



# OAK BAY CITIZEN BUDGET

## February 15 – March 15, 2019

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Q: What is *Citizen Budget*?

**Citizen Budget** is a web-based simulator that many local governments are using as a means of engaging residents in helping inform municipal budgets and priorities. Residents go online and use their own property assessments to see how much they currently pay for a variety of District services (i.e. roads and sidewalks, protective services, recreation and culture and more). By using the slider tools within the website, people can increase, decrease or maintain service levels in each area and see what impact that has on their annual municipal property taxes.

### Q: How does *Citizen Budget* work?

**Citizen Budget** is a website simulator experience that allows citizens to see where their tax dollars are being spent and provides citizens with the opportunity to increase or decrease service levels using a slider tool. As citizens register their wishes, the **Citizen Budget** simulator feeds back the impacts of their choices on their annual municipal property taxes. Users must be a resident of Oak Bay and have ready their 2018 property tax assessment to enter or enter the average Oak Bay Assessed value of \$1.333-million. If members of the same household have different budgetary preferences, they can submit their respective **Citizen Budget** from the same computer and the consultation results will reflect both submissions. The **Citizen Budget** website is flexible in that it will allow users to change their entries as part of the experience, and to stop and start again. **Once submitted** however, there is no other opportunity to make changes.

### Q: How do I access *Citizen Budget*?

The **Citizen Budget** is available February 15 – March 15 and can be accessed in the following ways:

- Log on to [www.oakbay.ca](http://www.oakbay.ca).
- Paper copies of the questions will also be available at Municipal Hall. These must be completed and returned to Oak Bay Municipal Hall by March 15.

Have ready the property value from your 2018 Property Assessment [www.bccassessment.ca/Property/AssessmentSearch](http://www.bccassessment.ca/Property/AssessmentSearch). If you don't have your assessed value, please use the average value: \$1.333-million.

### **Q: What if I need help?**

If residents have questions, they may drop by Municipal Hall during business hours at 2167 Oak Bay Avenue, or call 250.598.3311. Paper copies will be available at Municipal Hall for anyone who doesn't have a computer or would prefer to submit a paper copy.

### **Q: Why is the District doing this?**

Engaging citizens continues to be a priority for Council. Citizen Budget is an interactive budget simulator that allows residents to see where their tax dollars are being spent, and it allows residents to provide feedback that will help Council better understand residents' priorities. The budget simulator provides citizens with immediate feedback on how their choices will impact property taxes allowing residents to inform Council on their wishes to maintain levels of service, increase and/or decrease levels of service.

### **Q: Will there be a report out on the results of the *Citizen Budget*?**

Yes, District staff will bring the ***Citizen Budget*** report to a Budget Meeting in April or May.