



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (June 11, 2020)

Premature Platitudes by Saanich Council
2019 Saanich Audit Findings Report – Residential Tax Burden

On June 1, Saanich Council reviewed the [2019 Saanich Audit Findings Report for the Year Ended December 31, 2019](#). The report included an analysis of [Appendix 1: Residential Tax Burden per Capita](#) that indicates Saanich has a historically lower taxes than the average of other CRD municipalities.

Residential Tax Burden per Capita is a flawed measure, and is not used by the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in assessing property tax burden.

The true calculation of property tax burden used by the Province is *Taxes and Charges on a Representative House*. This is because each 'resident' doesn't pay property taxes and fees, but each 'representative house' does. A per capita analysis doesn't account for the impact of demographics, such as residents in rental and seniors housing, and age composition.

Using the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's [Taxes and Charges on Representative House](#) measure, a completely different picture emerges. In the case of Saanich and Victoria, the past seven year average of Municipal Taxes and Charges for Saanich is \$3,506, versus that of Victoria at \$3,480, – a negligible difference of less than 1%, with Victoria slightly lower.

Why is this important? Because inaccurate measurements of tax burden can be used to provide erroneous and misleading information to the public before and during the forthcoming Saanich – Victoria Citizens' Assembly (CA) process. It creates the impression that the tax burden in Saanich is lower. It is not.

Once the COVID-19 concerns have subsided, an independent consultant's review via the CA will compare Saanich and Victoria 'apples to apples'. Through this process, the CA will make a final recommendation based on factual data.

We look forward to the deliberations of the CA to assess options for future municipal governance for the 2/3 majority residents of the Greater Victoria region.

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