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CRD Budget 2024 Feedback

Well congratulations on allowing tax payers in CRD to provide input on 2024 budget after total disaster last year. I certainly hope this does not fall onto deaf ears like last year.

Ask your selves when is the last time you uttered "Cut Expenses"?

Government is the leading cause of inflation and what is ironic government can control inflation.

In order to achieve tax payer feedback that is accurate and precise we need access to the books and ledgers showing all detailed spending with explanations for each including job descriptions of each employee. Of course you will not disclose this in full for a forensic audit of operations but if you believe the tax payer's are your boss this should not be a problem.

We the people are over taxed.

You the government seems to think tax payers have no limits.

Guess what it's time to practice austerity and cut the fat, cut budgets to the minimum and push the pause button on some things.

Any business or private person that experiences economic down turn cuts expenses first and finds better ways to spend on those things needed to survive. Government has not done any of this in recent times resulting in excessive inflation and over taxing citizens long enough. You exist to serve and protect tax payers.

Administration is obviously something that needs attention Wages for employees are a bulk cost so you should be able to justify efficiencies for each one hired. Are employees clear on job description and are they maxed out time spend on duties? Adding fees for something employees are hired to accomplish is just more taxation (tax on Tax) so Eliminate fees and start demanding employees justify wages & benefits. Become more efficient. If you cannot figure this out I would be happy to volunteer a week of my time to help change your ways.

What is Administrative Service? If this is contracting out to private sector it needs scrutiny, or does it include contracting to other government departments (Tax on Tax)? Smells of something that needs review and scrutiny for savings.

Native Indians DO NOT PAY TAX! Yet you continue to waste time and money on expanding activities with natives. Stop! Time to talk with citizens (your bosses) and get direction before any further money is wasted along with full disclosure of all programs and funding that comes out of CRD coffers on this issue. Yes to expanding communications and interaction with real tax payers. Enough is enough they either pay their way or we cut them off.



Handing money to anyone that asks even non-tax payers must stop or at least pause. Example: Grants for business improvement should not exist using tax money to improve private asset values is wrong. Your level of government services should only include services to tax payers for efficiency and safety.

Arts and culture should be supported by fund raising direct from people. No more tax money from CRD budget based on majority rule in that the majority is not demanding or supporting. Instead assist with BC Lottery money and force Provincial authorities to provide funds then at the least gamblers and dreamers can see money supporting worthy causes. Tax money is not a free handout.

Economic Development was the original mandate of regional districts but has failed miserably in our region for decades judged by the number of jobs created. Writing grants application for tax money is not economic development. Attracting business into our region to invest in facilities that employ people like value added lumber production is economic development. This is important for our region in particular as we have been stagnant for decades because current industry is cutting back and investing in mechanical improvements that eliminate jobs in favor of profits by unsustainable volume. Any efforts made on this front yet? Tourism has suffered immensely since the Pandemic but has also struggled for decades, there are some things that can help improve this once going concern that employed many rural residents like improving fish stocks and representing an diverse REAL image that draws clients not just eco-warriors.

Instead of making it easy for citizens to spend and create economic activity like building something the CRD and other levels of government make it more difficult adding enormous costs by way of regulations causing additional costs & complexity to building. Development Services has turned into "Development road blocks" as building codes become more complicated the cost of building has sky rocketed and shows signs of going up substantially in the coming years with new regulation designed by engineers take effect. Fees charged for applications are outrageous especially for simple builds and I am sure the more complicated the higher the costs as outsourcing to engineering explodes. Once engineers sign off the liability of CRD is waved thus so should all fees for permits decline. Demand for engineers to become involved even for the simplest of structures is outrageous when inspector is fully qualified. Find ways to make it easier and cheaper to build in our region. Maybe even think about eliminating CRD involvement of building applications and push off to provincial government who have deeper pockets and who dictate the whole thing anyway.

Solid Waste Management needs some changes at the core of the problems. The goal here should be to reduce garbage and recycling from the source, packaging, boxing, plastics, and the likes should be pushed onto the ones making the profits. "You want to sell in Canada these rules apply" Protecting consumers must be priority instead of punishing with tax and fee while big business reaps all profit and continues filling out landfills. Tremendous change can be achieved when governments force change like appliance life must be 25 years in Canada not current 8 year engineered failure. Many other factors in the chain of garbage can also be modified at source with possible 20-30% reduction possible even more if trends catch on. Styrofoam packaging for instance could be paper that supports recycling. In the end cost of Waste management must be reduced either by volume and determined frugal negotiations for



all services used. Government should be fighting to reduce garbage at source not push more costs onto tax payers who have little to no control.

Invasive plants like knapweed are not in control and your efforts are not evident as I travel the region. Loggers who turn over dirt exposing ancient seeds increasing knapweed all over the place yet they have not done a dam thing to stop or prevent its spread. Instead of government incurring the costs of fighting when it should be part of logging practices to apply on site before pulling out. This would reduce the cost to tax payer and push costs to those making the profits. Use common sense and force those causing the problem to be the solution.

Regional Library system is important as a suppository of knowledge. It seems libraries have grown into internet café which at one time was to help those who do not have access to internet or computer. This is now redundant to some degree and has turned into free internet access subsidized by tax money. Stop additional costs like enhancements and do with what exists for at least two years. Website works fine so stop this enormous potential cost and let it be for at least two years. Renovations should be limited to paint and cleaning that's it. No more studies these are a huge waste of tax money just a simple survey targeting tax payers in our household by mail out will do the trick. A suppository of book knowledge is easy to maintain and should be encouraged to use with a goal of getting kids to dump the web in favor of a book this will improve our society immensely by creating critical thinkers improving attention spans.

Fire protection is a joke because where I live there are no means to access fire protection other than my own efforts. Area E sits partially in fire protection district and those who live within should pay for that service independently because they receive cheaper insurance. Those who live outside 12km protection zone should not pay as we are crucified by insurance premiums.

Regional Hospital District contributions are a contentious issue in that we pay BC Medical and tax at all other levels of government yet the Regional district is being tapped for more money. This should be consolidated into one level of taxation from one level of government only. Otherwise we should have a say in our hospitals and demand better management especially financial management as the health care system is a monster that can burn through every cent in no time with little to no scrutiny from funding sources while operating in secrecy and in my opinion a broken system of out of control expenditures. The split of our region between two health authorities needs attention we need to be part of only one like Northern Health which does a better job. If you want to improve something go after this. As far as improvements to Williams Lake Hospital what I see is theft of CRD reserve funds with no accountability and a growing native population with no contributions as they do not pay tax. The province of BC seems to throw money around in dense population zones and neglects the rural area's until pressure is on but instead of tapping all of the population of BC we are targeted at house hold levels to carry the burden but have no ability to demand more physicians or nurses to man the new facility when near 50% of residents do not have a family doctor and wait times in emergency are criminal. This cannot be left alone it needs real attention to who is using like natives and funding reflected so property owners are not carrying the whole costs.

Central Cariboo Recreation complex is a massive tax burden on rural residents. I have never used it so you can imagine how we feel about paying taxes for something not used. It is about time to do a real user survey at the doors and find out just who is using it and correlate their tax support ratio fairly. Just a loopy goosy guess is that city residents and natives are the largest user groups 80+%. Are they paying their fair share? I think Not! Time to look into a new formula and take it to referendum with property owners (mail survey), see how we all feel about paying to subsidize others especially those who pay nothing, guaranteed user pay model will fly.

In summary there are plenty of cuts & efficiencies that can be made using common sense for the common good using fair and reasonable approach to demonstrate and justify responsible governing. I for one will be your biggest promoter if you show fiscal responsibility and find savings then announce our taxes are going down for once.

Real democracy is possible at CRD.

Democracy as defined by Oxford Dictionary:

**"A form of government in which the people have a say in who should hold power and how it should be used. 2 a state governed in such a way, 3 control of a group by the majority of the members."**

Henry Van Soest

Williams Lake Rural area E

