

FAQs – Questions received during community meetings, July 22 -28 2013

Questions:

Do we need an architect?

Yes. The BC Building Code requires architectural services for all post-disaster construction.

What will be the tax rate on commercial property? The province sets the multiplier for the tax rate for classes other than residential. The current multiplier for commercial properties on Hornby Island is approximately 2.4 times the residential rate.

Do commercial properties receive a fire insurance premium reduction with a successful Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation (STSA)

The Fire Underwriters Survey has recently developed the criteria for recognition of STSA for commercial insurance lines. Although there are currently no examples in BC of commercial properties having reduced insurance premiums, specific communities are planning to challenge the STSA for commercial properties based on the newly developed criteria.

Is there a time in the future that the present building would be condemned?

We are unable to provide an answer to this question at this time.

Who votes in a referendum?

Generally a person can participate in the electoral assent process if they:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Are a Canadian citizen
- Have resided or owned property in the service area for 30 days prior to registration.

Could design include space for emergency services storage?

Emergency services storage space may be incorporated into the design of the new fire hall if the community indicates this as a priority.

Do the tanks need to be large enough to be accredited under STSA?

The tanks are large enough to supply the required amount of water for a successful STSA challenge by the fire department.

Can there be added communication for emergency events?

Yes. Communications with off-island emergency services is a key aspect for consideration with the construction of a new fire hall.

Can BC Ambulance financially contribute?

The regional district is currently working with Provincial Health Services Authority staff in the development of a pilot project that would hopefully see contributions towards the cost of operating the Hornby Island Fire Rescue ambulance.

Is the net increase of \$45 in taxes affected by interest rates?

Yes. A loan from the Municipal Finance Authority for the construction of a fire hall would have the rates revisited after 10 years. Of note: the estimated net tax increase of \$45 is based on the estimated cost of \$1.8m for the construction of a fire hall. The final design and the tenders received from construction firms will determine the actual net tax increase.

Does the fire department have a plan in the event of an earthquake?

Each firefighter is expected to have a personal emergency preparedness plan to ensure that his or her family is safe while the firefighter responds to a major event such as an earthquake.

What is the total amount of money raised for the fire service from property taxes at the current assessment of \$0.95 to \$1 per \$1,000 of assessed value?

In 2013 the total requisition for this service was \$450,000

What would happen if we went to referendum and result was no new fire hall?

If electoral assent is not granted, the fire department would continue to provide the best service possible from the current fire hall.

Can CVRD mandate a new fire hall?

No. The CVRD requires electoral assent to borrow the funds required to build a new fire hall.

How will a new fire hall improve the training/service level of the firefighters?

Since 2003 all firefighters in BC are required to train to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. A new fire hall would include a training room where the firefighters can receive the required class room study and write their exams. A new fire hall would also include an outdoor training area specifically for their practical training and exams.

For the High Salal neighbourhood, would a ring road be acceptable to the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) in order to benefit from STSA?

The CVRD and the HIFR department will work with the residents of High Salal and the Fire Underwriters Survey to determine the best plan for benefiting from STSA.

What are the “big picture” costs of this project? Is septic included in estimate or not? What about the removal of the present building?

The “big picture” costs will be estimated by the architect as we continue the public process into the design of a new fire hall. The final cost estimate will include the septic system and the removal of the present building.

Could we use the existing building for training, meeting, kitchen purposes?

The development plan submitted to the province as part of the Crown land grant application includes the demolition of the old fire hall. The Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Association (HIRRA) has asked that the CVRD consider support of its possible application to the province to maintain the old fire hall building for community purposes

Did Hornby Island community give approval to go ahead with the STSA?

The STSA process began in 2004 and has had aspects of the program included in the financial plan since that time. The financial plans have been supported by the residents of Hornby Island.