night camping in the two parks by-law?**

The three options for the playground design are available on the PlaceSpeak page:

<https://www.placespeak.com/topic/6660/#/resources?id=6230>

The information about sheltering in city parks is available on the City's website:

<https://duncan.ca/sheltering-in-city-parks/>

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Updated on October 11, 2022