



**DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER**  
750 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER BC V7V 3T3

## COUNCIL REPORT

Date:	January 31, 2022
From:	Chrystal Boy, Manager, Financial Planning
Subject:	Proposed 2022 Operating and Capital Budgets
File:	04.0860.01/01.2022

### RECOMMENDATION

THAT as described in the report dated January 31, 2022 regarding 2022 operating and capital budgets:

1. The proposed 2022 Operating Levy increase of 1.79% be approved;
2. The proposed 2022 Asset Levy increase of 1.00% be approved; and
3. The proposed 2022 Environmental Levy of 1.00% be approved.

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s approval on the proposed increase to the 2022 Operating Levy and Asset Levy and to approve a new Environmental Levy. Staff will then prepare the 2022-2026 Five-Year Financial Plan Bylaw for consideration by Council at the regular Council meeting on March 28, 2022.

### 2.0 Executive Summary

The proposed budget includes a \$1.4M Operating Levy increase which is the equivalent of a 1.79% tax rate increase. The proposed increase takes into account all non-taxation revenue sources, cost savings and operational efficiencies before resorting to taxation. In addition, the Operating Levy increase of 1.79% is well below the rate of inflation.

Proposed for the Asset Levy is a 1.00% tax rate increase, which would provide an additional \$0.8M for capital investment in asset maintenance for a total of \$10.3M. This increase to the Asset Levy is needed in order to address the deferred maintenance issue.

Also proposed is a new Environmental Levy to fund programs that support the protection of our natural environment and reduce our impact on it. The Environmental levy would amount to \$0.8M, which is equivalent to 1.00% tax rate increase.

The proposed increases would have a combined incremental annual impact of \$247 on the average single family detached (SFD) home assessed at \$3.7M or \$109 on the average strata property assessed at \$1.6M.

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	<b>SFD</b>	<b>Strata</b>
Operating Levy Increase	\$117	\$51
Asset Levy Increase	\$65	\$29
Environmental Levy	\$65	\$29
<b>Total Annual Increase</b>	<b>\$247</b>	<b>\$109</b>

### **3.0 Legislation/Bylaw/Policy**

Section 165 of the Community Charter requires that each municipality by bylaw, provide a five-year financial plan annually. In order for this bylaw to be prepared, Council must approve any increase to the tax rate. In addition, the five-year financial plan must be adopted by Council before the annual property tax bylaw is adopted. The annual property tax bylaw must be adopted by May 15 of each year.

### **4.0 Council Strategic Objective(s)/Official Community Plan**

The District of West Vancouver's ("District") budget is developed based on Council's strategic goal of delivering municipal services efficiently. The budget is a plan detailing the resources required to continue the delivery of general services to the community in addition to carrying out Council's strategic plan. Every expenditure provided for in the 2022 budget has been reviewed to ensure that it directly supports this goal.

### **5.0 Financial Implications**

Financial implications are discussed throughout the report.

### **6.0 Background**

A preliminary proposed budget was presented to Council on December 13, 2021 with an Operating Levy increase of 1.79%, Asset Levy increase of 1.00% and Environmental Levy of 1.00%. This information was also presented to the public at two budget information meetings.

#### **6.1 History**

##### Operating Budget

Over the past two years, the District has undergone significant challenges in adapting and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic operationally and financially. The 2020 operating budget was drastically cut back to make up for the revenue losses from facility closures, elimination of community services' programs due to restrictions from provincial health orders (PHOs) and the economic downturn. The most noteworthy item that was reduced was the contribution for capital investment. Prior to 2020, the contribution amount was \$7.4M and in 2020 it was reduced to \$0.7M.

The 2021 operating budget was conservatively developed due to uncertainty around how PHOs would change with the ongoing pandemic, so it was assumed that operations would be similar to 2020 and that

revenues would not return to pre-pandemic levels. However, effort was made to increase the contribution for capital investment and the amount increased from \$0.7M to \$1.2M.

### Asset Levy

In 2016, Council approved an Asset Levy with the funds raised from it to be dedicated for asset maintenance. The goal is for the Asset Levy to build up to the optimal investment amount required each year for the District to maintain its assets.

Prior to this levy, there was only a contribution from the operating budget to support capital investment. That contribution amount had been steadily drawn down over the prior ten years in order to support very low operating tax rate increases. This resulted in insufficient capital funds to maintain assets at an optimal level thereby creating a deferred maintenance liability.

From 2016 to 2019, Council steadily increased the Asset Levy so that funds raised from it totalled \$7.1M. But in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the proposed Asset Levy increase was withdrawn. In 2021, Council approved a 2.50% Asset Levy increase and this raised the dedicated asset maintenance funding to \$9.5M.

## **7.0 Analysis**

### 7.1 Discussion

#### Operating Budget

The General Fund budget is the fund in which the property tax level is determined. The proposed 2022 general fund budget of \$124 million requires additional funding of \$1.4M, which is an Operating Levy increase of 1.79%. The proposed increase is the minimum required to respond to maintain existing services within financial constraints. The 2022 budget only includes uncontrollable costs such as collective agreement increases, contractual obligations with external parties (i.e. E-Comm radio and dispatch services, IT software and hardware maintenance agreements) and externally driven cost increases (i.e. insurance premiums, utilities, and fuel).

The 2022 budget is also the COVID-19 recovery budget in that the District is expecting to resume most Community Services' programs and also restore service levels that were reduced to balance the budget in the past two years such as tree maintenance on District property, parks and roadways. In addition, the District is aiming to replenish the capital investment that was severely reduced in 2020. The 2022 contribution to capital investment is an increase of \$0.9M for a total of \$2.1M.

Each year, all non-taxation sources of funding are reviewed for further opportunities before resorting to taxation. As part of the budget process, a

complete base budget review was undertaken to ensure that all revenue and expenditure budgets reflect current circumstances.

**Appendix A** highlights the factors contributing to the changes in the budget from 2021 resulting in an additional \$1.4M required in taxation funding or 1.79% Operating Levy increase. The appendix also shows the adjustments made to the preliminary proposed budget that was previously presented at the December 13, 2021 council meeting. These adjustments were due to changing PHOs from the fifth wave (Omicron) of the COVID-19 pandemic mainly affecting Community Services' programming and other circumstances.

Capital Budget

Over the next 20 years, practically all of the District assets will require capital investment to maintain their performance or will be due for replacement. The estimated cost of maintaining the general fund assets is \$327M over the next 20 years, which on average requires an ongoing \$16.4M investment per year to prevent assets from failure resulting from deferred maintenance.

Proposed is an Asset Levy increase of 1.00% to build up the asset reserves to catch-up with maintenance that has been deferred because of lack of resources or put on hold due to the pandemic and to support the average amount required for infrastructure needs. The proposed 1.00% increase raises the amount for capital investment to \$10.3M.

With both the Asset Levy amount of \$10.3M and the operating budget contribution of \$2.1M, the amount available for capital investment is only \$12.4M compared to the required optimal investment amount of \$16.4M. This is a shortfall of \$4.0M.

Below is a table illustrating the build up of the Asset Levy, the change in the operating budget contribution amount and the shortfall in capital investment to maintain assets at an optimal level from 2015 onwards.

	Asset Levy % Increase	Asset Levy Amount Increase	Asset Levy	Operating Budget Contribution	Amount Available for Capital Investment	Estimate of Required Optimal Investment	Shortfall
2015	-	-	-	\$7.4M	\$7.4M	\$13.9M	\$6.5M
2016	5.25%	\$3.1M	\$3.1M	\$7.4M	\$10.4M	\$13.9M	\$3.5M
2017	2.45%	\$1.6M	\$4.6M	\$7.4M	\$12.0M	\$14.1M	\$2.1M
2018	1.56%	\$1.1M	\$5.7M	\$7.4M	\$13.0M	\$14.5M	\$1.5M
2019	1.76%	\$1.5M	\$7.1M	\$7.4M	\$14.5M	\$14.5M	\$0.0M
2020	0.00%	\$0.0M	\$7.1M	\$0.7M	\$7.8M	\$14.5M	\$6.7M
2021	2.50%	\$2.4M	\$9.5M	\$1.2M	\$10.7M	\$16.9M	\$6.2M
<b>2022</b>	<b>1.00%</b>	<b>\$0.8M</b>	<b>\$10.3M</b>	<b>\$2.1M</b>	<b>\$12.4M</b>	<b>\$16.4M</b>	<b>\$4.0M</b>

Capital projects planned in 2022 total \$17.8M. The majority of the spending is for maintaining and replacing existing assets that the District owns based on asset management plans and a small portion is for investments in new assets.

<b>2022 Preliminary Capital Budget</b>		
Maintaining and replacing existing assets	Asset Preservation	\$6.9M
	Regular Asset Maintenance	\$9.0M
	Health & Safety	\$0.4M
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$16.3M</b>
Investment in new assets	Strategic Investment	\$1.2M
	Innovation	\$0.3M
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1.5M</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$17.8M</b>

The available capital funding of \$15.0M falls short of what is required based on asset management plans and strategic initiatives, but it is anticipated that there will be funds available from prior years' projects, that have completed under budget, and that these funds will be returned to the asset reserves to cover the shortfall of \$2.8M.

<b>2022 Preliminary Capital Funding Available</b>	
2022 Asset Levy	\$10.3M
Operating Budget Contribution	\$2.1M
Development Cost Charges	\$0.7M
Union of B.C. Municipalities – Community Works Fund	\$0.8M
Environmental Levy	\$0.2M
External Sources	\$0.9M
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$15.0M</b>
Asset Reserves	\$2.8M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17.8M</b>

### Environmental Levy

The proposed Environmental Levy of 1.00%, which would raise approximately \$0.8M, would be dedicated funds for climate change response, sustainability, and protecting the District's natural resources. It could be used to fund projects to lower the greenhouse gas emissions both from District operations and in the community, as well as climate change response projects such as tree canopy studies, storm water and foreshore management projects, wildfire protection and stream rehabilitation. The items mentioned are for illustrative purposes and are not a comprehensive list.

Climate change impacts on natural assets and District infrastructure have been anticipated for some time, but are now becoming urgent issues. Many of the systems and structures that served well in the past will no

longer meet tomorrow's challenges. Using the Environmental Levy together with the development of a robust environmental strategy led by the CAO office and the Environmental Manager, the District can plan to be proactive in providing new ways to protect and enhance the quality of life in West Vancouver.

The new Manager of Climate Action & Environment (to be hired) will be responsible for creating a program to determine the best use of the Environmental Levy funds.

## 7.2 Sustainability

The investments supported by the 2022-2026 Financial Plan are key to the long-term sustainability of the District as a community.

Particularly in terms of the Asset Levy and Environmental Levy, the District needs to focus on investing in the long-term viability of its assets and natural capital assets so that municipal services can continue to be provided in a sustainable manner and protect its natural resources.

## 7.3 Public Engagement and Outreach

Given the current conditions and constraints associated with COVID-19 safety measures, public engagement was conducted through a broad range of online platforms, including:

- 2022 Budget information on the District's website - [www.westvancouverite.ca/budget](http://www.westvancouverite.ca/budget);
- two Virtual Budget Information Sessions conducted via zoom platform on January 25 and January 26, 2022;
- email inquiries relayed through the online budget forum on the District's website and emails sent directly to Finance staff; and
- presentations, documents, comments and recording of the Budget Information Session published on the District's website.

Staff have received more than 30 inquiries and feedback messages. Staff have provided responses to common questions and comments via the District's website and addressed questions related to specific residences directly with the owner.

The 2022 Budget Public Engagement Summary Report (**Appendix B**) provides detailed information and analysis of the results of the public engagement. The most common theme identified in the feedback was the Environmental Levy and how the funds would be used.

## 8.0 Options

### 8.1 Recommended Option

Staff recommend the 2022 operating and capital budgets be supported by an Operating Levy increase of 1.79%, an Asset Levy increase of 1.00% and an Environmental Levy of 1.00%.

### 8.2 Considered Options

Council could decrease the Asset Levy and/or Environmental Levy. While this would reduce the financial impact on property owners, it would also reduce the District's ability to maintain capital infrastructure and respond to climate change.

## 9.0 Conclusion

Input from members of Council on the proposed Operating Levy increase of 1.79%, Asset Levy increase of 1.00% and the Environmental Levy of 1.00% for 2022 will form the basis of the 2022-2026 Five-Year Financial Plan. The proposed 2022-2026 Five-Year Financial Plan will then be brought to Council for consideration on March 28, 2022.

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Concurrence   
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### Appendices:

Appendix A: 2022 Budget Highlights

Appendix B: 2022 Budget Engagement Summary Report

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# APPENDIX A

## DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

	Dec-2021			Changes			Jan-2022			
	FTE	Dollar Increase	% Tax Increase	FTE	Dollar Increase	% Tax Increase	Explanation	FTE	Dollar Increase	% Tax Increase
<b>Labour Changes</b>										
Contract increases	-	\$ 1,714,043	2.14%			0.00%		-	\$ 1,714,043	2.14%
Step increases	-	\$ 500,437	0.63%			0.00%		-	\$ 500,437	0.63%
Fringe increases	-	\$ 68,184	0.09%			0.00%		-	\$ 68,184	0.09%
Vacancy adjustment	-	\$ (161,047)	-0.20%			0.00%		-	\$ (161,047)	-0.20%
Other	-	\$ (149,348)	-0.19%			0.00%		-	\$ (149,348)	-0.19%
	-	\$ 1,972,269	2.47%	-	\$ -	0.00%		-	\$ 1,972,269	2.47%
<b>Parks, Culture &amp; Community Services</b>										
<b>COVID-19 Recovery / Program Resumption</b>										
Increase in programming revenue reflecting recovery from COVID-19	-	\$ (5,531,104)	-6.91%	\$ 250,300		0.31%	decrease in Community Services' revenue due to PHO restrictions on gyms and fitness centres	-	\$ (5,280,804)	-6.60%
Incremental labour program expenses	-	\$ 3,305,230	4.13%	\$ -		0.00%		-	\$ 3,305,230	4.13%
Incremental non-labour program expenses	-	\$ 1,561,146	1.95%	\$ -		0.00%		-	\$ 1,561,146	1.95%
	-	\$ (664,728)	(0.83)%	-	\$ 250,300	0.31%		-	\$ (414,428)	(0.52)%
<b>Revenue Changes</b>										
Increase in building and development permit revenues	-	\$ (569,150)	-0.71%			0.00%		-	\$ (569,150)	-0.71%
Increase in licences and miscellaneous revenues	-	\$ (250,718)	-0.31%			0.00%		-	\$ (250,718)	-0.31%
Increase in lease revenues	-	\$ (218,043)	-0.27%			0.00%		-	\$ (218,043)	-0.27%
Increase in police grants and traffic fine revenue sharing	-	\$ (144,154)	-0.18%			0.00%		-	\$ (144,154)	-0.18%
Elimination of library fines	-	\$ 62,000	0.08%			0.00%		-	\$ 62,000	0.08%
Use of COVID-19 Contingency Reserve to address public health order impacts	-	\$ -	0.00%	\$ (250,300)		-0.31%	offset decrease in Community Services revenue	-	\$ (250,300)	-0.31%
Decrease in revenue due to Harry Jerome Recreation Centre remaining open	-	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 95,000		0.12%	decrease in revenue due to Harry Jerome Recreation Centre remaining open	-	\$ 95,000	0.12%
	-	\$ (1,120,065)	(1.40)%	-	\$ (155,300)	(0.19)%		-	\$ (1,275,365)	(1.59)%
<b>Non-Labour Expenditure Changes</b>										
Printer savings	-	\$ (38,000)	-0.05%			0.00%		-	\$ (38,000)	-0.05%
Centralization of minor equipment and furniture	-	\$ (87,499)	-0.11%			0.00%		-	\$ (87,499)	-0.11%
Other adjustments	-	\$ (33,863)	-0.04%			0.00%		-	\$ (33,863)	-0.04%
Uncontrollable contractual/inflationary increases	-	\$ 356,847	0.45%			0.00%		-	\$ 356,847	0.45%
COVID-19 recovery	-	\$ 468,200	0.59%			0.00%		-	\$ 468,200	0.59%
Increase in grant in aid to North Shore Restorative Justice (NSRJ)	-	\$ 42,000	0.05%			0.00%		-	\$ 42,000	0.05%
Additional funding for Mayor's Taskforce on Economic Development	-	\$ 10,000	0.01%			0.00%		-	\$ 10,000	0.01%
FTE Request - Bill 22 Privacy Analyst	1.0	\$ 93,000	0.12%			0.00%		1.0	\$ 93,000	0.12%
Operating budget contribution to capital budget	-	\$ 654,042	0.82%	\$ (145,000)		-0.18%	cover revenue reduction from Harry Jerome Recreation Centre remaining open and additional hazard tree assessment and mitigation	-	\$ 509,042	0.64%
Additional hazard tree assessment and mitigation				\$ 50,000		0.06%	increase in expenses for additional hazard tree assessment and mitigation	-	\$ 50,000	0.06%
	1.0	\$ 1,464,727	1.83%	-	\$ (95,000)	(0.12)%		1.0	\$ 1,369,727	1.71%
<b>New Construction</b>										
Based on estimate from BC Assessment		\$ (220,000)	(0.28)%			0.00%			\$ (220,000)	(0.28)%
<b>Total Operating Levy Increase</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>\$ 1,432,203</b>	<b>1.79%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>0.00%</b>		<b>1.0</b>	<b>\$ 1,432,203</b>	<b>1.79%</b>
Proposed Environmental Levy			<b>1.00%</b>							<b>1.00%</b>
Proposed Asset Levy			<b>1.00%</b>							<b>1.00%</b>
<b>Total Tax Levy Increase</b>			<b>3.79%</b>							<b>3.79%</b>
1.00% of Tax Increase										

\* At time of publication, inflation, as measured by percentage change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) for British Columbia was 3.8%.

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# 2022 Budget

## Engagement Summary Report

February 3, 2022



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Prepared by Community Relations & Communications, February 2022

# 1.0 Background

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## 1.1 District of West Vancouver's proposed 2022 Budget

Each year, the municipality must create a budget that pays for the services provided by the District of West Vancouver, including police, fire & rescue, bylaw enforcement, parks, community centres, the library, festivals and cultural programs, and more. The budget must also fund capital expenses, including, for example, public facilities and roadwork.

The District budget also supports Council's Strategic Goals. These goals are:

- Significantly expand the diversity and supply of housing, including housing that is more affordable.
- Create vital and vibrant communities.
- Protect our natural environment, reduce our impact on it, and adapt to climate change.
- Improve mobility and reduce congestion for people and goods.
- Deliver municipal services efficiently.
- Enhance the social well-being of our community.

Like private citizens and businesses, the municipality is challenged with absorbing increased costs when developing the annual budget; local governments must balance the budget and are not permitted to run a deficit.

Each year, all non-taxation sources of funding are reviewed for further opportunities before resorting to taxation.

Financially, the 2022 year will continue to be difficult for the District of West Vancouver because of ongoing challenges as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, deal with the impacts of climate change, face rising costs for services and materials, and address asset maintenance that has been deferred because of lack of resources or put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### General Fund Budget

The proposed 2022 general fund budget of \$124 million includes an additional \$1.4 million to maintain existing services. This is the minimum amount required to respond to rising costs, recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and deliver Council's 2021–2022 Strategic Plan.

The operational budget portion of the property tax increase is 1.79%.

### Environmental Levy

A new Environmental Levy of 1.00% (\$800,000) is proposed to fund programs that support the protection of our natural environment and reduce our impact on it.

## Asset Levy

The Asset Levy was introduced in 2016 and has been increased by Council each year since then as part of a strategy to prevent municipal assets from failing by investing in maintenance at the optimum time. Over the next 20 years, the municipality will require ongoing investment of \$16.4 million per year to accomplish this.

For 2022, the Asset Levy is proposed to increase by 1.00% (\$800,000). This would bring the total Asset Levy amount available for capital investment to \$10.3 million.

## Proposed increase

The total proposed increase, including the General Fund, Environmental Levy, and the Asset Levy, is 3.79%.

## 1.2 Budget background

In 2021, the operating budget was conservative as a result of uncertainty around the impact of the ongoing pandemic, so it was assumed that operations would be similar to 2020. However, for 2022, the District is expecting to resume most services and programs and the budget has been built to reflect this.

Efficiencies that have been implemented during the past two years for finding new ways of delivering service during the pandemic will continue.

The 2022 preliminary budget was revised from December 2021 to January 2022 to account for operational adjustments in accordance with provincial public health orders. There was no change to the proposed operating tax levy increase. As these revisions were made after publication of the 2022 Preliminary Financial Plan, they were not reflected in the publication.

## 1.3 Impact on residents

The proposed increases amount to an extra \$247 for the average single-family detached home (SFD) assessed at \$3.7 million, or an extra \$109 for the average strata property assessed at \$1.6 million.

<b>PROPOSED total tax levy increase</b>			
	<b>Proposed increase</b>	<b>Average SFD</b>	<b>Average strata</b>
Operating Levy	1.79%	\$117	\$51
Asset Levy	1.00%	\$65	\$29
Environmental Levy	1.00%	\$65	\$29
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.79%</b>	<b>\$247</b>	<b>\$109</b>

Staff prepared two other options for consideration. While these options would reduce the financial impact on property owners, they would also reduce the municipality’s ability to maintain capital infrastructure and respond to climate change.

<b>OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION</b> <i>total tax levy increase changes based on Asset Levy and Environment Levy</i>				
		<b>Increase</b>	<b>Average SFD</b>	<b>Average strata</b>
<b>OPTION 1</b>	Operating Levy	1.79%	\$117	\$51
	Asset Levy	1.00%	\$65	\$29
	Environmental Levy	0.50%	\$33	\$14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.29%</b>	<b>\$215</b>	<b>\$94</b>
<b>OPTION 2</b>	Operating Levy	1.79%	\$117	\$51
	Asset Levy	0.50%	\$33	\$14
	Environmental Levy	0.50%	\$33	\$14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.79%</b>	<b>\$183</b>	<b>\$79</b>

## 2.0 Community Engagement: September 2021 – January 2022

### 2.1 Purpose

The goal of this engagement is to raise awareness and support understanding of the budget process, the options being proposed, and to give West Vancouver residents and businesses an opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback, and learn more.

One of the challenges of engaging on the municipal budget is that the requirements are different from other forms of budgeting. West Vancouver residents are highly educated and have a high level of knowledge of private finance and budgeting. This knowledge does not usually apply to the obligations and requirements of local governments, so education explaining the differences is a key element of this engagement.

**Phase One** (November to December 2021), focused on education and awareness. It featured a video, “Learn more about how the District’s budget is created”, which was hosted on the project webpage, and distributed through social media and email.

**Phase Two** (December to January), launched on December 15 with detailed information, including the preliminary proposed budget for review, and information about how to participate.

The details of the proposed preliminary budget and options were presented to Council at the December 13, 2021 Council meeting. After that meeting, the proposed budget was finalized and shared with the public. The proposed budget and public consultation were launched December 15, 2021, and public input was collected until January 28, 2022.

## 2.2 Participation

- There were 88 public and stakeholder interactions during the Phase Two consultation period from December 15, 2021 to January 28, 2022. These interactions include:
- 57 people attended two public information meetings
- 16 online comments/questions were received (from 8 people)
- two written submissions were received by correspondence@westvancouver.ca
- 13 written submissions were received by staff (sent to Budget email, CFO, and CAO)

## 2.3 Engagement Topics

Details of the proposed 2022 budget were presented and the public was invited to submit questions and comments on the proposed budget. All public input, including public correspondence, comments at information meetings, and feedback received online, was considered as part of the 2022 Budget review process.

## 2.4 Notification

Identification of opportunities to participate in the consultation included:

### **Newspaper advertising**

Advertisements ran in the North Shore News on the following dates:

1. Wednesday, December 15, 2021
2. Wednesday, January 12, 2022

### **Print materials**

The advertisement was posted at the following facilities:

1. Seniors' Activity Centre
2. West Vancouver Memorial Library

### **Online advertising (programmatic ads)**

Programmatic ads use automated technology to advertise across multiple websites. The online ad ran from December 29, 2021 to January 28, 2022 and targeted people in West Vancouver. The ads were seen 60,000 times (number of impressions).

### **Social media**

A social media campaign notifying the public of the engagement opportunity included:

- one post on Nextdoor on January 21, 2022, was seen by 627 people (Phase Two)
- four Facebook posts on December 14, January 5, January 20 and January 24 reached 3,320 people (Phase Two)

- three Instagram posts on December 14, January 5, and January 20 reached 1,143 people one LinkedIn post on November 4, 2021 was viewed by 147 people (Phase Two)
- four Twitter posts on December 14, January 5, January 20, and January 24 reached 1,140 people (Phase Two)
- one LinkedIn post on November 4, 2021 was viewed by 147 people (Phase One)

## **Engagement website**

Information and engagement materials were posted on [westvancouverITE.ca/budget](http://westvancouverITE.ca/budget), including:

- a short video explaining how a municipal budget is developed
- the proposed operating and capital budget, environmental levy, and asset levy
- a variety of background documents and info graphics
- links to public information meetings
- an informational presentation (as both a PowerPoint document and a video presentation)
- online questions and comments forms with publicly-viewable questions and answers
- a contact email
- milestone dates

The project webpage was visited by 1,424 people, with the following levels of engagement:

- Aware (visited the webpage) – 1,200
- Informed (opened links to additional information) – 138
- Engaged (submitted comments, questions, or registered for a virtual meeting) - 88

## **District website and WestVanConnect mobile app**

The homepage of the website and the mobile app each featured a banner promoting the engagement. The banner was posted from December 15, 2021 to January 28, 2022. When clicked, the banner directed visitors to the [westvancouverITE](http://westvancouverITE) project page.

Both virtual meeting dates were posted to the [westvancouver.ca](http://westvancouver.ca) calendar.

## **Email**

A total of 13,763 emails were sent in Phase One and Phase Two of the 2022 budget engagement, as follows:

### **E-west subscribers**

- Email newsletters announcing preliminary budget information featuring a short video were sent to e-west subscribers on November 10 (sent to 1,489 subscribers and opened by 841) and December 2, 2021 (sent to 1,500 subscribers and opened by 833). (Phase One)

- Email newsletters announcing the proposed budget was available for review and feedback were sent to e-west subscribers on December 13, 2021, (sent to 1,501 subscribers and opened by 890) and January 24, 2022 (sent to 1,555 subscribers and opened by 1,030) (Phase Two)

westvancouverITE subscribers

An email reminder was sent to westvancouverITE account holders about the 2022 Budget project on December 13, 2021 (sent to 4,012 subscribers, opened by 3,020) and on January 19, 2022 (sent to 3,706 subscribers and opened by 2,592). (Phase Two)

## 2.5 Engagement Methods

### 2.5.1 Virtual Information meetings

Two virtual community information meetings were held for the public to learn more about the 2022 budget, ask questions and provide comments. District staff from Financial Services, Community Relations & Communications, Human Resources & Payroll Services, Parks, Culture & Community Services, Planning & Development, Engineering & Transportation, Fire & Rescue Services, and the Chief Administrative Officer were present to share information, answer questions, and record feedback.

The Zoom meetings were advertised and open to all members of the public. Each meeting lasted approximately 90 minutes. Thirty-seven members of the public attended the January 25 meeting and 20 attended the January 26 meeting.

A video of the staff presentation at the meetings, the questions asked, and the responses, were posted to the budget project web page.

At the conclusion of the January 25 meeting, a poll was held to ask participants whether they found the virtual meeting format useful. One hundred percent of respondents indicated that they found the meeting useful and they enjoyed the opportunity to participate from home.

### 2.5.2 Information materials and feedback form

In response to the fifth wave of the pandemic, the engagement and informational materials were completely virtual. The project webpage provided detailed information on the budget process, the economic environment, proposed budget and impact to homeowners. It also hosted a comprehensive document library, including:

- a video, “Learn more about how the District’s budget is created”
- the proposed operating and capital budget and covering Report to Council
- a breakdown of what is included in the budget, including capital investment requirements
- an informational presentation (as both a PowerPoint document and a staff presentation video)
- 2022 BC Assessment Interactive Map
- utility rate information

- links to join a virtual information meeting
- online question and comment forms
- questions and answers from both the feedback form and the virtual information meetings

### 2.5.3 Correspondence

Correspondence regarding the proposal addressed to [correspondence@westvancouver.ca](mailto:correspondence@westvancouver.ca), [budget@westvancouver.ca](mailto:budget@westvancouver.ca) or the staff project lead during the engagement period was received as open-ended comments for the purposes of the consultation.

## 3.0 Community Engagement Results

### 3.1 Virtual Information Meetings

The following are summary results of the two virtual information meetings. Key themes were determined by frequency of mention and were summarized from meeting notes.

Virtual Information Meetings	
Meeting	Key Themes
Tuesday, January 25, 2022 2–3:30 p.m. 37 attendees	Question/comment about environmental levy and/or climate change (7 mentions) Clarification about budget funds allocated to an infrastructure project (2 mentions) Questions about staffing costs and/or staffing increases (2 mentions)
Wednesday, January 26, 2022 5–6:30 p.m. 20 attendees	Clarification about capital and operating costs (2 mentions) Clarification about budget funds allocated to an infrastructure project (1 mention) Clarification about utilities increase (1 mention) Property assessment question (1 mention)

### 3.2 Online Comment & Questions Form

Comments on the 2022 Budget were submitted via two online comment forms and 16 online question forms prior to the cut-off at 4 p.m. on Friday, January 28.

Please note:

- The views represented in the online comment form reflect the priorities and concerns of engagement participants. They may not be representative of the views of the public and other stakeholders because participants self-selected into the 2022 Budget engagement and therefore do not reflect a random sample.

Please note:

- The District of West Vancouver has read and will consider all feedback. Following is a summary of the most frequently-mentioned themes.

Key themes from online comment form	# of Mentions
Covid restart grant	3
Staffing costs and/or staffing increases	3
Question/comment about environmental levy and/or climate change	3
Clarification about tax increase	2
Clarification about budget funds allocated to an infrastructure project	2
The tax increase is too high and should be lower during unprecedented times	2

### 3.3 Correspondence

The following are summary results of the letters and emails received by Council, the staff project lead, and the CAO during the consultation period.

Please note: The total number of mentions for key themes may exceed the total number of correspondence items as participants may have commented on more than one topic. The District of West Vancouver has read and will consider all feedback. Following is a summary of the most frequently-mentioned themes.

Key themes from correspondence (15 pieces of correspondence)	# of Mentions
Clarification about utilities increase	1
Clarification about tax increase	1
Clarification about budget funds allocated to an infrastructure project	1
Unrelated to budget engagement (i.e. need technical assistance, need help finding a document, question or comment about another engagement, etc.)	1
The tax increase is too high and should be lower during unprecedented times	1
Construction timeline and cost for Place for Sport	1

## 4.0 Analysis

The budget engagement process for 2022 shared both commonalities and differences with previous years’ budget engagements.

### Participation

The budget engagement process for 2022 was similar to the engagement process for the 2021 budget, in that pandemic restrictions remained in place and the entire engagement was conducted virtually. As in past years, overall participation in the process remained low.

With very few exceptions, comments and questions were submitted through the channels indicated on the project website, instead of as general public correspondence, which saw high volume during the 2021 budget process.

Attendance at virtual information meetings was slightly higher than in 2021, likely a result of the public’s increasing experience and comfort level with participating in virtual meetings.

### Themes

In 2021, the operating budget was conservative as a result of uncertainty around the impact of the ongoing pandemic, so it was assumed that operations would be similar to 2020. In 2022, the District expects to resume most services and programs and the proposed budget

reflects this. Accordingly, most of the major themes arising from the 2022 engagement process were different from previous years:

- Interest in and support for the environmental levy was the most frequently-mentioned theme. Participants indicated a desire for more detailed information on the District's plan to allocate these funds
- Requests for more detailed information about the proposed tax increase, including details of capital and operating costs
- Requests for information on the status of the 13 new FTEs approved in the 2021 budget
- As in previous years, there was support for lowering the tax rate
- Requests for the status of, or clarification on, the COVID relief fund as it applies to the 2022 budget
- Request for clarity on utility rate increases

A wide variety of minor themes also arose:

- A question seeking clarity on costs for each of the following projects:
  - Ferry Building Gallery restoration
  - arts centre public engagement
  - West Vancouver Place for Sport
- Question/suggestion regarding a possible levy on vacant homes
- Question about West Vancouver Police Department costs
- As in previous years, a minority of participants provided positive comments and general praise

## 5.0 Conclusion

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West Vancouver is home to many engaged residents, and these stakeholders seek a very high level of detail regarding the municipality's finances. During the budget engagement process, questions arise that are not necessarily related to the budget process itself, but do reflect the interest of the community in accessing a high level of detail regarding the District's overarching financial picture.

Feedback from the public demonstrated concern about the impacts of climate change and support for the environmental levy.

Overall, the high level of services provided by the municipality continue to be valued by residents, and no service reductions were suggested. Feedback on the proposed budget represents a variety of suggestions on how to accomplish the goals of the environmental levy, improve services, and provide financial information.

Staff have taken all suggestions into consideration and will continue to incorporate as many as possible while continuing to deliver effective and efficient municipal services.