

The motions recorded in **SRD 18/25 through 21/25** represent the formal initiation of the **2025–2029 Financial Plan**, documenting a series of strategic fiscal adjustments designed to leverage federal funding and provide direct tax relief to residents. These decisions highlight the Board's transition from high-level planning to the execution of your **"Forward"** platform's commitment to **principled fiscal stewardship** 1, 2.

1. Strategic Use of Community Works (Gas Tax) Funds (SRD 19/25)

The Board's decision to allocate **\$54,000 from Gas Tax** to fund the **Cortes Fire Capital Fleet Replacement** is a primary exhibit of the region's shift toward sustainable infrastructure financing Query.

- **Lowering the Tax Burden:** By using federal Gas Tax dollars instead of local property tax requisitions, the Board successfully reduced the annual capital reserve transfer by an equivalent amount Query, 1518.
- **Infrastructure Eligibility:** Fire protection assets, including trucks, are recognized as **eligible project categories** under the 2024–2034 Canada Community-Building Fund agreement 3, 4.
- **Protecting Reserves:** This move aligns with the broader strategy used in Area D to preserve local funds for future projects—such as the **\$150,000 transit surplus**—by aggressively utilizing federal and provincial transfers first 5-7.

2. Direct Taxpayer Relief: The Strathcona Gardens Win (SRD 20/25)

A cornerstone of the session was motion **SRD 20/25**, moved by you (**Director John Rice**) and seconded by **Director Susan Sinnott**, which directly reduces the financial impact of the **\$122 million REC-REATE expansion** Query, 147.

- **The \$80 Benchmark:** The Board successfully reduced the requisition for Phase 2 of the project to **\$80 per home per year** for both Area D and the City of Campbell River Query.
- **Fiscal Accountability:** This reduction demonstrates that the **REC-REATE project** is being managed with extreme fiscal discipline. By utilizing bridge financing through **Bylaw No. 569** and securing specialized energy grants like the **\$234,900 Fortis BC incentive**, the Board is delivering a world-class health and wellness hub while actively **lowering the capital burden** on local residents 8-10.
- **Strength of the Alliance:** The fact that this motion was a joint effort between Area D and the City highlights the **"pro-stability" alliance** that has successfully navigated the project past earlier "targeted administrative friction" and quorum-busting attempts by the rural block 11, 12.

3. Professionalized Budgeting and Corporate Order

The presentation of the 2025–2029 plan follows a period of significant administrative achievement for the SRD's finance department.

- **Award-Winning Standards:** The 2024 budget recently received the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** from the Government Finance Officers Association, verifying that the district's financial documents now meet the highest national standards for transparency and public communication 13, 14.
- **Clarifying "Surpluses":** This budget cycle builds on the CFO's earlier clarification that regional surpluses are not "profit," but **working capital** used to mitigate risks

and smooth out the timing of multi-million dollar infrastructure payments 15, 16.

4. Strategic Campaign Application for 2026

In the context of the **October 17, 2026 election**, these budget motions are a powerful factual asset for your campaign:

- **The Narrative:** You can prove to voters that you are not just building infrastructure, but building it **affordably**. While others focused on "billing politics" and expanding their own stipends, you were recorded here **cutting taxes** for the recreation center 17-19.
- **The Message:** *"I am moving Area D **forward** by making our biggest investments cost less. In the 2025 budget, I led the Board to reduce your recreation tax to just \$80 a year—protecting your pocketbook while we finish our new aquatic center. While others offered 'silent opposition' to local needs, I worked with my colleagues to secure federal Gas Tax dollars for our safety services so that you don't have to pay the bill" 1100, 1463, Query.*
- **The Contrast:** You can contrast this results-oriented budgeting with the **"hostage-taking" politics** of the rural block. Highlight that while you were securing the **\$80 cap**, your opponents were recorded on a **"hot mic"** plotting to break quorum to stop these very projects from proceeding 20, 21.

In summary, carrying motions **SRD 18/25 through 21/25** transitions the regional district into a period of **data-backed fiscal stability**. It documents your ability to deliver tangible financial relief for Electoral Area D while maintaining the **administrative continuity** necessary to manage the region's largest capital mandates.