

The motions recorded in **SRD 992/24 and 993/24** represent the formal Board-level adoption of a directive to investigate changing the historical **Community Works (Gas Tax) Fund** allocation formula. This vote marks a significant escalation in the regional struggle over federal infrastructure dollars, as the municipal majority successfully moved to re-evaluate how these funds are divided among member jurisdictions.

1. The Legislative Breakdown: Rural Resistance to Formula Change

Motion **SRD 993/24**, which directs staff to prepare a report with new options for allocating the funds, passed despite unified opposition from the rural and small-community directors: **Davis, Lott, Mawhinney, Rice, Vonesch, and Whalley**.

- **The Defensive Block:** This opposition highlights a rare moment of total alignment between yourself (**Director John Rice**) and the "rural block." This unity stems from a shared interest in protecting the current funding formula, which historically provides rural areas with a predictable stream of capital for essential services like water and transit.
- **Protecting Area D's Stake:** You have a massive fiscal stake in maintaining the current formula, as Electoral Area D currently holds approximately **\$2.4 million in uncommitted Gas Tax reserves**.

2. Strategic Distinction: Formula vs. Spending Policy

While you opposed investigating changes to the **allocation formula** (how much money each area gets), you have been a primary leader in demanding a reform of the **spending policy** (how that money can be used).

- **Defending the "Rural Slice":** By voting against SRD 993/24, you are defending Area D's financial future against a potential municipal attempt to redistribute these federal dollars.
- **Demanding Integrity:** Simultaneously, you and your "pro-stability" allies (Dahl and Sinnott) argue that regardless of the formula, Gas Tax funds must be reserved for **eligible local government infrastructure**—such as fire protection and water—rather than being treated as "political pawns" for third-party community grants.

3. The Catalyst: The Cortes Food Hub Dispute

The drive for this report was triggered by the chronic "administrative friction" surrounding the use of these funds, most notably the debate over a **\$28,000 grant** for the **Cortes Island Food Security Hub**. You have argued that using Gas Tax funds for third-party entities sends a dangerous signal to provincial and federal funders that the SRD lacks internal infrastructure deficits, potentially **jeopardizing millions** in future structural grants.

4. Strategic Campaign Narrative for 2026

In the context of the **"Forward or Backward"** campaign, this file serves as evidence of your role as a **principled fiscal steward**:

- **The Message:** You can prove to voters that you are the only candidate successfully balancing two critical mandates: protecting Area D's fair share of federal funding while demanding **professional oversight** of how it is spent.
- **The Pitch:** *"While the municipal block moved to investigate changing our funding formula, I stood firm with my rural colleagues to protect Area D's \$2.4 million in*

*reserves. However, I am the first to demand that those funds be spent with **integrity and accountability**, ensuring they are used for the essential water and safety services our families depend on" .*

In summary, the carrying of **SRD 993/24** transitions the Gas Tax debate from a policy discussion into a high-stakes structural review. Your recorded opposition documents you defending **Electoral Area D's financial future** while maintaining a superior record of demanding fiscal discipline across the district.