



Message from the Mayor

Dear Residents and Business Owners,

We've been living through the COVID-19 global pandemic for over a year now. On behalf of Council, I want to express my appreciation to Victoria residents and business owners for your continued commitment to preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Some of you may have lost jobs or had your work hours cut. Some of you may be feeling isolated and missing all the connections that our community usually offers. And for others, the pandemic has widened existing cracks in the social safety net, leaving our most vulnerable neighbours in desperate need of housing and support.

Many of our beloved small local businesses are struggling and I'm continually inspired by their leadership, creativity and nimbleness as they respond to public health orders to keep us safe. And I'm so appreciative of everyone who continues to support them and our downtown by shopping local, ordering take-out and enjoying Victoria's many outdoor patios – in all kinds of weather!

The Build Back Victoria initiative is a cornerstone of the City's COVID-19 response and recovery plan to support businesses in every neighbourhood. Within weeks of launching last spring, dozens of patios and retail "flex spaces" had sprung up across the city, and yoga and fitness studios had moved classes outside in parks. I know we'll see even more creative use of public space this summer.

Budget 2021 invests in the well-being of our community as we recover and build a city and economy for the future.

This year, Council will invest over \$260 million to deliver more than 200 core programs and services and carry out over \$104 million in capital improvements to make our city more resilient.

The City received more than \$6.5 million from the Federal-Provincial Restart Grant, which has helped to make up some of the revenue

shortfalls brought on by the pandemic. In addition, City staff are implementing a number of cost-saving measures, keeping the overall tax increase this year to 2.03 per cent – below Council's target of inflation plus one per cent. This is on the heels of a zero per cent tax increase in 2020.

“Budget 2021 invests in the well-being of our community as we recover and build a city and economy for the future.”

For every \$1 homeowners pay in property taxes, businesses contribute more than \$3.32. Businesses and downtown – particularly tourism, restaurants, arts and culture and local retailers – continue to struggle with the fallout of the pandemic. Council decided to break with policy and lowered the 2021 business tax ratio, with a typical business seeing a saving of approximately \$146.

Check out victoria.ca/budget for the full read on the investments your tax dollars are making in building Victoria this year. Some highlights include:

- \$24.5 million to improve City streets, fill potholes, upgrade crosswalks and sidewalks, traffic calming and investments to make the city more walkable and safer for cyclists and pedestrians.
- More than \$24.1 million to maintain and enhance the City's 138 parks and open spaces, gardens, community centres and other facilities. Providing outdoor spaces for people to enjoy and stay active, while apart, has never been more important.

- \$350,000 to top up the CleanBC's Better Homes and Home Renovation Rebate Program, and another \$275,000 to advance our transition to a fully electric fleet and build new public EV charging stations.
- \$459,000 to implement the *Victoria 3.0 Recovery Reinvention Resilience Economic Action Plan* to help build back our local economy, and close to \$220,000 to support the work of the South Island Prosperity Partnership.
- A continued focus on public safety with \$60.89 million for police services, \$18.68 million for fire services and \$2.77 million in bylaw and licensing services.
- Establishing a new Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and developing a Welcoming City Strategy to make Victoria more accessible and inclusive.

As vaccines continue to roll out, restrictions will be slowly eased, and life will start to feel normal again. In the coming months, let's continue to use what we've learned during the pandemic – agility, deep collaboration and a can-do spirit – to position our city and our region for the future.

This has been one of the most difficult times in Victoria's history. By working together, we will continue to recover, re-invent and become a more resilient community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lisa Helps'.

Lisa Helps, Victoria Mayor.

What you need to know to pay your taxes

The City offers many convenient payment methods to pay your property taxes.



Ways to pay your taxes



Online Banking

Online banking is encouraged. You can pay through your financial institution's online banking system using the Folio Number located at the top left of your tax notice as the account number. Check your institution's local cut-off time to ensure payment is received by **July 2, 2021**.

By Mail: Mail your cheque (including post-dated cheques to the due date) and the bottom portion of your tax notice to:

#1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

Payment must be received by **July 2, 2021** to avoid penalty.

Financial Institutions: Contact your financial institution for additional details and hours of operation.

Drop Box: There is a drop box located at the Pandora Avenue entrance of City Hall. The drop box is open 24/7 for non-cash payments.

Through Your Mortgage Company: If your mortgage company will be remitting payment to the City of Victoria on your behalf, confirm details of your tax payment with your mortgage company directly.

In Person: The Public Service Centre located in City Hall is open to the public Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., excluding statutory holidays. Payment methods include cash, cheque and debit. Credit cards are not accepted. Upon arrival, please line up outside the Pandora Avenue entrance of City Hall. An ambassador will greet you and answer questions. Capacity is limited and you are required to wear a face mask.

Pre-authorized Payments: Pre-authorized payments offer a convenient method to make monthly payments towards your 2022 property taxes. For further information visit victoria.ca/propertytax.

Claim Your Home Owner Grant

Starting in May 2021, eligible property owners can apply for their Home Owner Grant through the **Province's new online system. Municipalities are no longer accepting applications.** Program eligibility is unchanged. To avoid penalties and interest, apply before the property tax due date of July 2, 2021. Learn more at gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant or call **1.888.355.2700** to speak with someone over the phone.

MyCity Online

Want one-stop 24-hour access to your City accounts? Register at victoria.ca/mycity today. Create a profile, register your accounts and access all of your information.

- Review property tax accounts (payments, assessments, levies)
- Obtain information for income tax purposes
- Sign up to view your Property Tax Notice online

Property Tax Calculator

View your property assessed value change compared to the average assessed value for your property class and total property tax change by entering your Folio Number into the Property Tax Calculator at victoria.ca/taxcalculator.

Your 2021 property taxes

An increase of \$2.898 million is needed in property taxes in 2021 resulting in an overall tax increase of 2.03%.

Council has distributed this increase to residential properties at 5.73% and to business properties at a decrease of 2.08%. This will result in an average property tax increase of \$145 for an average residential property assessed at \$834,000, and an average decrease of \$146 for a typical business property assessed at \$647,000.

Please note that these are estimates only and each property will vary based on a number of factors. If your property assessment change (determined through BC Assessment) is equal to the average in its property classification (2.26% increase for residential and a decrease of 5.29% for business in 2021), your property tax change will be close to the average. If your property assessment increased at a greater or lower rate than the average, your property tax increase will adjust accordingly.

Say Hello to eBilling and Goodbye to Paper Bills

Sign up at MyCity Online.
It's easy!

Receive next year's property tax notice by email and have less paper to worry about.

- 1 Login or register at victoria.ca/mycity.
- 2 Register your property tax account. If you own multiple properties, you can sign up each property for eBilling. Use your eight-digit Folio Number and your six-digit Access Code from your Property Tax Notice.
- 3 Select to receive your Property Tax Notice by email.