

## 2019 RDBN Initiatives

- 2018 Wildfire After Action Review
- Participate in the Resource Benefit Alliance to investigate resource revenue sharing
- Produce annual guide to Eating Local
- Politically support the rural internet/cell phone connectivity enhancements
- Implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan
- Opening of additional recycling depots
- Community Event Grant Program for local producers
- Emergency preparedness and 9-1-1 public education
- Working with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations staff on the Spruce Beetle Public Advisory Committee
- Organize the Northern Emergency Support Services Conference
- Encourage growth in the Agricultural sector with the support of the Agricultural Coordinator
- Continuation of supporting the Regional Transit service
- Promote regional tourism with 360 virtual reality videos
- Working on workforce development issues in our region
- Host 2019 Start up Business Contest and Business Forum

## About the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

Regional Districts were created by the Province to:

- Provide region wide services;
- Provide inter-municipal or sub-regional services where residents in the municipalities and rural residents outside the municipalities benefit from the same services;
- Act as local government for rural areas and provide local services.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) includes the municipalities of Smithers, Telkwa, Houston, Granisle, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake, Vanderhoof, and Fort St. James and Electoral Areas of "A" Smithers Rural, "B" Burns Lake Rural, "C" Fort St. James Rural, "D" Fraser Lake Rural, "E" Francois/Ootsa Lake Rural, "F" Vanderhoof Rural and "G" Houston Rural.

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## Stuart - Nechako Regional Hospital District

The Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District (SNRHD) raises funds through property taxation to provide a portion (usually 40%) of funds required by hospitals within our boundaries for medical equipment, building renovations and new construction.

The SNRHD does not own or operate any hospitals or health centres of any kind. The facilities the SNRHD supports are operated by the Northern Health Authority. They are:

- Fraser Lake Diagnostic and Treatment Centre
- Granisle Health Centre
- Lakes District Hospital - Burns Lake
- St. John Hospital - Vanderhoof
- Stuart Lake Hospital - Fort St. James
- Southside Health and Wellness Centre

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, the Board of the Stuart Nechako Regional Hospital District (SNRHD) approved its 2019 budget. The amount of taxes raised will be \$4,652,184 up from \$2,148,006 in 2018. Taxation for a \$100,000 property will increase from \$64.73 in 2018 to \$140.19 in 2019.

Highlights of this year's budget include:

- \$3 million for the SNRHD's first payment towards the new Stuart Lake Hospital
- \$480 thousand towards the new Fort St. James primary care building.
- \$300 thousand towards the final completion of the Pines Cafeteria Expansion in Burns Lake
- \$380 thousand towards upgrades in the Vanderhoof Hospital

The priority in the next few years will be the construction of the Stuart Lake Hospital. The SNRHD has committed contributing 20% to the total cost of this project. Tax rates are expected to remain steady for the next five years.

The SNRHD includes the communities of Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake, Burns Lake and Granisle and the Electoral Areas "C – Ft. St. James Rural", "F – Vanderhoof Rural", "D – Fraser Lake Rural", "B – Burns Lake Rural" and "E – Francois Lake Rural".

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# 2019

# Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

## Regional District Property Tax Guide

## For Taxpayers in the Village of Granisle



"A World of Opportunities Within Our Region"

## Message from the Chair

2018 was a busy year at the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. Despite the disastrous floods in the spring and record wildfires in the summer, and the fall elections, the board has created a strong and visionary strategic plan with clear priorities that will drive our success in 2019.

The wild fire season was one of the worst imaginable. There were many evacuation orders, alerts and unbelievable smoke. It was a stressful time for residents and staff. We are hopeful we do not have another event of this size any time soon and our thoughts and prayers are with those that are still recovering.

After we have heard from our citizens that they have a strong desire to increase recycling and reduce how much waste we put into the landfill, we have adopted a new Waste Management Plan with an emphasis on waste reduction and recycling. We have worked with Recycle BC to come up with some innovative solutions on getting recycling into many of our centers with more locations to open soon.

Ensuring that all our residents have access to high speed Internet access is a board priority. We are working with experts to develop a plan so that the new federal high-speed internet standard will be provided throughout our region. To meet this commitment, we are striving to build strong relationships with our federal and provincial funding partners and both small and large internet providers.

Our natural resource industries are strongly committed to our communities and this has made our Region strong. To support the forestry industry, we are continuing to advocate for better use of the fibre in our forests. We can no longer live with slash piles being burnt but instead we need to see these “waste piles” used to build jobs in our region and to make sure we have a strong bio-energy sector. We are also working to ensure our agriculture lifestyle remains strong and we continue to look for new markets and opportunities.

Even with some horrible downloads from more senior levels of government, the Board has worked hard and has managed to increase our high level of service while still maintaining only a minimum tax increase. With representation from Smithers in the West to Vanderhoof in the East, Wistaria in the South and Fort St. James in the North the board always manages to work together to find consensus and provide a clear path to the future. I count it as an honour and privilege to be the Chair of the Regional District and thank you for electing the Board that I have been able to serve with this past year.

Sincerely,

Gerry Thiessen, Chair

## Where do my local Regional District taxes go?

The RDBN provides 79 services to approximately 38,000 residents within its boundaries. Not every municipality or electoral area participates in the same services. The following table shows the services that are included in your regional district tax levy for 2019. These taxes are billed on your municipal tax notice and your municipality in turn forwards the funds to the Regional District to be used for the delivery of these services.

**The residential tax rates shown below are per \$100,000 assessed residential value**

| Service                                       | 2019            | 2018            |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| General Government                            | 21.72           | 20.92           |
| Agriculture                                   | 0.70            | 1.10            |
| Solid Waste Management                        | 56.25           | 54.70           |
| Regional Economic Development                 | 1.58            | 3.21            |
| Development Services                          | 4.63            | 4.15            |
| Feasibility Studies                           | 0               | 0               |
| Planning and Zoning                           | 2.90            | 2.47            |
| Regional Public Transit Service               | 1.90            | 1.82            |
| <b>Total taxation land &amp; improvements</b> | <b>\$ 89.68</b> | <b>\$ 88.37</b> |
| 9-1-1 Service                                 | 6.57            | 4.76            |
| <b>Total taxation improvements only</b>       | <b>\$ 6.57</b>  | <b>\$ 4.76</b>  |

### Who else is paying for these services?

Some services — 9-1-1 Service for example — are provided to the entire Regional District and some are for specific areas only. An example of a specific area service would be the Smithers/Houston and area TV Rebroadcasting service, which is a shared service that is paid for by taxpayers in the District of Houston, Village of Telkwa, Town of Smithers, and Electoral Areas “A” Smithers Rural, and a portion of Electoral Area “G” Houston Rural.

## What do Electoral Area residents pay in taxes?

Rural residents pay many of the same taxes that municipal residents do, plus additional taxes for specific rural services. In addition to the Regional District taxes, rural property owners pay taxes for:

- **BC Assessment Authority** - a Crown Corporation that sets property value in BC
- **Municipal Finance Authority** - which coordinates financial borrowing for local governments in BC
- **Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District** - see explanation in this brochure
- Provincial School Taxes
- Provincial rural taxes for road maintenance and policing.

## How is the RDBN portion of your property taxes calculated?

- The RDBN determines the budget and tax levy (or funding) to provide each service after a thorough review by the RDBN Board of Directors
- BC Assessment Authority provides assessment information, which it has independently determined
- Calculate tax rate per \$1,000 of assessments:

**Budgeted tax levy**

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**Assessed property value x 1000**

## Assessments & Tax Rates

How does the change in assessed values affect the amount of tax I pay?

This is a question many taxpayers ask each year.

What happens when my property value increases? As all property values do not change by the same percentage the examples below address those issues:

If the budgeted tax levy to provide services remains the same from one year to the next, but property values increase 25% the amount of tax collected does not change, but the rate declines:

| Year | Assessed Value | Tax Rate | Tax you pay |
|------|----------------|----------|-------------|
| 1    | \$150,000      | 1.00     | \$150       |
| 2    | \$187,500      | .80      | \$150       |

If the budgeted tax levy to provide services increases by 10%, and property values increase by 25% the change could be shown as follows:

| Year | Assessed Value | Tax Rate | Tax you pay (levy) |
|------|----------------|----------|--------------------|
| 1    | \$150,000      | 1.00     | \$150              |
| 2    | \$187,500      | 0.88     | \$165              |

