

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT 2023 DRAFT BUDGET SUMMARY



February 2023

Background:


On January 26, 2023, Council deliberated the initial draft of the five-year financial plan which includes the 2023 budget. After first reading of the budget on January 31st, 2023, Council directed staff to engage the community on the proposed increase. The newly elected Council was clear that engagement was to be a priority and every effort to reach everyone in the community was essential to help explain the draft budget. Effort was also made to reach community members who do not have access to technology platforms or have made the choice not to use or engage through electronic platforms.

Beginning in December and throughout January and February staff executed an extensive communications and engagement plan. Staff took full advantage of media platforms including non-technical platforms to make absolute certain that anyone in the community who wanted to participate was able to do so in a way they felt comfortable. Information was readily available and if anyone wished to make a comment or ask a question, they had several opportunities and ways to be heard prior to second and third reading of the budget on February 23rd.

Communications & engagement overview:

Date	Topic	Communication Channel	Platform
December 19, 2022	You Asked – How will Lake Country’s growing population hit me in the pocketbook?	Article	Website Email subscribers
December 23, 2022	You Asked – Why does road maintenance cost so much?	Article	Website Email subscribers
January 10, 2023	You Asked – Why are water rates going up?	Article	Website Email subscribers
January 13, 2023	Growth and rising costs result in Council considering sizeable property tax increase for 2023.	Article	Website Email subscribers Facebook

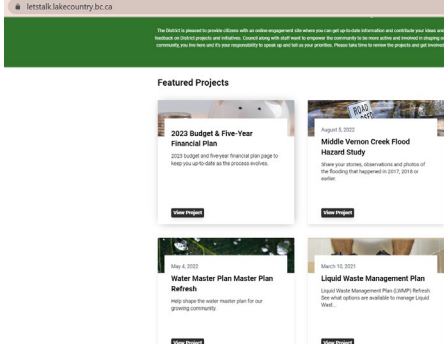


Communications and Engagement Strategy

January 13, 2023	<p>Let's Talk-Lake Country 2023 Draft Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on budget process • Outcomes of Council meetings • Documents related to the budget • Space to leave comments or ask questions 	Online engagement platform	Let's Talk – Lake Country Website
January 20, 2023	<p>2023 Budget Town Hall Mailer</p>  <p>The graphic is a flyer for a '2023 BUDGET TOWN HALL' on January 31 at 7pm. It features the Lake Country logo and a photo of a man working on a laptop. Text on the flyer includes 'LAKE COUNTRY Life. The Okanagan Way.', 'log in details & ask a question in advance of the town hall letstalk.lakecountry.bc.ca', and 'attend & participate online or in person'.</p>	Postcards	Maildrop via Canada Post All homes in Lake Country
January 26, 2023	<p>Time to get engaged in the 2023 budget</p>	Article	Website Email subscribers Facebook
January 26, 2023	<p>Special Council Meeting</p>	In Person & Video	Live via LiveStream or in Person <i>Also available to the public to view after the meeting.</i>
January 27, 2023	<p>Community is asked to provide input on the 2023 budget</p>	Article	Website Email subscribers Facebook

Communications and Engagement Strategy

January 31, 2023	Special Council Meeting	In Person & Video	Live via LiveStream or in Person <i>Also available to the public to view after the meeting.</i>
January 31, 2023	Town Hall	In Person & Video	Live via LiveStream Facebook Live In Person participation
February 1, 2023	Council gives first reading to the 2023 budget	Article	Website Email subscribers Facebook
January 19, 2023 January 26, 2023	Submit questions & comments about the budget	Lake Country Calendar	Local weekly newspaper
January & February, 2023	Facebook & Instagram various postings throughout January & February	Online	Facebook & Instagram

How were community members reached?:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Let’s Talk – Lake Country, 2023 Draft Budget ➤ 1,500 visitors to the site between December 19, 2022 – February 16, 2023 ➤ 92 questions/comments posted (outlined below) ➤ Financial plan linked on the site along with other helpful reference articles including “You Asked” articles to assist with better understanding the budgeting process. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facebook – Paid Ad ➤ Early awareness virtual town hall post January 10th, 2023. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Budget Town Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Person ○ Facebook Live ○ LiveStream <p>** Full transcript of Facebook Live questions and comments can be found by watching the Live Event archived on the District’s Facebook Page.</p>	

What the community has to say:

Common concerns from citizens throughout the community engagement period can be summed up in three main points:

- Proposed tax increase for 2023 is high.
- Council needs to ensure that every dollar spent brings value to the community.
- Immediate need for improvement in community infrastructure (roads and water).

In summary:

2023 public engagement was completed using a variety of tactics that included social media platforms along with print. Instead of relying on traditional face to face methods, online tools such as Let's Talk – Lake Country, LiveStream and Facebook LIVE were used. Council was able to reach and connect with a wider audience, and expanded demographic of the community. Perhaps even reaching community members who had not taken the time or had the opportunity to engage in previous years. Prior to the draft budget being released to the community a series of “You Asked” articles were published with the intention of educating the community on the important issues Lake Country is facing and would be considered through the budgeting process.

Consideration was taken to reach those within the community who appreciate information and may want to engage, however do not use, or have access to technology. This was accomplished by delivering postcards to every home within Lake Country and making use of the Lake Country Calendar which is a free newspaper readily available throughout Lake Country.



Questions & Comments via Let's Talk Lake Country & Email	District Response
<p>1 Why is there early approval before the draft budget has been released to the public? This seems impossible to get public input that way.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Early approval was only considered for certain capital requests, all of which are to be funded from reserves or other existing sources and have no impact on 2023 property taxation. As the District puts forward the five year financial plans, the majority of items are also included in the prior year's financial plan which would have received public input in numerous stages. The early approvals were provided in a public meeting agenda in advance of the January 3rd meeting. The public had the opportunity to attend the public meeting and to provide input. The agenda along with proposed budget details for the January 26th budget Council meeting will be available by January 19th and can be found here for review. The public is also welcome to attend and participate at the January 26th Council meeting and the January 31st Town Hall. If you don't already subscribe to District news please do so - that way you will receive in your email Council updates and after each of the meetings Council Highlights. Be sure to check back on Let's Talk - Lake Country for all budget info and links.</p>
<p>2 Why has Glenmore Road and Okanagan Center Road West not been maintained properly in regards to the asphalt. The hugh potholes that are happening now are a result of not maintaining the roads during the dry weather months. All properties are paying an extra \$125.00 per year on top of our regular property taxes. Perhaps the funds spent on the free community concerts which I personally enjoyed should be put towards road maintenance on certain well travelled roads.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. During the winter, the water under the roads can freeze and expand, then thaw and contract. This natural cycle causes the pavement to crack so that it deteriorates under the weight of the traffic and streets seem to break out in potholes overnight. A pothole that is considered repaired one day may open up again the next due to weather conditions and traffic driving over it. District crews respond as quickly as they can to complaints about potholes, but full repairs must wait until the weather warms up and the asphalt plants are open, generally the first week of April; until then only temporary fixes are possible. To report potholes please contact the District online or by calling 250-766-5650 during business hours. Your comments regarding the community concerts will be passed onto Council for consideration, however please note that Live in Lake Country has an annual budget of \$40,000. If Council were to eliminate the free summer concerts it would have a \$0.24 impact or \$5.00 impact on overall taxes.</p>
<p>3 BC Assessment is based on July 2022 home prices which by now have decreased 15 - 20%. How in the world can you even think about raising property taxes, which are already based on over-assessed values, by 10 - 19%. Talk about taking a double hit! On top of that you've already sidetracked garbage and sewer to quarterly payments to make property taxes look like they are less. Seems like taking unfair advantage of most low income people, but especially those whose income is on a fixed basis. Would love to hear your views.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. A common misconception is that a significant change in your assessed value will result in a proportionately significant change in your property taxes. The most important factor is not how much your assessed value has changed, but how your assessed value has changed relative to the average change within your jurisdiction. You can find out more by visiting www.bcaassessment.ca. In Lake Country the average home increase was just under 10% - if you fall within this range it is likely your property taxes will only increase by the percentage Council decides on. To put the increase into perspective, a 1% increase results in approximately a \$20 annual increase, for the average single-family home. BC Assessment has determined that the average single-family home in Lake Country in 2023 is \$1.087 Million. Utility bills were separated from the property tax bill in 2022 due to a change in billing systems at the District. Having two separate invoices provides greater transparency and is likely easier for property owners to review and better understand the costs.</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>I live on mountview rd. Already pay 280 in tax's a mth. And my garbage bill and water bill. Now hit in harder. I don't even have sewer and when I called to ask. All I hear is we got no money. Sure my house has gone up in value. But I still make the same money. And after covied 19 and the liberals In the federal gov make in new BS Rules. There ain't a never ending pile of cash. From people on mountview rd.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments – they will be passed onto Council for consideration.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>With all these tax dollars generated will the city of lake country ever follow through with redirecting glenmore road? Since an industrial yard is going to be where the old gravel gravel pit used to be. How is glenmord supposed to handle increasing traffic when it can barely handle what it has now? Increase in semi trucks etc. The little intersection at Seaton meets glenmore road can't handle more traffic particularly semi's. When you have a vehicle trying to turn left off glenmore to go up Seaton while semi's or another traffic coming up glenmore from the highway. I've lived long enough on glenmore having to walked to school everyday an a couple times nearly missing being hit by a vehicle at that corner because of people trying to get around others trying to turn left up Seaton road. Used to ask myself why hasn't the city ever done anything with this intersection. After a couple time I realized sadly it'll take someone getting killed at the intersection before the road gets changed or anything. An honestly the sadist part of the whole thing is the city knows of the problem but it'll take for a family to suffer the lose of a family member before anything will be done about it.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Alternative routes to reduce traffic on Glenmore Road are found within the Mobility Master Plan. Staff continue to coordinate with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on Glenmore Interchange and options to connect Jim Bailey Road away from existing Beaver Lake Road.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>In what world do we need to pay more taxes for more rcmp costs in lake county? Lake country is more than safe . This is a joke right ?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Lake Country is a safe community, however the Federal government has set the cost structure for having RCMP services within all communities throughout Canada. Up until 2022, the District paid 70% of RCMP cost with the Federal government covering the remaining 30%. Because the population in 2023 is over 15,000, as per the RCMP cost-sharing ratio under contract policing, the District now must pay 90% and the Federal government portion is reduced to 10%. In addition to the change in cost-sharing ratio, as a 15,000-person community there are a number of costs the District is now directly responsible for, such as vehicles and major crime investigations. Council will also be considering increasing the authorized strength from 18 members to 19 members to address growth and the additional responsibilities. While the District has been planning for this change over many years and has been proactive by building a Policing Reserve Fund to help smooth the impact on taxpayers, funding the additional 20% and added direct costs beginning in 2023, will result in an increase that simply can't be avoided.</p>

7	Is there a reason why there is no indoor swimming pool in Lake Country?	Thank you for the question. If the District were to build and operate a community pool, it would likely require borrowing and financing the debt estimated at \$1.4 million per year for 20 years. Additionally, operation and maintenance costs would add \$400,000 annually to the District's budget. Every property owner in Lake Country would incur a substantial tax increase to fund the construction and operation of the pool, with user fees offsetting only a small percentage of the actual cost of a facility of this type. For more information please take a moment to read - You Asked - Why doesn't Lake Country have a pool?
8	I do understand everthing cost more. We do not have sidewalks no sewer water that is not drinkable most of the year and no steet light but we do get our dead end street plowed 3 times in one day even when there is no snow (wasted rax dollars). We do have some darm nice parks and what do we get more pot holes narrow roads and you want more money for what???????	Thank you for the question.The proposed tax increase is primarily a result of Lake Country's growing population. Throughout Lake Country there are 59 km of sidewalks along with 207 kms of roads – all of which require maintenance year-round. Snow removal, street sweeping, and gravel maintenance are always required. During the winter, the water under the roads can freeze and expand, then thaw and contract. This natural cycle causes the pavement to crack so that it deteriorates under the weight of the traffic and streets seem to break out in potholes overnight. A pothole that is considered repaired one day may open up again the next due to weather conditions and traffic driving over it. District crews respond as quickly as they can to complaints about potholes, but full repairs must wait until the weather warms up and the asphalt plants are open, generally the first week of April; until then only temporary fixes are possible. To report potholes please contact the District online or by calling 250-766-5650 during business hours.
9	What is council it self planning to do to minimize the increase for the budget like salary cuts, any plans to safe money at their departments , safe money on operations ? Or they pass all increase on to the residents ? How do you think seniors can effort to large home tax increases ? Why not tax the rich more on their property taxes, lake shore homes as a sample ! Or home values over 2 million ! Remember clearly we are not all millionaires ! Do,t touch the property taxes from seniors !	Thank you for the question.The District determines salaries for staff by benchmarking wages with other similar sized communities. In order to hire and retain qualified staff at the District, wages and benefits must be competitive and inline with other municipalities. The District is also bound to the CUPE labour agreement which outlines wages and increases over a five year period. Council will review various scenarios to determine how to cover the anticipated cost in 2023 along with determining the best way to manage an increase for all property owners. The Province does offer a tax deferralment option for homeowners over the age of 55 – more details can be found here. As the share of property taxes everyone pays is based on assessed values determined by BC Assessment, the higher value homes do in fact pay more in taxes than homes with lower values.

<p>10</p>	<p>When are you going to fix the immense pot holes and the road into the Lakestone development?</p>	<p>During the winter, the water under the roads can freeze and expand, then thaw and contract. This natural cycle causes the pavement to crack so that it deteriorates under the weight of the traffic and streets seem to break out in potholes overnight. A pothole that is considered repaired one day may open up again the next due to weather conditions and traffic driving over it. District crews respond as quickly as they can to complaints about potholes, but full repairs must wait until the weather warms up and the asphalt plants are open, generally the first week of April; until then only temporary fixes are possible. To report potholes please contact the District online or by calling 250-766-5650 during business hours.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>An increase in population means an increase in Tax dollars for Lake Country \$\$\$++;So why is there a massive increase in the Tax proposal?Also who was in charge of putting the Main Street through a private individuals land and thereby achieving a dead zone for development in the center of our town.....not the councils town??Where are the local facilities? Where is the town center p,an to include public facilities? In fact, where is the local Council in any of anything?</p>	<p>Thank you for the questions.While it is true that as the community grows, new construction adds to the tax base and allows the District to spread costs out over more properties, however the District also acquires more expenses in providing services to new buildings and residents. The 2023 tax increase is mainly due to the increased cost of the RCMP. In prior years when the population was under 15,000 the District was only required to pay 70% of RCMP cost. Now that Lake Country's population is over 15,000 Lake Country must pay 90% of RCMP cost. The impact of increased RCMP costs for 2023 is over \$1.4 million meanwhile we will only receive approximately an additional \$340,000 in taxes from the 2% growth we saw in the year.All properties along Main Street are privately owned. The District constructed the roads, sidewalks and services however it is now up to the individual landowners to develop the properties. Staff has applied for provincial grant funding to facilitate and develop a plan to eventually connect Main Street and Woodsdale neighborhoods. Lake Country has many facilities such as a District office, RCMP office, library, arena, and many parks. If you are referring to Lake Country not having a pool, You Asked – Why doesn't Lake Country have a pool helps explain why.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Why are taxes going so much higher ?..You already put the utility bill aside in 2022 and STILL rose taxes ! Is it even legal ???</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.RCMP Service costs increases were triggered when Lake Country's population surpassed 15,000. Rising inflation rates are also resulting in escalated cost of services, contracts, and wages throughout the District. Maintaining and upgrading aging infrastructure and sustaining the level of services that we are all used to will come with a higher price tag in 2023. With the significant cost increases observed over the past 2-3 years, continuing to improve and replace the District's water system requires setting rates that reflect current market conditions. There are several capital projects that have been identified as needing to be completed.</p>

<p>13</p>	<p>Our house assessment has gone up almost \$300,000 K in the last couple of years! Our house was built in 1977 and we are on Septic. If we are going to be taxed up to almost 20% on our new assessment from 2023 I really don't know if we can manage on a fixed income! I'm sure we are not alone. Plus there is talk of getting rid of the grants! How does one survive?</p>	<p>A common misconception is that a significant change in your assessed value will result in a proportionately significant change in your property taxes. The most important factor is not how much your assessed value has changed, but how your assessed value has changed relative to the average change within your jurisdiction. You can find out more by visiting www.bcassessment.ca. In Lake Country the average home increase was just under 10% - if you fall within this range it is likely your property taxes will only increase in the amount Council moves forward with. To put the increase into perspective, a 1% increase results in approximately a \$20 annual increase, for the average single-family home. BC Assessment has determined that the average single-family home in Lake Country in 2023 is \$1.087 Million.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>So, I see a lot of this response:</p> <p>A common misconception is that a significant change in your assessed value will result in a proportionately significant change in your property taxes. The most important factor is not how much your assessed value has changed, but how your assessed value has changed relative to the average change within your jurisdiction. You can find out more by visiting www.bcassessment.ca. (External link) In Lake Country the average home increase was just under 10% - if you fall within this range it is likely your property taxes will only increase by the percentage Council decides on.</p> <p>To put the increase into perspective, a 1% increase results in approximately a \$20 annual increase, for the average single-family home. BC Assessment has determined that the average single-family home in Lake Country in 2023 is \$1.087 Million.</p> <p>Utility bills were separated from the property tax bill in 2022 due to a change in billing systems at the District. Having two separate invoices provides greater transparency and is likely easier for property owners to review and better understand the costs.</p> <p>How does this response help anyone? How on EARTH has this assessment come to be when the economy has tanked? A common misconception, this is no 'misconception', our taxes ARE GOING UP. At a time when inflation is outpacing our salaries, ability to afford food, electricity or anything really it is beyond comprehension that government would continue to tax us to literal death. Also, gotta love that utilities are separate. What I noticed when we moved here is that we are billed for every little thing separately, and in some bizarro way. Water - separate, Garbage/Green bin - separate, Taxes - separate. I am still completely unsure of what my tax dollars pay for here. Can someone please provide a detailed statement of where every single of my</p>	<p>Thank you for the questions and comments. Please take a look at the 2022 Property Tax Insert, the graphics show how property tax dollars fund various District expenditures. 2021 Financial Statements can be found here.</p>

<p>tax dollars goes to? We should have the option to elect where we want those dollars to be allocated as well. Please, do not provide a canned response to my question, you can't and will not listen to citizens. There needs to be a taxpayer revolt, clearly.</p>	
<p>15 Curious why the growth of Lake Country appears to be a surprise to the local council, with the resulting reactionary response of steep tax hikes within a precarious economic climate? Why was there such a lack of foresight and long term planning to not have budgeted for these known and necessary incremental upgrades and increases to policing, fire, roads, water etc over the last 5, 10, 15 years? In example, how much more will taxes rise again or additional levies be placed on local residents when the rapidly failing and woefully inadequate infrastructure for clean drinking water is budgeted for over the next few years? This is a beautiful area but turning out to be an exceedingly expensive place to live long term. In addition to the higher property taxes, we (like so many others) pay to maintain our own septic system, have access to a private water utility, drink bottled water, pay additional garbage and recycling fees, deal with poor roads, and are now facing a large levy in the near future for water utilities.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. The District has been saving tax dollars in anticipation of the population growth and the impacts of reaching the 15,000 plus population. Over the last two years, over one million dollars has been saved to assist with the RCMP cost. Addressing water quality issues, ageing infrastructure, and undersized piping for adequate fire suppression needs, adds pressure for the District to fund these important improvements. Construction of a water treatment plant on Beaver Lake and Kalamalka Lake. With the significant cost increases observed over the past 2-3 years, continuing to improve and replace the District's water system requires rates that reflect current market conditions. Your comments are appreciated and will be passed on to Council.</p>
<p>16 Why was there only a 2% growth rate last year? I thought Lake Country kept talking about 5% annual or 22% over four years. What happened last year? Will 2023 be the same? Are we slowing it down on purpose? What about the hundreds of building permits waiting to be approved? And now taxes going up? We hit the 15,000 mark. Doesn't seem like the right time to stop growing now. What's happening in Lake Country? Does this council have a plan and can they share it with us?</p>	<p>The growth rate in Lake Country has averaged 3.12% over the past 10 years with an unprecedented spike in 2019 of 8.1% (details can be found here)Because the population went up by X% doesn't mean Lake Country's tax revenue goes up by the same percentage. Below is LAke Country's non market change growth the last 5 years: 2019 – 2.79%2020 – 3.21% 2021 – 2.52%2022 – 2.65%2023 – 2% Non-market change growth and population growth are different. Non-market change is the additional tax revenue the District receives from new construction, however the population can change at a different rate. For example if an existing house occupied by 1 person was sold to a family of 5 and that person moved away the population would go up by 4 however Lake Country wouldn't collect any additional tax on that property. Similarly, the Census data is based on where someone was living at the time of the census. Another example would be - If someone owns a house in Vancouver and a house in Lake Country, and they reported their principal residence as Vancouver for the 2016 census but then Lake Country in the 2021 census it would show the population as growing but Lake Country wouldn't receive additional tax revenue. Due to staff turnover the number of permits waiting for approval has increased. Vacancies are</p>

		being filled and the 2023 budget proposes two additional positions that would support the Planning and Development department with the existing backlog.
17	<p>The responses given to the very real concern residents are bringing forward, of having to sell and move to a more affordable district as a result of a 10-20% tax hike on homes that are likely over-valued due to a heated real estate market is a bit disingenuous. I'm sorry, but most folks cannot even afford to buy a home these days with prices at \$1million. These homes are not owned by millionaires. People on fixed incomes will not be able to keep up with the taxes applied to their homes, in fact even people who work will be facing struggles to spread their wages across higher tax bills. I get that the costs are on the rise, and the deal to cover the costs when a community hits or exceeds a specific population count is a problem. Whomever set that deal in place perhaps didn't think that the region would not be able to provide high paying jobs to support the higher costs? Perhaps the community needs to bring more industry to provide higher wages to those living in the million dollar homes to cover the increased taxes; or maybe lake country should look now to join Vernon or Kelowna to spread the tax burden more widely? Yes, your community has grown with more development and there are bound to be more pressures to maintain the infrastructure. However, there must be other mechanisms to look to beyond a 10-20% tax hike to folks, who really might not be able to buy the home they live in - because it's beyond a rational number! Maybe it's time to increase the taxes on empty homes? And seriously, you need to think about the value returned on that tax hike. If you drive folks away from the community - and maybe that is your intent with such a proposed increase? - you will end up with a failed community. You need to work towards a balanced approach to funding the city. There is no endless pot of money, and the current state of economics for most residents, combined with huge tax grabs from all levels of government will only push everyone closer to the edge of poverty. You cannot sell a million dollar home to someone who will get more services and enjoyment for less costs. People can live and work almost anywhere now. Be balanced and fair with your financial plan. Tighten the belt on free concerts in the park. It's time for government to cut deep and stop expecting residents to cut and go without. I simply do not earn more this year - in fact with the inflation I earn less, so how would you like me to pay the increased taxes? So, perhaps roll up your sleeves, sharpen the pencils and crunch numbers for another money making concept beyond taxes! How about generating the money through more development to make the community a destination for industry other than residential construction. Also, perhaps move the permitting process along WAY faster so we can get a lot more folks</p>	Thank you for the comments - they will be passed on to Council for consideration.

	into their new fancy homes so that the tax burden - which will always increase) can be shared across more shoulders.	
18	How is it that Lake Country Council is surprised by the rate of growth in Lake Country when the Council is approving development through building permits etc.?	Thank you for the question. The District has been planning for the population growth and has saved over one million dollars over the last two years to assist with the additional RCMP cost. Non-market change is the additional tax revenue the District receives from new construction, however the population can change at a different rate. For example if an existing house occupied by 1 person was sold to a family of 5 and that person moved away the population would go up by 4 however Lake Country wouldn't collect any additional tax on that property. Similarly, the Census data is based on where someone was living at the time of the census. Another example would be - If someone owns a house in Vancouver and a house in Lake Country, and they reported their principal residence as Vancouver for the 2016 census but then Lake Country in the 2021 census it would show the population as growing but Lake Country wouldn't receive additional tax revenue.
19	When is Council showing concern for long time residents of 28 years who live in developments that are older and are still not on sewer (Daniel Rd area)?	Thank you for the question. Properties that have been identified to be connected to the District sewer system are contained within the Official Community Plan. Sewer is referenced in Section 9.3 and Map 6.
20	If water tax is increasing, when do areas like Daniel Drive have improvements to their water quality? We used to be on Okanagan Lake water until "the Lakes" development caused us to be moved to Beaver Lake?	Thank you for the question. One of the top infrastructure projects is a water treatment plant for Beave Lake. Planning for the water treatment plant is well underway however requires grant funding along with a water rate increase to fund the project.
21	<p>1. What is the District doing to attract new commercial and industrial development? And thus increase this tax base?</p> <p>2. Does the District still receive property tax revenue from the Province of BC for homes on the deferred property tax program? Or is that an account receivable?</p> <p>3. Is the large property tax increase being explored because the cost for the District to borrow has exponentially increased? Would it be prudent to delay non time sensitive capital projects and expenditures until borrowing costs have come down?</p> <p>4. When will the land values of properties classified as farm land be reviewed and have their land value tax base increased? (BC regulation 411/95) many of these residential "farms" are not contributing financially to our community.</p> <p>In a time of entering a recession, now is absolutely not the time to increase residential property taxes. Put the work in and find other ways or delay spending, apply for government funding, or increase your tax base through commercial development with less of a focus on residential development.</p>	<p>1. Council considered at the January 17th Council meeting to remove 6 properties from the ALR to eventually be rezoned for a Lake County business park. The business park would accommodate light industrial businesses. Council does consider the limited commercial and industrial tax base when setting the tax ratios between property classes such as residential vs. business vs. light industrial .2. Yes, when a property owner is approved for the property tax deferral program, the Province pays the District those taxes and then it becomes essentially a low interest loan between the property owner and the Province.3. While it is true that the cost of borrowing has increased, it's not causing the proposed property tax increase. We currently have adequate capital reserves for all 2023 capital projects and the District's 5 year capital plan has been adjusted where we have delayed several capital projects based on inflation/significant rise in construction costs already. Delaying any of the 2023 proposed capital projects would not have an impact on the proposed tax increase as they are all funded from existing reserves and/or grants and developer</p>

		contributions. 4. All classifications and assessment values including farms are set by the Province through BC Assessment. The only aspect which Council can impact is the farm classification tax rates/ratio however you cannot distinguish between different types of farm and the rate for all farms must be the same. The District's Letters Patent actually have limits on the maximum rates that can be charged to the farm classification. Thank you for your input, your comments will be passed along to Council for their consideration.
22	Does the District issue municipal bonds? This should be considered to raise the capital needed for necessary projects, while delaying those that can be.	Thank you for the question. Under legislation, the District cannot incur debt other than borrowing internally from one reserve to another or through borrowing through the Regional District through the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA). The District does have adequate capital reserves for all projects listed in the 2023 capital plan. Due to rising costs, certain projects in the 5 year capital plan have been delayed and further consideration will need to be given each year as we progress as to whether certain projects should be delayed further, or debt financing should be pursued to proceed based on priority.
23	What are you guys thinking? A 9% to 19% tax increase is unheard of. We elected a new Mayor and four new Councilors last fall and I hope they are ready to fight the District on this outrageous tax increase. How do they expect seniors on fixed incomes and middle income people who are fighting inflation to put groceries on the table and increases in interest rates to pay this crazy increase in taxes. I have lived in Lake Country for over sixty years and have never ever seen any tax increases like this before. You guys are going to drive people right out of their homes.	Thank you for the comments. They will be passed on to Council for consideration.
24	Political hacks have been throwing up balloons for 100 years to see which way the wind is blowing, just another form of creating fear, and is hoped this lets the citizens know who holds the power. If you can post this it would be great.	
25	Not much info here on infrared sauna	Thank you for the question. The request for the infrared sauna which was approved by Council at the January 3rd Council meeting can be found here beginning on page 26.
26	I think I have left this comment earlier but bears repeating. Politicians for a 11 years have been throwing up balloons to see which way the wind is blowing. When they came back with lower numbers not 19% they look like heroes. It also gives them checkmate in the power category.	Thank you for your comment, it will be passed on to Council for consideration.

<p>27</p>	<p>I see that on the district budget property taxes make up 30% and “other revenue” makes up 41% of the revenue for the district, could you please elaborate on what “other revenue” is beyond grants?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Other revenue includes a number of recurring items such as: Grants such as the Community Works Fund (formerly known as Gas Tax Fund), the Small Community Grant, the OBWB Grant, grants in lieu of taxes from federal/provincial buildings (Post Office & BC Hydro). 1% utilities charges on utility companies (BC Hydro, Fortis etc. must pay 1% of revenue to the District in exchange for being able to operate in the District as per Local Government Act Section 644) Traffic Fine Revenue from the RCMP Funds received for density bonusing for fire (\$22/sq metre must be paid for any floor space created above the 3rd floor to help the fire department pay for equipment to handle fires in these types of buildings) It also includes an administrative amount where we allocate the expenses from shared functions like IT, HR, Accounting, Corp services to all departments, in order to not double count those expenses, a revenue amount is recorded to offset the amount. Return on investments on the reserve funds we hold as well as penalties & interest on late tax payments. In addition to the above recurring items, we have large developer contributions or one time grants that can really make the amount fluctuate from year to year. In the 2022 budget which I’m assuming you’re looking at based on the 41% of revenue comment, we had a grant application in the amount of \$14.1m for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Phase 5 which really skewed this number for that particular year. In the 2023 year we have some grants/developer contributions budgeted however the percentage of total revenue is 18%, with property taxes making up 35% which is much closer to what you’d see in a typical year.</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>What is the current status of the temporary dog park next to the tennis courts? I understand a facility is to be built on that site . That being the case, how long will it remain open. Thank you</p>	<p>The Indigenous Cultural Centre and Nature Park is currently in the design phase with an expectation that construction will start in late summer 2023. In regards to the dog park that has been located at 3724 Woodsdale Rd (behind the tennis courts), it is being proposed in the 2023 budget to allocate funds to move it to another location within the Woodsdale neighbourhood.</p>
<p>29</p>	<p>Your response of that is only a savings of \$5.00 is perhaps typical of accountants. Perhaps take a look for 9 more and we can save \$50.00. How much is going into Art Gallery \$60,000 plus maybe \$10,000 more? When was last survey done to check traffic. Do you think 1% of the residence have gone through the doors? This was obviously a pet project from the district hall, you tell me.</p>	<p>Thank you for the questions and comments. Art, culture and recreation are all important components of a healthy community. All funding requests are at the discretion of Council to make the decision. Additional Information: Q When was last survey done to check traffic.. A. The art gallery continually count every visit to the gallery and keep annual records which are reported in our presentation to Council and at our AGM each year. We also count, registrations for classes and numbers of engagements with the public at outreach events. Our typical visit & engagement number per year is in the region of 11,000. Q. Do you think 1% of the residence have gone through the doors?...A. While we do not collect residency location data from every visitor, we have (pre-COVID) kept visitor books in the gallery, filled in on a voluntary basis by a portion of visitors during our first 9 years of operations 2011-</p>

		<p>2019. These visitors completed a field asking which CITY then were resident in and from this data were were able to compile the following information:69.9% were from Thomson/Okanagan 11.5% from Greater BC That's over 80% total from BC with the remaining amounts as follows: 6.7% from Alberta less than 1% from Saskatchewan1% from Manitoba 2.5% from Ontario less than 1% from Quebec less than 1% Maritimes 2% US/ Mex/ South. Am 2.7% from Europe less than 1% from Asia 1% from Aus/ NZ</p>
<p>30</p>	<p>A 10/19% increase will add \$373/\$709 to our municipal taxes in 2023 which are already unreasonably high from unchecked municipal decisions in recent years. We have not received any noticeable increase in services which might justify increases beyond the general inflation rate. Our high population growth should REDUCE municipal expenses on a per property basis, not increase unless Council and municipal management are too lax in administrating scarce taxpayer resources. NOW is the time for Council members to take action by freezing/reducing ALL discretionary expenses to limit the 2023 tax increase to 5-7 %, the rate of inflation. Reductions in the proposed budget could include municipal salaries, fire/police redundancies, accommodation etc. DRASTIC action and brave taxpayer-oriented decisions are required to address the dire financial circumstances being described for this year.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. They will be passed on to Council for consideration. Additional Information: Clarification to your comment - a tax increase would be approximately \$20 for 1% so 10% ~ \$200 and 19% would be \$380 (not \$373/\$709) the numbers are based on a home that is assessed at \$1.087 million.</p>

<p>31 If the District “currently has adequate capital reserves for all 2023 capital projects and the District’s 5 year capital plan has been adjusted to delay several capital projects based on inflation/significant rise in construction costs already”, then what is the reason and the urgency for the proposed property tax increase this year? Where precisely will those additional funds collected from the increase be going? Show a chart.</p> <p>How many RCMP are being hired? If 2 additional new RCMP are hired, that is maybe at most \$150k per year for their salaries, some of which is paid for federally.</p> <p>Rising costs and inflation is temporary. Property tax increases are not temporary. Increasing property taxes due to higher costs is hitting the easy button. It’s the lackadaisical way to balance a budget. You can increase revenue or decrease costs to balance a budget. Going into a recession, citizens are being forced to balance their budgets by reducing costs and cutting unnecessary or discretionary expenses. The District should be no different. Have all expenses and costs been reviewed to cut unnecessary costs, renegotiate contracts, reviewing vendor and supplier contracts? Just because capital projects for 2023 have been approved, does it make sense for them to go forward?</p> <p>Simply increasing property taxes reduces your accountability to your residents. What options were explored before coming to this decision? Have all other/any other avenues been considered? On page 4 of your proposed financial plan, the only solution I see being proposed is a property tax increase. That is not accountable governance.</p>	<p>While there are adequate capital reserves for the proposed 2023 capital projects, the reason for the proposed property tax increase is this relates to operating items. While it is true that you could use capital reserves for one year to put off the tax increase, as the operating items are ongoing costs, using capital to cover the 2023 amount would just move the tax increase to 2024 and then set back all the master plans and capital projects by one year and since that funding would be pulled from those reserves it would create an even larger infrastructure deficit. The reasons for and where the additional funds collected from the increase will be going are outline in the table titled “Changes from 2022 to 2023 in General Taxation” on page 4 of the 2023 – 2027 Draft Financial Plan. There are further details on these amounts and the reasons why in the “Request for Council Decision 2023 – 2027 Draft Financial Plan” document. Additional RCMP member is in the proposed budget for 2023 with the 5 year plan showing potentially adding another 5 over the following 4 years. However, the major increase as noted in the report is the District being required to cover 90% of the RCMP costs up from the previous 70% due to surpassing 15,000 in population in the most recent Census which represents an additional \$1.4 million in 2023 (including the one extra member). This is not due to a contract specific to the District of Lake Country, this is applicable to all municipalities across the country who utilize the RCMP https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ccaps-spcca/contract-eng.htm. Every single line/account in the budget is reviewed on an annual basis and heavily scrutinized. We operate extremely lean and do not build buffers or “fat” into the budget which can be easily cut. While we believe this is the most responsible way to budget to provide the best value for our taxpayers, it also means in years with high cost increases out of our control that we have no way of absorbing those increases without significantly altering services. The budget being proposed is in draft form. After scrutinizing every line and adjusting where necessary, we determine the proposed potential increases in order to maintain existing service levels as well as cost out items that Council has indicated are strategic priorities or align with their vision. It is then up to Council whether to proceed with the existing levels of service or determine if service level cuts are deemed warranted. This is why there are multiple meetings with Council as well as multiple public input opportunities where adjustments can be made to find the balance of taxes and levels of service that Council, while considering public input, deems appropriate. As of now, we have not received any indication that the public or Council wants reduced services in the community and as such the draft budget has not been prepared proposing service cuts however that is subject to change in future readings of the budget if Council opts to go in that direction.</p>
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<p>32</p>	<p>In your report https://www.lakecountry.bc.ca/en/news/you-asked-why-does-road-maintenance-cost-so-much.aspx it is stated that the road maintenance budget for 2022 was \$1.6 million. I have a few related questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is that just for snow and gravel, or does that include repairs? 2. Where do road maintenance/ repair funds come from? 3. Is there any additional levy on high-wear road users like local industry that requires regular heavy truck deliveries & collections? 	<p>The proposed maintenance budget of \$1.6 million covers patrolling, plowing, sanding and salting on District roads, roadsides, and sidewalks, street sweeping and gravel road maintenance. Funding for road repairs such as potholes are an operational cost. Bigger projects such as Shanks Road, Pixton Road, etc are capital funded projects. Gravel companies do pay an addition fee for material moved out through the soil removal permitting process which is meant to offset cost of increased wear on roads.</p>
<p>33</p>	<p>I understand that the property tax increase is essentially unavoidable at this stage. To better put the increase in perspective, how does the increased amount compare to other Okanagan municipalities for similar valued homes?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. It is difficult to compare property taxes from one community to another. Each community includes different services in the annual budget in addition to property values varying in different communities. The Province does collect and report on municipal taxes. The data allows you to review taxation rates throughout BC.</p>
<p>34</p>	<p>I am pleased to live in a community that is working to ensure all our needs are being met, which includes so much more than roads, safety, and water. While those are all essential, we also need places to meet for social interactions, creative activities for our children, places to cycle to enjoy our beautiful area, engaging events for our seniors, parks for all kinds of activities, .</p> <p>It would be terrible to live in a community that did not include those things that ensure we are healthy and can thrive. Many studies have proved how good health and happiness comes from participation in social gatherings, in arts and culture experiences, and in varied physical activities.</p> <p>It is a good thing that the taxes are being set at a level to achieve a balanced community, and I am happy to pay my share.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments. We will ensure that they are passed on to Council for consideration.</p>

<p>35 I urge Council to go over the proposed budget, looking for any cost cutting that can be achieved; and keeping the items that are "must haves", while postponing or eliminating those that "would be nice to have". I won't be installing a sauna this year; perhaps the fire department can wait as well. Ongoing operating costs should be funded from revenue collected in the year those costs are incurred. Grants from senior governments are fine for one time obligations, but unless there is a guarantee of ongoing funding, reliance on a grant for an annual cost just pushes the pain of the increased cost down the road a year or two. Any reserves that have been set aside in anticipation of having to pay 90% of RCMP costs should certainly be applied, but not in a way that pushes any part of this year's policing costs into future years. That would be similar to only paying the minimum payment on your credit card, only to find your balance has increased by added interest on the original balance. Using the RCMP reserve to stagger the increase over two or three years would be prudent. The only time that costs should be pushed forward to future years' budgets is when the benefits from those costs will be enjoyed by future taxpayers - such as taking out a mortgage on capital items such as the arena, the theatre, the sewer plant or city hall. A policeman on the street today does nothing for a citizen who will be here 5 years from now. Those who say we have never had increases like this in past years, are forgetting the late 90's, when Council had to implement double digit percentage tax increases for three years in a row. At that time, shortly after incorporation, the need for bigger and bigger budgets was driven by the province turning over responsibility for various functions in a staggered way over a five year period. The current increase in responsibility for RCMP costs is a similar situation where senior governments are passing the costs down to municipal taxpayers; something we always knew was coming. Back in the 90's, when certain taxpayers were outraged by 15-30% increases, they were asked to come in to study the budget so they could make suggestions of budget items that they felt the majority of Lake Country citizens wanted to see reduced or eliminated. Not just items they personally didn't want, but those that they believed most citizens didn't want. None of those complaints produced reasonable suggestions and most budget skeptics left saying "Council sure has a tough job". Please refine the budget by eliminating any frivolous items, but don't reduce it to the point where we lose the things that make our community a great place to live. And if the costs are real for the services we require, then give us the bill -- who else should pay it? A 20% increase for the average home would be \$400 - about what Westjet will charge a couple for two checked bags each on a flight to and from Mexico for a holiday.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments, they will be passed on to Council for consideration.</p>
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<p>36</p>	<p>We live in Carrs Landing, We pay for our septic costs and water separately and above from our District taxes. I notice a number of items in the budget that are for sewer or water upgrades in the district as well as the running costs of sewer and water systems in various areas of Lake Country that have sewer or water supplied by the District. Do any of my taxes paid to the District go towards any of these items even though we have no district benefit for that item ? As an example Beaver Lake Treatment System – Functional Design on page 202, Do any of our Municipal taxes go towards this? Thanks</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.Approved capital project costs and operating costs related to water and water infrastructure are paid by District water customers only. Sewer infrastructure upgrades and operating costs are paid by property owners who are connected to the District sewer system. All property owners, including property owners who are not connected to the sewer system and on septic pay an annual environmental fee of \$75.</p>
<p>37</p>	<p>Can you please supply the community with an organizational chart? At one point there was one on-line. We would like to see if cost savings can be made on the DLC side. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.The organizational chart can be found in the 2021 Annual Report, on page 10 - Annual Report 2021.pdf (lakecountry.bc.ca)</p>
<p>38</p>	<p>I just want to thank the District for supporting the arts and culture in Lake Country. I have been going to to LC art Gallery since it opened. I enjoy the projects they have developed over the years. The continued growth in community engagement. It is a joy to see all the children come through the Gallery and watch the faces as they get a lesson on art. I have also taken many classes at the Gallery and am looking forward to the upcoming events over this next year, especially the Gathers which is a project that will inform people of other cultures. This is one area that needs our continued support. Lake Country Art Gallery enriches the lives of all ages.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments, they will be passed onto Council for consideration.</p>
<p>39</p>	<p>I would like to add a comment to the conversation...</p> <p>The visual arts play a vital role in Lake Country's culture and community development.</p> <p>The Lake Country Art Gallery provides programming and a safe space for seniors, children, teens, and adults. Numerous art-making workshops, adapted art classes for teens and adults, and opportunities for learning and celebrating diversity, heritage, and indigeneity are offered throughout the year.</p> <p>When we, as a community, fund and support arts and culture, we all benefit.</p> <p>Please remember one person's frill might be another person's lifeline.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments, they will be passed onto Council for consideration.</p>

40	<p>The support of the district for local arts and culture has a great impact on the community. In particular, the Districts' support of the Lake Country Art Gallery provides valuable opportunities for our community members for sharing, learning, and experiencing art and more. From gallery guests to local artists there is something there for everyone of all different ages. Local arts and culture have the capacity to create a more diverse, inclusive community, as well as contributing to the cultural growth of Lake Country, not to mention the important role the gallery plays in contributing to local tourism. Investing in the arts has the capacity to educate, inspire, and experience different perspectives. We are so lucky to have such a great, inclusive space!</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments, they will be passed on to Council for consideration.</p>
41	<p>Supporting local arts and culture has the potential to challenge, educate, and engage the local community which is so beneficial to the growth of any community. Plus, it's great for tourism!</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment, it will be passed on to Council for consideration.</p>
42	<p>Comment Re: Spending There is money going towards a sauna for the fire department and there is an alternative. The Firefighters Union will pay 100% of this cost if you present it to them. The Union paid the full cost of the sauna in North Vancouver and in other districts. Please have the firefighters reach out to their Union as cost cutting and savings need to be found in the DLC. Thanks</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. We consulted with the District's Fire Chief and he informed us that you are likely referring to the IAFF in the District of North Vancouver. In Lake Country we do not have IAFF. The team appreciates the good idea and please be assured that staff is constantly looking for grant application opportunities.</p>
43	<p>How do we get a pool involved in this? Grants, etc? We need one! Could we get a YMCA Rex centre?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Please take a look at the article "You Asked - Why doesn't Lake Country have a pool?" In 2022 a Sports and Recreation Master Assessment was completed for Lake Country - information on the assessment can be found on the project page.</p>
44	<p>Pool - I was referenced back to your pool on my last question but the faq on it is pretty vague. Have we looked into the YMCA? What does a "significant tax increase" mean? If it's \$50-100 I bet a lot of ppl would pay that for a rec centre!</p>	<p>Thank you for the clarification. I don't believe the YMCA option has been closely evaluated. Council and staff do recognize that many in the community would like a pool in Lake Country and it's often discussed. Later this year Council will be reviewing the findings of the Sports & Rec Assessment and evaluating recommendations being brought forward after extensive engagement with the community,</p>

<p>45</p>	<p>Hello, The poll for the Pelme wash slope refers to page 169 of the financial plan. However, that page does not have info on Pelme wash. Page 127-131 does, but I do not see 3 options listed. There are 3 areas that need to be addressed are those what you mean by options? Or have I misunderstood? Please let me know.</p>	<p>There are 3 different options each with a different price tag:https://pub-lakecountry.escrimemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=3283 Area #1 - Draped Netting with Rock Anchors \$70,000 In order to direct the potential rock fall debris into the existing rock catchment area, it is proposed that approximately 900 Square meters of draped netting secured at the top of the rockface by rock anchors be installed in the indicated red zone shown above. This netting would drape down the rock face to contain the bulk of the rock debris and control the falling trajectory to within the existing rock catchment area. The draped netting has a lifespan of approximately 10 years without damage from rocks. Metal netting would add \$115,000 to the cost and would have a lifespan longer than 50 years without rock damage. Area 2 Map of Potential Rock Fall Area of observation Area of Proposed Solution Area 2 - Single Lane Alternating Traffic \$102,000 In order to allow for an adequate rock fall catchment area approximately 91 meters along Pelme wash Parkway will be changed to single lane alternating traffic. This would be achieved by directing all traffic to the northbound lane along with the use of jersey barriers to secure the proposed rock catchment area, fencing along the top of the jersey barriers may be considered after the barrier installation. This section of road would function the same as a single lane bridge found throughout many communities. This cost includes solar powered traffic signals to assist with traffic flow and safety. This traffic pattern change could see a minor increase in commercial truck traffic on Oyama Road. The District has limited enforcement options, as Bylaw officers cannot stop moving vehicles. Truck routes could be established but would rely on user compliance with limited enforcement by provincial Commercial Vehicle Enforcement staff. Further traffic calming measures could be implemented based on the District's Traffic Calming Policy if required after implementation. 129 Area 3 Map of Potential Rock Fall Area of observation/Proposed Solution Area 3 - Jersey Barriers with Chain Link Fencing \$28,000 In conjunction with the existing rock catchment area a series of concrete "Jersey" barriers with 8' high chain link fence mounted to the top would be installed along the shoulder of the existing roadway for a length of approximately 61 meters. The Barriers will contain the majority of the larger rock fall debris and the fencing will provide containment for the smaller "bouncing" rock fall debris.</p>
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<p>46 Question Re: Contingency Funds.(CF) It appears to me that there is an excessive number of CF's with way too much money in them. The practice of having a CF for absolutely everything that the district owns or maintains is not viable. There shouldn't be enough money sitting around to run another whole district. DLC needs to run lean and use the money that is already sitting there collecting dust. "What if there is an emergency and something needs to be replaced?" You dip into the DLC's one and only CF, with a moderate amount of money in it, and take a loan out for the rest like everyone else does. This "unforeseen expenditure " will then be addressed in the next year's budget appropriately. Consider using the money that DLC has already collected before you ask for more. Thanks</p>	<p>The majority of the District's reserves relate to its capital plans. All reserves per the reserve policy have specified purposes including desired levels of reserve balances to mitigate current and future risks, encourage stable tax rates and demonstrate financial commitment to long range infrastructure and master plans. The reserve funds that are in place are also earning investment income which compared to taking out debt for every project can result in significant savings. Thank you for your comments, they will be passed along to Council for considering in determining future levels.</p>
<p>47 Comment Re: Policing. I understand the increase in policing costs because of the 15,000 + residents. Why is the DLC hiring 6 more officers in the next 5 years? If this increase is NOT a regulation/law by the government then don't do it. When all 18 current officers are swamped by their workload then look into hiring additional support staff then ultimately officers. This is how staffing issues are dealt with everywhere in virtually every industry. Why are so many being hired? The DLC should only hire more officers, firefighters or staff of any sort if there is an actual shortage that is showing a negative impact on the DLC. So please run lean and only spend what we have on only what we need. Thanks</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.For the 2023 budget, Council will be considering increasing the authorized RCMP strength from 18 members to 19 members to address growth and the additional responsibilities that come with a growing population. In past years Lake Country has relied on Kelowna for resources to investigate major crimes. As Lake Country's population continues to climb plans need to be in place to recruit additional resources in Lake Country.</p>
<p>48 Having been lucky enough to live in Lake Country for 40+ years, I'm not particularly thrilled with the prospect of a tax hike - coz who ever is? . . . but . . . I AM pretty thrilled with the community Lake Country is becoming . . . our past mayors and council members have been pivotal in supporting the development of parks, trails, community activities, and so much more . . . I am grateful for experiences offered right here in my own community - things like theatre performances, outdoor concerts, ArtWalk and the Lake Country Public Art Gallery, all of which play an important part in building the foundation of a rich cultural life for the people who live here . . . I also appreciate the delicate balancing act DLC council and staff have when it comes to financing things seen as 'frills' with the nitty gritty of necessities like road maintenance . . . and I urge Council to remember that we need amenities to keep us thriving as a community just as much as we need roads to drive out of it . . . thanks for listening!</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments, they are most appreciated and will be provided to Council for consideration.</p>

<p>49</p>	<p>I went to council meeting just to see how things went, I'm old and have extra time on my hand. I waited outside until 7pm when meeting was to start. A woman pulled up and unloaded a bunch of dinners. When I came inside everyone was chowing down. Perhaps you as well. Looking for calendar of dates for Council Meetings I could only find dates listed until April. So here are my questions in regards to free food. Perhaps they are paying?</p> <p>A) Doing a rough calculation I suspect the annual bill for this is over \$10,000, but I'm sure you will tell me. Where is this found in the budget, under Misc.?</p> <p>B) The woman picking up, is she covered with Lake Country Business Insurance and is she paid mileage?</p> <p>C) Is the response convenience with I'm sure everyone living within 10 minutes from home and can eat there</p> <p>d) Are you paying overtime for the time the staff are now in building? And you wouldn't if they went home for dinner? Perhaps they are all management and don't receive overtime.</p> <p>E) If you are paying overtime please include as a separate line to meals.</p>	<p>Thank you for the questions. Catering expenses for staff and Council required to stay into the evening for Council meetings are captured under Council administration cost - all admin cost can be found within the District's financials for each calendar year. Staff using a personal vehicle for District business are reimbursed for mileage when using a personal vehicle. Not all staff live in Lake Country and the majority of staff attending Council meetings are non-union and do not receive overtime for working through the evening.</p>
<p>50</p>	<p>in response to your funding question, we prefer funding for the RCMP over the Pelme wash slope mitigation plan.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. If you could please take the quick poll - the question is which of the 2 funding options for the RCMP do you prefer and which of the 3 options of the Pelme wash slope mitigation do you support? Council will have to pick one option for each expense - but they would just like to better understand what the preference of the community is before making a decision.</p>
<p>51</p>	<p>Present property taxes are killing us at these trying times, please no more raises, can you please stay within budget?</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment. It will be passed on to Council for consideration.</p>

<p>52 Dear Lake Country Council The following is my input / questions I have to the proposed Budget 20231. Addressed to Trevor James and all the “helping hands and brains” to create this and any future plans: In most professional literature there is an explanatory page that lists all the abbreviations and it’s definition utilized in that literature. Being a professional engineer, but not yet too savvy with the financial plan of our community, it is really difficult to read AND understand the content when all these “strange” abbreviations have been utilized. Yes, after searching for a while some will finally find the definition of that abbreviation, which by all means is not very reader friendly. Samples are, but not limited to:- OCP, DCC, FTP, OBWB, PRV, P & D, WWTP, GMG, LCFD, CRJ, UBCM, NFPA, MOT, NFPA, etc. So here is my input as “potential for improvement”: I would appreciate if a separate page could be added (listed as a separate page# in the “Contents” section) that lists ALL abbreviations utilized in the report, it’s proper naming, AND –if required- an additional explanation what it is, or means, AND at which page# of the report this abbreviation has been utilized the first time in the report. With our modern software (i.e. MS-Word) this shouldn’t be a big issue to implement it.- Thank you !</p> <p>2. Capital# 2023-12 (Woodsdale Waterfront Park Site & Cultural Centre – Construction) This “Project” being utilized as a sample: The annual operating / maintenance cost (estimated @ approx. \$60,000) do NOT include the depreciation of the building and all related landscaping / outside structures. After 50 years the “renewal of the asset is required” (as per respective “Capital Budget Request”) . Hence there is an “annual budget for an additional \$56,520 to be considered (without taking the inflation rate over these 50 years into account !) Question: Where will this total annual funding of min. \$120,000.00 come from ? Why do we mainly focus on the purchase and funding of the “asset” and create huge liabilities for our community in the long-term future ? Purchasing and funding an “asset” is only a very short-sited view. Operating, maintaining and replacing this “asset” turns quite often into a huge liability the local tax payer most likely has to come up for ... Again with property tax increases ?? This “project 2023-12” and my statement above should be considered as a sample for any “nice to have” projects listed in the 2023 budget plan – and any future budgets. We need to start to think and distinguish more critical and cost-oriented about “absolutely must-have projects” (i.e. water / sewer / infrastructure etc. their improvement/ operation and replacement) . Anything else are “nice-to-have” projects that will turn into a burden for our community –in a long-term. And a long-term vision is required to establish a valuable and sustainable budget plan.</p> <p>3. How would a 5-year-budget plan look like with an exclusive focus on “absolutely must-have-projects” and it’s immediate and long-term effect on the required property taxes ?</p> <p>4. How can “nice-to-have-projects”</p>	<p>Staff does try to include the full terms followed by the acronym in the first instance, such as Official Community Plan (OCP), however I do realize that the detailed reports come after the summary document so in those cases the abbreviation would be the first thing you’d see so it is a fair point. I will note this for future documents. The renewal line can be used to provide a general idea, however the long term capital plans and their funding models are laid out in our respective Master Plans. For example the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan which was completed in 2018 and laid out a 20 year plan. As part of it, recommendations to increase contributions to our Facilities Reserve were included in order to have adequate reserves in order to replace existing facilities. The specific example you used of the Woodsdale Indigenous Cultural Centre & Nature Park is funding in the majority through grant funding. At the end of the 50 year expected life of the facility I would suggest that grant funding would be pursued again in the event of renovation/replacement and as such specifically adding tax dollars to deal with that replacement would not be necessary. Regarding your view that the Indigenous Cultural Centre is an example of a “nice to have” and not a “need to have” as well as preparing the budget on a “absolutely must have projects”, this is a fundamental philosophical question for Council as what is “nice to have” vs. “need to have” is extremely subjective. Other than certain mandatory and regulated services that the District must provide such as potable drinking water (if it is decided that water will be provided), safety and administration of the municipalities finances which are regulated to meet legislative requirements, most things that the District provides are optional or very discretionary in the level of service that is provided. Policing, fire protection, garbage collection, transit, roads maintenance, sanitary sewer, parks, recreation and cultural programs are provided at their levels at the discretion of Council. Some might view things like art galleries, museums, cultural events, parks etc. as “nice to have” however they’re all part of making a community a desirable place to live. Some might not view as having paved roads as necessary, and going back to gravel roads might be desirable to reduce taxation however planning is done on the basis of Council’s vision, mission, strategic priorities and long term master plans. Specifically for the Indigenous Cultural Centre, “Honour Reconciliation by Strengthening Relationships and Inclusiveness With Our Indigenous Partners” is a Council Priority and the Cultural Centre is an action item in that plan. It is also primarily grant funded. If you are referring to re-allocating funds from certain capital projects to offset this year’s potential tax increase, this could occur and delay the tax increase but not make it go away. Reserves are managed according to our reserve policy and each reserve has a specific purpose. While all non-statutory reserves Council does have the discretion to re-allocate funds, taking capital</p>
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<p>be handed to other responsibilities that would keep the community's finances unaffected ? (sample is the 2023-12 project and of course, any other "nice-to-have" project. Budgeted or not-yet budgeted) 5. How does the timeline look like of getting our community debt-free ? And operating on a balanced budget in the future with only minor adjustments (if absolutely necessary) of the annual property taxes ? Your clear view on this topic would be much appreciated, especially when it will be published to our community. Just think about a good old saying "Less can be more for all of us – in a long-term...." And this is also more sustainable, also in a long-term.... Thank you-EFP-</p>	<p>reserves and funding operating items only delays the tax impact until the next year. For example, taking money from a capital reserve to cover the RCMP contract for one year would mean this year's taxes could be reduced by that amount, however next year that ongoing cost is still there, that reserve amount is depleted and you would need to raise taxes in that next year anyway, and then the reserve which was specifically intended for capital projects as part of long term master plans is no longer there and we'd be facing a potential infrastructure deficit related to that item. Responsible debt financing is used to finance a number of projects in the District, and while we are always careful to manage the debt, there are no current plans to create a timeline to become "debt free". Responsible debt is used to fund projects when deemed appropriate, it can help match benefits to the taxpayer paying the amounts and help stabilize long term tax rates. For example, we recently borrowed \$6.124 million for the new Fire Hall. Please note these are very rough numbers and are ignoring interest rates/investment income/inflation however are for illustrative purposes, here are 3 ways that could have been paid for (if we were looking at that decision today): Raise taxes for 1 year by 36% for all existing tax payers meaning the average single family home would pay \$720 more in taxes for this year, we would then drop this off in the next year and going forward Raise taxes by 1.8% or \$36 for the average single family home, and save up that money for 20 years before purchasing the fire hall Pay using debt and raise taxes by 2.6% or \$52 for the average single family home to pay for the debt payments Option A is an extreme burden in one year for tax payers, many of which would have to pay using debt themselves and likely at a much higher rate than we get on our debt through the Municipal Finance Authority. This is also a massive fluctuation in tax rates that we look to avoid. Option B means someone in 2023 is paying for a Fire Hall in 2043 that they might not even be around to see built Option C means the tax payers who are benefitting from the Fire Hall through enhanced safety and lower home insurance premiums are the ones paying for it. It also means the much needed facility gets built now as opposed to in 20 years. My other overall comment is that this is ultimately Council's budget, and for them as elected officials, to adjust levels of service based on what they believe the community needs. There is significant discretion in where those levels of service are set and what the resulting costs will be. We will pass on your question/comments to Council however I encourage you if you feel strongly about what you believe should be community priorities that you reach out to Council as since we have a new Council, there will be an update on strategic priorities and strategic actions coming in 2023.</p>
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53	Property taxes are taxing those long time seniors out of the community. DO you agree property taxes are out of control?	Thank you for your comment - it will be passed on to Council to respond to at the town hall on Tuesday January 31st.
54	Why does the District not accept donations at the music in the park functions? Bringing in well known Name Acts at DLC taxpayer expense, and advertising widely at DLC taxpayer expense, which draws larger audiences for free concerts, from outside of Lake Country makes no sense. For years under volunteer management, DLC audiences were happy to make donations, with door prizes supplied by sponsors, and the music was just as good, sometimes better. Accept donations from both locals and outsiders instead of increasing the budget.	Thank you for your comments. They will be passed on to Council for review.
55	Is there monies allotted in the new Budget for improving the Carrs Landing Rd from the right turn coming down from Ocela Rd and up ?? The road has been severally damaged from heavy construction trucks. There are no walking or cycling paths along the road....It's a death trap to say the least. Will it take a pedestrian or Cyclist to be injured or killed before the powers that be realize something drastic needs to be done. Taxes keep going up, however, the road has not been improved in the 8 1/2 yrs that we have lived here other than filling in pot holes sporadically at best We have had some near misses from being hit walking/cycling along the road....Motorists are not always willing to share the road and we have been yelled at to get off the road even though we are as far over as we can go to allow traffic to pass. Many motorists do not even slow down or move over when passing us and speeds are exceeding the posted limit. This road is the only other access parallel to hwy 97 into Vernon and the wineries, Sparkling Hills etc and has now become a major road. Traffic has increased exponentially in only a few yrs. Thank you for your time I pray that our concerns are heard and acted upon.	Thank you for the question.As part of ongoing mobility planning throughout the District, Council asked the community for feedback on Carr's Landing Road from Okanagan Centre West Road to Commonage Road this past summer. More information on the District's mobility plans can be found in the Mobility Master Plan(External link).There are a number of active tasks the District is either leading or supporting. There are known constraints along Carr's Landing Road however the traffic engineering analysis work required to make informed decisions has not yet been completed.The project team is planning to undertake the technical work required to understand the future mobility needs of the neighbourhood and identify the technical solutions. The following initiatives are currently underway or will happen shortly:Carr's Landing Rd Pathway (Commonage - Commonage) – Pathway Design proposed in 2024 with construction in 2026.Carr's Landing Road and Okanagan Centre West Survey - 2022.Commonage Rd & Carr's Landing Road intersection and Commonage Road improvements by O'Rourke Family Vineyards.Creation of the DC 13 Zone for O'Rourke Family Vineyards.
56	A side note to my concerns regarding Carrs Landing Rd. Why not make it a toll road for heavy truck users in order to raise money which could result in increasing the communities coffers for improvement of the Carrs Landing Road. Why are the construction companies/developers not paying their fair share of expenses for use and damage of the road and provide some relief to the tax payers along Carrs Landing Road.?	Thank you for the comments regarding Carr's Landing Road. Your suggestions will be submitted to Council for consideration.
57	What is the situation on that motel above highway 97 Airport Inn just after Robinson? How long are we going to have to wait for action on this property?	Thank you for the question.The former Airport Inn is not owned by the District of Lake Country. It is up to the current land owner to determine when the property will be redeveloped.

58	<p>I recently viewed a council meeting in regards to the Pelmawash/Rail Trail connector along Woodsdale Rd. There was a discussion about the road contingency fund would be eaten up by this project. I feel the priority needs to be focused on fixing our roads & installing sidewalks throughout our community, as our roads are crumbling away. A reply to a recent comment in regards to Glenmore road, indicated the condition of the road was a result of freeze/thaw. Glenmore Road has been in the same condition for years & it's unacceptable. The same with Carr's Landing, Sherman Drive & pretty much all side roads in Lake Country. I do not want to see a large tax increase & all new projects should be put on hold until existing upgrades to roads is completed.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments regarding Lake Country roads. Your comments will be passed on to Council for review and consideration.</p>
59	<p>Thanks for your response, I believe when I ask for numbers about how much is spent on dinners you have easier access to numbers and if its mixed in with other expenses I won't get a answer to my question. If staff are not getting paid overtime (they would be taken advantage of. If they go home for their dinner no pay needed and no expense for dinners. If you are just paying mileage, she has a problem if in accident. She needs business insurance to be picking up your food.</p>	
60	<p>How long is it going to take you guys to fix glenmore rd. This is getting really ridiculous and I'm trying not to cuss in this but your guys really gotta get your shit together.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. A section of Glenmore road was overlaid last year as part of the Interim Pavement Renewal program, further works will continue operationally this season as budget and capacity allow. The Glenmore Road corridor is being looked at as part of the Lake Country Business Park planning and the MoTI regional transportation study. Both of these initiatives could have significant impact on the corridor over the next few years.</p>
61	<p>This is in regard to the average house price in Lake Country at \$1.087 million. Why do the less than average house value home owners have to pay way more taxes. I realize that it's according to our assessments but my home isn't close to that figure at all. Why not tax them more for the extra wear and tear on our roads and policing costs now changing (as its those new subdivisions that have increased our population) Is Kelowna policing and using their Fire Department for their Industrial business's? Plan for Town Centre. Use the land from the old firewall for a new police station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding the budget. We will be sure to pass your thoughts on to Council for consideration prior to 2nd and 3rd reading of the budget on February 23rd.</p>

<p>62</p>	<p>1. How are deferred property taxes accounted for in the revenue budget? 2. Noted that Bylaw expenditures increased by about \$100,000 from 2022 to 2023, with no additional FTE. Also noted that request for Bldg Inspector and Bylaw Mgr staff increase would have no tax effect? Why bylaw expenditures up \$100,000? 3. Noted (Page11) Development Eng cost increase from \$844,031 to \$1,020,878 from 2022 to 2023 (+\$177K), but (Page10) Transport Services salary/wages down only \$68K from 2022 to 2023 with the one shared individual now split costs between these two. One employee shared, but net cost increase of \$177K- \$68K, or up\$109K? 4. Why do all council members need to attend all of SILGA, UBCM, and FCM conferences?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.1) There is no impact from property tax deferrals on the budget, when someone is approved by the program the Province pays that home owner's property taxes on their behalf to the District and then the loan is established between the owner and the province. We collect the same money as though they had paid themselves. 2) The majority of this as a result of the new Building and Bylaw Manager position where we have coded half of their salary and benefits to bylaw. This increase to the department also results in the department making up more of the overall costs of the budget and therefore shifting approx. \$10k of admin charges (HR, IT, finance etc.) from other departments to bylaw. There is no tax effect as we are budgeting to fund this position through the revenue we collect from building/development fees. 3) This is in part due to a new part time Engineering Project Coordinator included is this amount that was created through reallocating existing budget lines. At the time of the draft budget being prepared, due to the position being funded through non-taxation sources (similar to the building & bylaw position) the fund changes were reflected however the FTE number in the report has not been updated until if Council approves the positions. The shift in additional costs to the Transportation department has also resulted in a shift of administrative costs of \$17k similar to with bylaw above. 4) All Council members do not attend all of these conferences, a budget line of \$25,000 exists and the pricing of these conferences is provided so that Council can decide who and how many to send to each. In order to register for these conferences a Council resolution is needed. At the time of first reading Council left the \$25,000 budget line but deferred decided how many and who to send to which conferences.</p>
<p>63</p>	<p>There is a budget request of \$65,000 for road crack sealing. In the budget request document, a unit cost of \$2/meter is provided? Does this mean we have 33 km of cracks?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. There are more than 33 kilometers of cracks in the roads within District of Lake Country. This program is meant to be on going and will extend the middle lifespan of many of our roads by slowing the infiltration of water into the asphalt surface.</p>
<p>64</p>	<p>Have read many of comments submitted. One general theme seems to come through - council needs to consider which budget proposals are really necessary, and which are "nice to have". With all citizens feeling the increasing costs just to "live", now is not the time to spend on nice to have items.</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to submit your thoughts on the budget. All comments will be submitted to Council for consideration prior to 2nd and 3rd reading on February 23rd.</p>
<p>65</p>	<p>As a long term resident of Lake Country, I am concerned with the steady increase in our taxation. Other municipalities are managing to keep their cost increases at a reasonable rate. Given our push for development and increased population base, and with contingency funds set aside over the past years to supposedly address this issue, how is it that the conversation is looking at extreme tax increases this year? Surely affordability for everyone must be considered.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments - they will be passed on to Council for consideration. If you haven't already - please take a moment to read through the You Asked Articles found on the Let's Talk page. The articles help explain the challenges being faced by the District making the 2023 tax increase necessary.</p>

66	Are there any properties owned by the District of Lake Country that can be sold such as the old Fire Hall?	Thank you for the question. The District owns very little land. The previous fire hall is not being sold at this time as it will likely be required for a future use.
67	<p>Comment: I would like to see some use of the policing reserve to soften the transition cost from 70/30 to 90/10. Perhaps in the neighbourhood of a one time 20% re-allocation from the reserve; anymore and we risk heavier future financial burdens from wage increases and new building costs.</p> <p>Question: Is the ask for one extra FTE for this year the experienced serious crimes investigator (as LC is now obligated to do its own serious crimes work) or can that be reallocated from within the staffing if not added? Can we contract out very serious rare incidents like homicide investigations like Port Moody does?</p>	<p>Thanks for the comments and questions. On January 31st Council gave first reading to: THAT the 2023-2027 Financial Plan Bylaw 1197, 2023 include the following increases to address policing costs:</p> <p>a. 2023 – 7.08% - move from 70% to 90% and no additional FTE & contractual increases</p> <p>b. 2024 – 2.75% - 2 additional FTE (18 to 20) & contractual increases</p> <p>c. 2025 – 2.50% - 1 additional FTE (20 to 21) & contractual increases</p> <p>d. 2026 – 2.00% - 1 additional FTE (21 to 22) & contractual increases</p> <p>e. 2027 – 3.17% - 2 additional FTE (22 to 24) & contractual increases</p> <p>Council is still asking for public feedback prior to second and third reading of the budget on February 23rd.</p>
68	I would like to see what bids have been forwarded for road maintenance, park services, building maintenance, and all other bids that are put out. Let us see what is available and give an accounting of who + why each was chosen. No more extra expenditures on rail trail art and things of that nature, without public say. These kind of expenses in the economic climate we are in, is not necessary. With our government sending the economy to the toilet, any unnecessary expenses should be cut. Everything is going up but wages of the farmers and people on lower incomes. We are already dealing with higher food costs, gas, and government spending.	Thank you for the question. The Road Maintenance Services bid process was public and could be accessed through BC Bid and the District's website. The Request for Proposals closed on December 12, 2022. Proposals submitted are not public information, the results will be posted publicly once the contract is executed.
69	Reconsider decrease taxation for lake country who have owned property for more than ten years. Tax the newer residents.	Thank you for the comments, they are most appreciated and will be provided to Council for consideration.
70	<p>Considering Lake Country's rising population to above 15,000 and now having to fund our own police force, deal with an increased demand for services, school more kids, etc...</p> <p>Why not levy a second property tax on any residence that has a secondary suite? Why is it that one house has to pay only one tax, on a property that is housing two residences (at the minimum)? The secondary residence are driving on the same roads, expecting the roads to be maintained, expect policing services, paramedic services, send their kids to the same schools, yet they do not pay any property tax? How is this a fair system?</p>	Thank you for the comments regarding secondary suites. We will pass the suggestion on to Council for consideration.

<p>71</p>	<p>The lake side communities, OK Ctr etc do not have sewer which is desperately needed for environmental reasons and protection of the lake. The lake is a major attraction for our tourism and ecological preservation. unfortunately the lake has massively deteriorated over the last decades, as can seen at the marinas, one is now since 3 to 5 years unable to see the bottom. Algae blooms are present. The old septic boxes in OK Ctr leak out phosphates, even the level 4 new septic systems do leak out coliform, prions, viruses and all! chemicals used in our house holds.</p> <p>A sewer system should be of the highest priority for health, environmental and preservation reasons. A test with methylene blue fused from our lake side septic showed up 48+ hours later at the foreshore. Sewer development cannot wait. You are spreading a firehall upgrade cost to us over 20 years, the same for a much needed sewer system, which opportunity was missed years ago with the federal liberal grant for infra structure upgrade, and again with the developer for Lakestone development. The control of density can be controlled by zoning and development laws and is not an obstacle for sewer development. Sewer needs to come, every year of delay will just increase the cost and pollute our ground and water more.</p> <p>My question is; when will the municipality champion the planning and development of a sewer system, and possibly do it concomitantly with the water pipe expansion in OK Ctr while the ground is open? We need a plan.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments and question. The Liquid Waste Management Plan is well underway. You can review the Let's Talk page that explains the project and has links to the Official Community Plan. The OCP does have a section on sewer and identifies high priority neighbourhoods that could eventually be connected to the District sewer system.</p>
<p>72</p>	<p>'What budget reductions have been considered?-salary freeze for all non-union staff and District Council.-reduction of union staff and management . After so many years of growing staff and management it is time for the CAO and CFO to show fiscal leadership to evaluate the value added of each position.-ask every manger to reduce their budget by 17%-develop must have list (road maintenance, police) and nice to have list of expenses. Cut or defer nice to have list items.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments, they will be provided to Council for consideration.</p>
<p>73</p>	<p>Did I read the Casanet correctly when they said our taxes in Lake Country are going up 17% less than 6 months?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. On January 31st Council reviewed the five-year financial plan that includes the draft 2023 budget. After careful consideration of information presented and discussion from the January 26th meeting, Council gave first reading to the 2023 budget as follows: Base Increase – 12.83% which includes: RCMP impact due to increase in population. Loss of fire contract with the City of Kelowna. Road maintenance contract. Inflationary contractual and wage rate increases. Operating Supplementals – 4.22% Total Proposed Increase at First Reading – 17.05% Council</p>

		made the decision to delay funding for Pelme wash Rock Stability initiative and to revisit the initiative again in 2024.
74	A 17% increase in the current economic climate is ludicrous. This suggestion comes from a Council which is running a municipality that cannot approve a building permit application in under two years, impacting new construction, renovations and chasing perspective contractors out of our community. It is time the Municipality got its act together, moving to control costs and salaries in a growing community. Uniformity of bylaw enforcement is uneven: the bigger and wealthier you are the less chance you have of being subject to any meaningful sanction no matter how egregious the infraction.	Thank you for the comments, they are most appreciated and will be provided to Council for consideration.
75	Seriously? This proposed increase in taxes, coupled with the recently released assessments for 2023, is nothing short of mismanagement on the part of the Lake Country council and those involved in developing the DLC budget for the coming years. Council, if they had any foresight whatsoever, could see that the population of the District was growing significantly over recent years. DLC could have built reserves into prior budgets for monies needed for policing costs knowing full well that they were going to lose the funding for RCMP. Rising costs must be acknowledged but, as mentioned by an earlier questioner, the need for reserve funds in many other areas could be utilized to offset such an exorbitant increase of 17%. Has council explored all options of alternate funding. From either the Provincial or Federal government? This tax increase is, at a time when costs for everything are increasing, a terrible pill to swallow for every resident of Lake Country! Every council member should be ashamed to vote for this increase.	Thank you for the comments and question. Council has explored various types of funding and have been able to reduce some of the tax burden by using the COVID-19 safe restart grant that was received from the Province in 2021. Grants available through the Provincial and Federal government and other agencies are always considered to try and offset District cost.
76	What is the reason that the District of Lake Country can not budget wisely instead of spending foolishly? With the increase of population then there are more people to pay taxes. Not everyone gets raises like the District of Lake Country.	Thank you for the comments - they will be passed on to Council for consideration. The growth rate in Lake Country has averaged 3.12% over the past 10 years with an unprecedented spike in 2019 of 8.1% (details can be found here). Because the population went up by X% doesn't mean Lake Country's tax revenue goes up by the same percentage. Below is Lake Country's non market change growth the last 5 years: 2019 – 2.79% 2020 – 3.21% 2021 – 2.52% 2022 – 2.65% 2023 – 2%. Non-market change growth and population growth are different. Non-market change is the additional tax revenue the District receives from new construction, however the population can change at a different rate. For example if an existing house occupied by 1 person was sold to a family of 5 and that person moved away the population would go up by 4 however Lake Country wouldn't collect any additional tax on that property. Similarly, the Census data is based on where someone was living at the time of the census. Another example would be - If someone owns a house in Vancouver and a house in

		Lake Country, and they reported their principal residence as Vancouver for the 2016 census but then Lake Country in the 2021 census it would show the population as growing but Lake Country wouldn't receive additional tax revenue.
77	It's hard to contemplate a 17% increase in taxes for no additional services. Council can't possibly think that this is reasonable. You must realize that such a large increase will create financial hardship for many families in our community. Maybe the writing is on the wall and it's just not possible to fund the needs of our community on such a small tax base. Maybe it's time to move away from being a separate District with its own staff, policing, services etc. and amalgamate with Kelowna where costs can be spread over a much larger tax base. Has this option been discussed by Council? Or is it too much of a conflict of interest for Council to consider? Maybe it needs to be put to a referendum?	Thank you for the comments. The newly elected Council has not discussed the possibility of amalgamating with Kelowna. We do appreciate your comments and suggestions and will pass them on to Council for consideration.
78	What is happening with the dredging of the canal between Wood and Kalamalka lake?	Thank you for the question. Council is aware that local citizens have independently applied to the Province to dredge the channel. The District has received notification from the Province of the application and has been asked to comment. Council has not budgeted funds within the five-year financial plan for dredging activity.
79	Have set aside any money to upgrade and deepen the boat launch at the north end of Wood lake?	
80	In the case of a condemned building, how much time do the new owners have, before action needs to be taken on the property, ie the Airport Inn?	Because the property is privately owned there is very little the District can do regarding the property.
81	I believe that there is a point that is being overlooked... Assessed values have also increased for the majority of homes in DLC in 2023. I find it hard to believe that an additional 17% is required as the values being assessed are already higher (10-15%) then in 2022. Focus should be on fiscal restraint during the current inflationary period.	Thank you for the comments. Please note that property value increases do not result in an increase in municipal taxes. Please review the You Asked series found on Let's Talk that helps explain the required increase in detail..

<p>82 Considering previous rcmp funding reduction levels were anticipated a reserve fund was established to prepare for, and cushion the impact of such increases for the district?.</p> <p>What is the status of that reserve now?</p> <p>Was it effective before now? Can an instrument such as that be utilized to spread out the impact of the change about to hit? Can the operation budget part of the buget of the RCMP be slowed over time to lessen the impact?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question.As this significant change was anticipated, the policing reserve fund was bolstered over the past few years resulting approximately \$1.5 million available for Council to smooth out the impact of the increase if desired. However, it is important to note that while the reserve could be used to smooth the increase, it cannot be used to make the increase go away as once the reserve runs out the new increased expense amount still needs to be funded through additional taxation. Having this reserve available resulted staff presenting Council with two options, Option A which takes on the bulk of the increase in 2023, with smaller increases over the upcoming 5 years to deal with increasing the budgeted RCMP members from 18 to 24 and Option B which would utilize the reserve to smooth the increase over the next 5 years in addition to funding the additional officers. The other factor impacting this decision is that the old bank building currently being utilized by the RCMP is not meeting the current needs of the current size of the detachment, and is certainly not suitable for a larger force required to serve a larger community and as such a new facility is likely required in the near to medium term. By taking on the larger increase in 2023 and not only preserving the policing reserve but actually continuing to grow it, it would mean that some funds would be available towards a new facility in a few years time. While it would not be enough to cover the entire cost of a building, having funds earning investment income and paying for the portion of the building vs. borrowing more at the time at higher interest rates means there is a cost to using the policing reserve as well. Under the 90% funding model the District is also responsible for a number of direct costs such as vehicles, equipment, major crimes investigations etc. which having money in the reserve is necessary as well. At first reading (subject to change in 2nd & 3rd reading based on public input) Council went with a modified version of Option A where the dollar impact of 70% to 90% would be taken on in 2023 however the increase in RCMP members from 18 to 19 was delayed, updating the schedule in moving from 18 officers to 24 to 2 additional members in 2024, 1 in 2025 & 2026 and 2 more in 2027.</p>
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<p>83</p>	<p>My thoughts are to explore some middle ground in a phased approach that would help young families and people in fixed incomes absorb such a rate increase if necessary. 10% 2023 / 3% 2024 / aim to find the rest. Has the city of Lake country negotiated prices with all their suppliers and third-party service contractors? Have you explored all contracts / and the potential for RFPs to increase service and lower rates through competition? Have you explored ways to increase fees to new housing builds vs taxing existing owners as a profit center? As the ask \$ is due to a population increase. My suggestion / glean your budget for needs after you have addressed / renegotiated your largest cost centers. Create some profit centers throughout lake country / this at least provides people a choice / as there are a lot of people outside of lake country using such services. Vernon does this well. Get your base ask to under 10% find your way to reach supplemental through other profit centers. We appreciate your efforts, I suggest more community input and another forums. Ask yourself if 17% seems fair for the community?</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments and question. The District follows procurement processes that ensures each dollar spent brings value to the community. Council has reviewed the proposed budget to ensure that each dollar being proposed is indeed required. Your comments are most appreciated and will certainly be passed on to Council for consideration.</p>
<p>84</p>	<p>It would be great to keep in mind that lake country is mostly a farm community when considering development. Why is there no consideration for equestrians when it comes to transportation? It's always about cyclists. The horse community is quite large and there seems to be constant debates online on where it's appropriate for horseback riders to go. You can take Maple ridge as an example where there are designated trails next to the roads where people can take their horses for walks. I think this should be taken into consideration on future developments particularly in Carr's Landing and Oyama</p>	<p>Thank you for the comments and we will be sure to share your thoughts with Council for consideration.</p>
<p>85</p>	<p>Can we please see how each DOLC Council member voted with regard to the first reading of the 17% property tax increase? Surely this is public knowledge and can be shared.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. You can either watch the Special Council meeting video or you review the minutes from the January 31st meeting found here.</p>

<p>86</p>	<p>How the individual councillors voted re: tax increase is well concealed. We checked your references to the agenda and minutes of the January 22 meeting and beyond minus the video. Why don't you publish how the individual councillors voted regarding the enormous property tax increase of 17.2 %? And can you please still publish this for the voting public in the spirit of transparency?</p>	<p>From the minutes:2023-01-018 It was moved and secondedTHAT the 2023-2027 Financial Plan Bylaw 1197, 2023 include the following increases to address policing costs:a. 2023 – 7.08% - move from 70% to 90% and no additional FTE & contractual increasesb. 2024 – 2.75% - 2 additional FTE (18 to 20) & contractual increasesc. 2025 – 2.50% - 1 additional FTE (20 to 21) & contractual increasesd. 2026 – 2.00% - 1 additional FTE (21 to 22) & contractual increasese. 2027 – 3.17% - 2 additional FTE (22 to 24) & contractual increases Carried.2023-01-019 It was moved and secondedTHAT Capital Budget Request item 2023-17 “Pelme wash Slope Stability Mitigation” be removed from the 2023 budget and deferred to the 2024 budget for consideration.Carried.Councillors Reed and McKenzie opposed. 2023-01-020 It was moved and seconded.THAT The 2023-2027 Financial Plan Bylaw 1197, 2023 be amended as follows:The following \$721,203 (4.22%) of operating supplementals be funded using additional taxation revenue:2 Seasonal Parks Staff1.5 Bylaw OfficersParks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan IncreaseInflationary Increase to Mobility Improvement Program FundingPaid On Call Firefighter Training Tuition & Fees IncreasePaid On Call Firefighter Training Wages IncreaseArt Gallery Additional FundingMuseum Additional FundingAND THAT \$137,250 of the remaining COVID-19 Restart Grant Funding be used to fund the following operating supplementals:Community Engagement GrantCommunity Greening Project – Lake CountreeInvasive Plant Species ManagementRoad Crack SealingHalloween Fireworks IncreaseFire Prevention Program IncreaseLive! In Lake Country IncreaseAND THAT the \$282,750 of remaining COVID-19 Restart Grant Funding be used to fund \$141,375 of Transportation projects in place of the Capital Reserve Fund and \$141,375 of Protection Services projects in place of the Fire Facilities and Equipment Reserve.Carried.2023-01-021 It was moved and seconded.THAT the 2023-2027 Financial Plan Bylaw 1197, 2023 as amended by resolution 2023-01-018, 2023-01-019, and 2023-01-020 be read a first time.Carried.</p>
<p>87</p>	<p>hello i asked a few questions about a week back and didn't receive a response. It was in regards to meals, meetings car expenses etc. did i miss response?</p>	<p>Good afternoon.I did send you the links for the 2021 Financial report (the 2022 financial report will be published sometime in June, 2023) If you would like specific financial information not found in the report please submit an FOI request.</p>
<p>88</p>	<p>Will the proposed tax increase (20% cited in local media) take into consideration DLC offloading certain utility costs from the tax notice in 2022 onto the quarterly utility bill? For example will the overall 2023 tax increase be 20%ish over the prior years municipal parcel tax and we can still expect increases to utility costs now billed separately?</p>	<p>The proposed tax increase at first reading is 17.05%. When the increase is adopted by Council in March (the percentage might change depending on the outcome of 2nd and 3rd reading on February 23rd) the increase is separate to utility costs that are reflected in the quarterly utility bill. Water rate increases will be considered later in 2023, once Council reviews the updated water master plan which is currently being completed.</p>

89	Via email - I believe in order to fully understand the budget I would like the detailed departmental budgets and an organizational chart? The public should be given the opportunity to see an overall picture.	Information provided as requested.
90	Via email -Could you pls direct me to the over \$75k remuneration chart for 2022? Also is there an actual org chart rather than just department chart?	Information provided as requested.
91	Via email: I am generally supportive of the tax increase and would prefer to just suck it up and go to 14% increase and get it over with. The 9% option is a nice cushion at a time when lots of people are struggling with inflationary pressures but doesn't feel sustainable. Let's not push the problem down the road. My thoughts for your consideration:• Some services are required and unavoidable (RCMP) while others are nice to have. For example, I have no choice but to suck up the cost of RCMP increase and I absolutely must have access to water, but I don't need a sidewalk to live my life, I can navigate around a few potholes, and most of the time when I contact the District I could wait a few days to hear back from staff and don't need a same-day response (emergencies excepted). • In order to offset some of the unavoidable cost increases, what scrutiny has been given to existing services and service levels in order to find areas where services could be scaled back and savings achieved?• No business can be both high service and low cost, those are mutually exclusive. However the district seems to want to be both. As a community, if we want low taxation, we need to change our expectations on service levels. If we want premium service for low cost we are fooling ourselves about what is possible. Are we as a community, and as a District, taking the proper steps to look at where we may have over-built services/service levels (wanted a premium) and would the community be willing to accept a lower service model in exchange for lower taxes. For example, staffing - same day reply vs two business days - these are different expectations at different cost structures. I for one would be willing to expect less to pay less. Too many people in the community know how to complain but few are willing to find constructive solutions. If the District could deliver on these kind of trade offs to moderate the unavoidable budget increases I would not complain about the lower service levels. I realize that the District is well aware of all of these and has a Vision to guide service levels, so I share this to provide support and encourage scrutiny. Is it the right Vision? Could more work be done here? (Rhetorical questions, no reply necessary)Lastly, I share these thoughts to offer support as I know that the critics are loud. It's a tough spot to be in. Thanks for listening.	Comments provided to Council

