

## IMPROVED TOWNSHIP BUDGET DOCUMENTATION

PROPOSED BY – COUNCILLORS CAVENS AND BOARDMAN

DATE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2024

### DESCRIPTION OF INITIATIVE

Revise and improve the documents presented to Council for the 2025 budget cycle (and beyond). Consolidate existing materials into a single, easy-to-understand package that includes information on detailed departmental budgets and staffing levels; reserve fund balances; strategic initiatives; major capital projects; and other financial information. For each, historical, proposed and projected values would be provided to allow council and the public to better understand trends over time.

### BACKGROUND

The current budget process is difficult to understand for both the general public and new council members, presenting a significant learning curve.

A review of financial plan documents from other local governments with similar populations and assumed financial and human resource capacities suggests that Esquimalt could enhance transparency for both the council and the public by adopting similar practices.

[Colwood Financial Plan](#)

[Qualicum Beach Financial Plan](#)

[Oak Bay Financial Plan](#)

While these communities are comparable in size to Esquimalt, their financial plans are more extensive than what may be necessary. We propose a tailored Esquimalt solution that is less verbose but still provides Council and the public with enough information to evaluate and understand the budget effectively.

### DESIRED OUTCOMES

- A single document that consolidates most of the Township's budget information, including past, current, and projected data.
- This document could include (depending on availability and complexity):
  - Detailed departmental budgets (e.g., see Colwood Financial Plan)
  - Existing and proposed staffing levels per department

- Historical and proposed VicPD and GVPL budgets
- Reserve fund balances, additions, and summarized spending proposals
- Financial estimates for strategic initiatives (approved and proposed)
- Capital plans

## ANTICIPATED SCOPE

This document outlines the ultimate goal of the project. Staff are encouraged to propose a phased approach if certain components require significant additional effort, resources, or time due to current system or staffing limitations.