



TOWN OF SIDNEY

PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION

2440 Sidney Ave | Sidney BC V8L 1Y7

www.sidney.ca | propertytax@sidney.ca

T 250-656-1184

Access to Town Hall

Although the Town Hall is expected to reopen to the public in early June, access will be limited to ensure the safety of customers and staff. Physical distancing measures will be in place until lifted by the Provincial Health Officer.

Due to the physical distancing requirements, this year will definitely not be "business as usual". Only two people will be admitted into Town Hall at any one time, and everyone else will have to line up outside, at 2 meter intervals; we will not be able to serve you as quickly as usual if you choose to come in to Town Hall to pay your taxes or claim your Home Owner Grant.

For this year, you are strongly encouraged to avoid coming to Town Hall in person to take care of your taxes. Please phone us at 250-656-1184 for assistance and advice. We are confident that most of your needs may be met over the phone, eliminating the need to come in to the office. There are many alternatives available to you:

- Online and telebanking payment through your financial institution
- Online Home Owner Grant claims through Town website
- By mail for cheque payments and/or Home Owner Grant forms
- In-person at your financial institution (taxes only; not Home Owner Grants)
- Drop box at Town Hall (available 24 hours) for cheque payments and/or Home Owner Grant forms.

We've also made this year's tax season longer than usual, to ensure everyone has time to adjust to all the temporary measures. While the due date is published as July 2nd as usual, the first penalty date for late payments has been moved back a month. You now have until July 31st to pay your taxes and claim your Home Owner Grant. The deadline is even later for commercial properties (September 30th).

However, if you are in a position to pay by July 2nd or earlier, we would certainly appreciate it; it would help with our cash flow needs, improve our financial results for the year, and help to reduce future tax and utility increases. If you are able to pay early, we thank you; if not, we hope that the relaxation of the due dates provides some relief at this challenging time.

We are working on additional service options for the upcoming tax season. Please check the Town's website, or call us, for up-to-date information. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Late Payment Penalty

Unpaid 2020 taxes (including outstanding home owner grants and deferments, as applicable) will be subject to:

- **5% penalty if not paid by July 31, 2020 for residential (class 1), utilities (class 2) or farm (class 9) properties.**
- **5% penalty if not paid by September 30, 2020 for light industrial (class 5), commercial (class 6) and recreational (class 8) properties.**
- **An additional 5% if not paid by December 15, 2020 for all property classes.**
- **Properties with a combined assessment of residential (class 1) and light industrial (class 5), commercial (class 6) or recreational (class 8), the September 30 penalty date will apply.**

The assessment class of your property can be found on the front of your tax notice.

If you are unsure of the penalty dates applicable to your property, please contact us.

How To Pay Your Taxes

Payments can be made **online**, by **phone**, by **mail**, at your **financial institution** and at **Sidney Town Hall**. Please refer to the back of your tax notice for more details about all of these options, and see page 3 of this brochure for more information about online payments.

How To Apply For Your Home Owner Grant

You can apply for the grant without making a tax payment.

Online - Apply on our website at www.sidney.ca. See page 3 of this brochure for more detailed instructions.

Tax Notice Form - Complete and sign the application form attached to the bottom of your property tax notice. The form can be submitted to the Town of Sidney by mail or in the letterbox at the front entrance.

To avoid a late penalty, your application must be made before the first penalty date applicable to your property.

If you have any questions about the home owner grant or require assistance with the application, please contact us.

Budget Highlights

In February, Town Council had originally adopted a Financial Plan for 2020 which called for a 1.79% increase in municipal property taxes for existing taxpayers. However, in order to help with the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Council asked staff to bring forward options for eliminating the tax increase, and further reducing commercial taxes for the year. Upon reconsideration, Council decided to roll back the municipal tax increase to zero, and to reduce taxes for commercial and light industrial properties by 10%. These reductions are accompanied by a relaxation of the regular due dates for paying this year's taxes, as outlined on the previous page.

While the Town has done what it can to reduce the tax impacts for this year, without reducing the level of service, we still have to collect taxes for other jurisdictions. These taxes make up roughly half of the tax bill each year. Unfortunately, while the average residential property will be paying the same amount of municipal taxes this year as in 2019, this same property will see an increase of \$85 in taxes collected for other jurisdictions. Provincial School Taxes make up \$51 of this increase, with additional, small increases for Regional District, Library and Regional Transit taxes. The overall increase means that the average residential property will be paying about \$7 more per month than last year. Due to significant reductions in School Taxes for commercial properties, the average business will be paying about 22.5% less than last year.

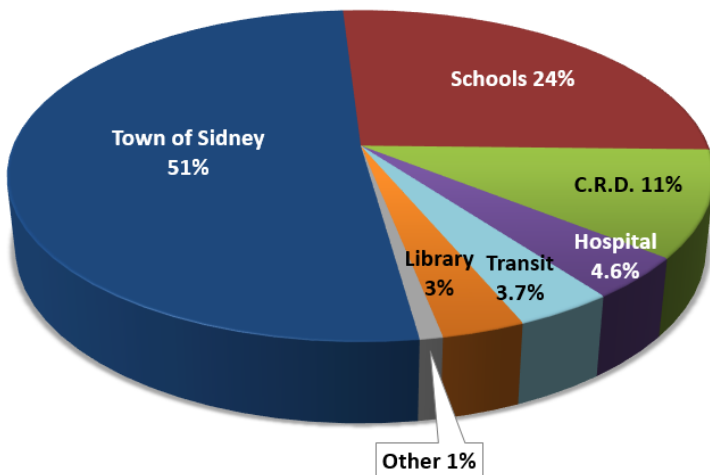
The chart below (left) shows the distribution of total taxes paid for a residential property, before applying the Provincial Home Owner Grant. The municipal portion includes the Water and Sewer parcel taxes, which help maintain our underground infrastructure; there is no increase in these, or in Utility rates, for 2020.

As always, the tax increase for any individual residence will vary depending on its assessment change relative to the average. For 2020, the average residential property increased in value by less than 1%. The tax impact on your property depends on how close your assessment change was in relation to the 0.36% average.

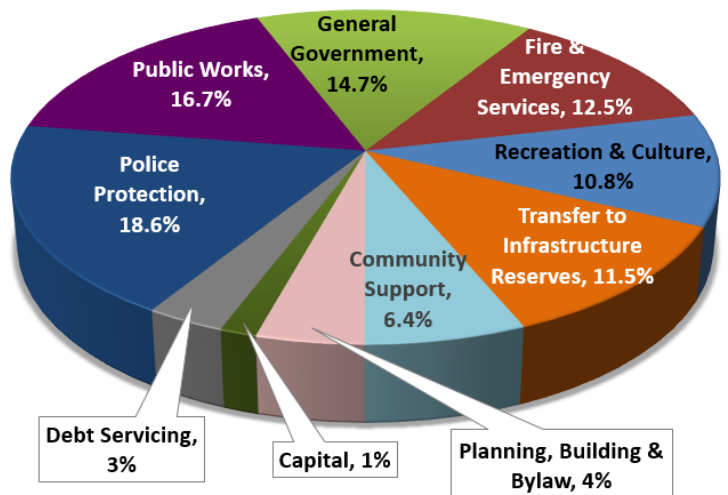
Total municipal taxes for the average residence remain at about \$1,518 per year, or \$127 per month. For this monthly amount, the Town provides fire and police services, roads maintenance, parks and public space maintenance, community and emergency planning, bylaw enforcement, as well as a range of related community services. While many of these services may be taken for granted, the value received for \$127 per month compares favourably with many common utility bills, not to mention the average strata fee.

The Town is collecting about \$11.7 million in municipal taxes this year. The chart below (right) shows where those tax dollars are going. Please note that most of our capital program is funded from non-tax sources, mainly from reserves which have been set aside for replacement of infrastructure.

Where your property tax dollars go




How your municipal tax dollars are spent





Go Green. Sign up for eBilling
Now available for Property Tax Notices & Utility Bills
 Visit mysidney.sidney.ca to get started!

 **Convenience at your fingertips**

- Hassle-free access to your bills 24 hours a day from wherever you are.
- Keep a record of your bills without cumbersome paper records.
- Say goodbye to potential delays caused by standard mail delivery.

 **Eco-friendly**

- Choosing eBilling helps the environment by reducing paper waste.

 **It's easy!**

- Only a few simple steps to sign up and you're done!

To apply for the home owner grant online

- Go to www.sidney.ca
- Enter the folio number and access code, which can be found on your property tax notice.
- For the folio number, enter the **9 digits after "476" and include the decimal.**
- If you have a MySidney property tax account, simply follow the "Claim Grant" button on the Tax Account Detail screen.

To make your tax payment online

- Use your financial institution's online bill payment service.
- If you need to add the Town of Sidney as a new payee, try searching for us using just **"Sidney"**, then select the option for property taxes.
- Use the folio number, found on your property tax notice, as the account number.
- You will need to enter **all 12 digits, starting with "476", but exclude the decimal.**

Provincial Property Tax Deferment Program

The Province of British Columbia continues to offer both the *Regular* and *Families with Children* deferment programs to assist qualifying homeowners with payment of current year property taxes on their principal residence.

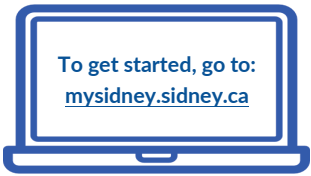
Starting this year, the Province is centralizing the administration of this program. Property owners wishing to apply for the program or renew an existing deferment must do so directly through the Province. Application and renewal forms can no longer be submitted to the Town of Sidney.

More information about the deferment program, including eligibility and the online application, can be found at: www.gov.bc.ca/propertytaxdeferment.

If you have questions about deferring your taxes, you can contact the Provincial Tax Deferment Branch by phone at 250-387-0555 or by email at taxdeferment@gov.bc.ca.

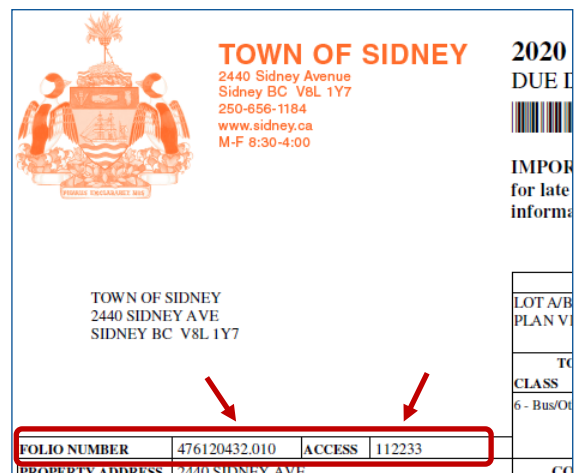
What is MySidney all about?

- It's the one portal to access all of your Town of Sidney accounts.
- It's available 24 hours a day, and no lineups.
- It's the place to sign up for eBilling for your property tax notice and utility bill.
- You get one-click access when applying for your home owner grant online.
- You can review account details, such as current balances, payments, historical tax assessments and levies (for property tax accounts), past consumption and charges (for utility accounts), and much more!
- Registering is fast, easy and free!



Looking for the Folio Number & Access Code?

Both are located on the left side of your property tax notice, directly below the mailing address block.



Pre-authorized Property Tax Payment Plan

The Town of Sidney offers an instalment plan that allows you to make 10 equal payments towards next year's property taxes by automatic monthly deductions from your bank account.

How does it work?

You determine how much you'd like to pay each month.

The pre-determined amount is withdrawn from your bank account on the first day of each month, starting in August and ending in May. There are no withdrawals for the months of June and July.

Your annual tax notice will reflect the current year's taxes less the total prepayments, including the interest that you earned. You are responsible for paying any difference, as well as applying for the home owner grant, by the due date.

What are the advantages?

Monthly payments can help you with budgeting and eliminate the impact of one large payment in July.

Interest will be credited to your instalment account monthly, at the Prime rate less 2.5%.

MySidney

If you have a MySidney account you can view your instalment balances, assessment and property tax history. To register, go to mysidney.sidney.ca.

How do I sign up?

Detach, complete, and sign the authorization form below. Return it to Sidney Municipal Hall along with a VOID cheque or pre-authorized debit form from your financial institution.

Detailed terms and conditions are available at the Municipal Hall or online at www.sidney.ca.

Already signed up?

Your monthly payment will continue at the same amount unless you decide to change it.

Use the form below if you would like to modify the amount of your monthly payment.

Did you know?

We also offer a pre-authorized payment option for our quarterly utility bills.

For more information and to sign up, visit www.sidney.ca.

Pre-Authorized Payment Form

Please complete the form below and return to Town of Sidney at least ten (10) business days in advance of the next payment.

Property Owner Information

Name	Civic Address
Phone	Email

Payment Information

Tax Folio Number	Choose One ____ New ____ Modify ____ Cancel
Effective Date	Amount \$ [for new of modify]

Banking Information

Please attach void cheque or pre-authorized payment form provide by your financial institution.

Authorization

I have read and understood the pre-authorized payment plan's Terms & Conditions, found at www.sidney.ca. I request the Town of Sidney to start, stop, or modify my pre-authorized payment as indicated above.

Signature	Date Signed
-----------	-------------