



SCRD Adopts 2013 Budget

The SCRd board of directors has adopted the 2013 budget that includes a total consolidated budget of \$42.30 million (a net operating budget for the year of \$29.8 million), which will result in an overall tax increase of 3.14 percent.

In pre-budget meetings, the Board focused on bringing projects forward that aligned with the Strategic Plan and other main policy documents. This helped all those involved in the budget process to remain focussed on what is truly important for our communities, while striving to keep taxation as low as possible.

As part of this financial plan, the budget process included a base or minimum operating budget to sustain current service levels as a starting point with recommendations on options for proposed projects and enhancements.

Some major projects and changes to services for 2013 include an increase in honorariums for the Gibsons and District Fire Department; completion of the Long Range Water Master Plans for the three water systems (Chapman, North & South Pender); implementation of universal metering program for North and South Pender; landfill cost pressures resulting in increased tipping fees and reduced operating hours starting in September 2013; continuation of the Agriculture Area Plan; increased hours for the Gibsons Pool; completion of repairs to the Sechelt Arena; new gym equipment at Pender Harbour Pool; bicycle and walking path construction planned for Marine Drive and Pratt Road, as well as the plans for the “new Area A bikeway function” for Lilly Lake.

More details and information on the 2013 approved budget can be found at www.scrd.ca/Budget.



Get Away From it All

It's Spring and mild weather will soon arrive and residents and visitors can start spending more time outdoors enjoying the beautiful, unspoiled nature of the Sunshine Coast, and getting away from life's usual demands.

Sunshine Coast residents and visitors benefit from hundreds of kilometres of walking and cycling paths, and more are being built every year in an effort to link communities by foot and by bike. Connecting trail networks such as the Sun Coaster Trail have increased accessibility to outdoor activities.

The Sunshine Coast Regional District manages and maintains 102 community parks and beach accesses with a total size of 698.78 hectares, 16.79 kilometres of paved bike paths, and approximately 71.6 kilometres of trails.

From camping at Katherine Lake, or mountain biking at Sprockids, to meandering through Secret Cove trails, your adventure into the natural beauty of Sunshine Coast parks awaits!

For more information, visit www.scrd.ca/parks or call the Sunshine Coast Regional District at 604-885-6802.

Conserve Water in Your Garden with “Xeriscaping”

Water is an everyday necessity that we often take for granted. Our survival depends on water, and yet we waste it every day, and often just by watering our landscape garden. Did you know that water demands double during the summer months? If you are interested in ways to conserve water in your landscape garden, then think about following some proven steps.

Opt for a Xeriscape garden that is specifically designed for minimal watering in gardens. A Xeriscape garden takes the native garden to the extreme. It avoids wasting water by creating gardens with a rational water use and minimizes water loss through evaporation and run-off. This style of garden features native plants and shrubbery, cacti, succulents, ornamental grasses, and drought-tolerant turf grasses.

There are many water-thrifty plants suited to the Sunshine Coast besides the ones listed below. Our local garden centres have experts who can help you pick the best plants for your Spring landscaping projects.

CLIMBERS & GROUNDCOVERS

Salal, Golden Stonecrop, Grapevines, Rambling Roses.



ORNAMENTAL GRASSES & FERNS

Blue Oat Grass, Feather Reed Grass, Sword Fern, Cycads.

HERBS

Chives, Thyme, Mullein, Lemon Balm.



PERENNIALS

English Lavender, Red Columbine, Russian Sage, Strawberry.

TREES & SHRUBS

Hazel Tree, Pine Tree, Flowering Crabapple, Mock Orange, California Lilac.



Even if you are not ready to do a complete make over, becoming more knowledgeable and aware of your existing landscape is a start. Here are two simple steps that will make a difference:

1. Alter your irrigation to match your plants actual water requirements.
2. Make adjustments to minimize overspray onto hard surfaces.

Download the Sunshine Coast Regional District's [Water Wise Plant Guide](http://www.scrd.ca/Waterwise-Gardening) at www.scrd.ca/Waterwise-Gardening.

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