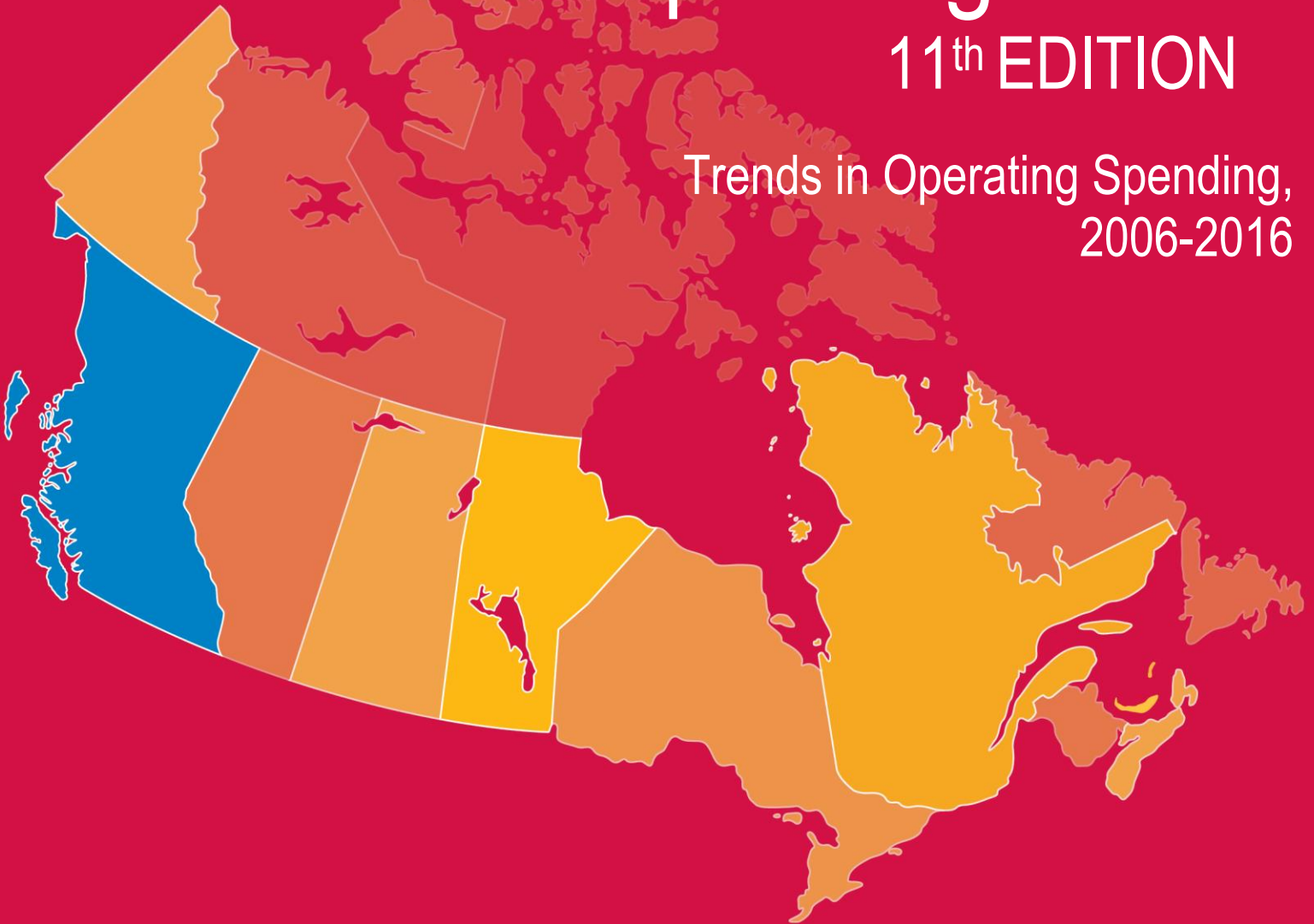


British Columbia Municipal Spending Watch

11th EDITION

Trends in Operating Spending,
2006-2016



September 2018



CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

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Executive Summary

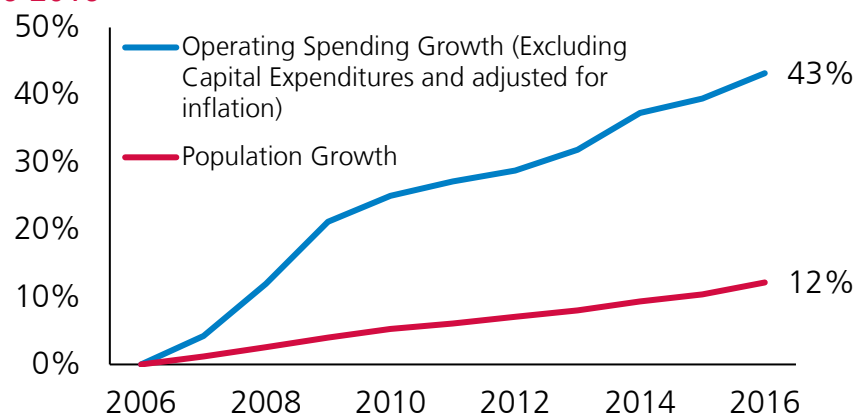
The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) has tracked municipal spending growth for over 10 years. Every year has seen spending grow beyond a sustainable rate, which raises the financial burden on British Columbians, including entrepreneurs. Between 2006 and 2016, municipal spending increased 43 per cent while BC's population only grew by 12 per cent. This is far above the benchmark for sustainable operating spending growth, which is to keep spending at or below the rate of inflation plus population growth¹. If municipal spending had been kept in line with that benchmark, the average family of four could have saved \$7,695 in municipal taxes over this 10 year period. While it is clear that the current rate of municipal spending is unsustainable, municipalities have many opportunities to innovate and trim excess costs while providing better services. This report will both examine current trends in municipal spending and highlight best practises BC municipalities have adopted to curb costs.

Introduction

The BC Municipal Spending Watch aims to analyze the sustainability of municipal government expenditures. To accomplish this, municipalities are provided ranks based on their operating costs per person, and the rate of real operating spending growth over a ten year period. This edition of the report examines operating spending data between 2006 and 2016 (the latest year for which data is available) to establish rankings for all BC municipalities. Over these years, BC's population grew by 12 per cent. Meanwhile inflation-adjusted municipal operating spending increased by 43 per cent – more than three times faster (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

BC Municipal Operating Spending Growth (Adjusted for Inflation) and Population Growth, 2006-2016



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; BC Stats, Population Estimates; BC Stats, CPI. 2006-2016.

¹CFIB Municipal Issues Survey, July 2017

Despite the fact that small businesses account for 54 per cent of BC's private sector employment and roughly a third of its economic output², municipalities have seriously diminished the prospects for success by continually raising taxes, since so many operate in highly competitive markets and on thin profit margins. When municipal governments increase taxes on small businesses, there is an opportunity cost to the local community and provincial economy, as it stifles the growth of otherwise healthy enterprises. When CFIB members were asked how they have been impacted by rising property taxes, 35 per cent have said that they caused them to delay expanding their business in the past three years (Figure 2). Thirty-three per cent would not recommend others start a business in their municipality – meaning fewer locally-owned enterprises in those communities.

Figure 2

How have rising property taxes impacted your business?



Source: CFIB Municipal Election and New Provincial Payroll Tax Survey, April 12 – June 5, 2018, n=783

Because municipal governments are unable to run a budget deficit, new spending must be funded through new or already existing revenue sources. The most popular new sources of revenue for municipalities are taxes and fees, which are disproportionately levied on small business owners³.

The current system of generating revenue and paying for services is not working. Small business owners pay far more taxes than value they receive in services (Figure 3)⁴. Furthermore, there have not been substantial increases to the quality of services they receive, despite the fact their property taxes have recently risen dramatically (Figure 4). This dynamic acts as a major disincentive for businesses owners who want to expand and grow in their communities.

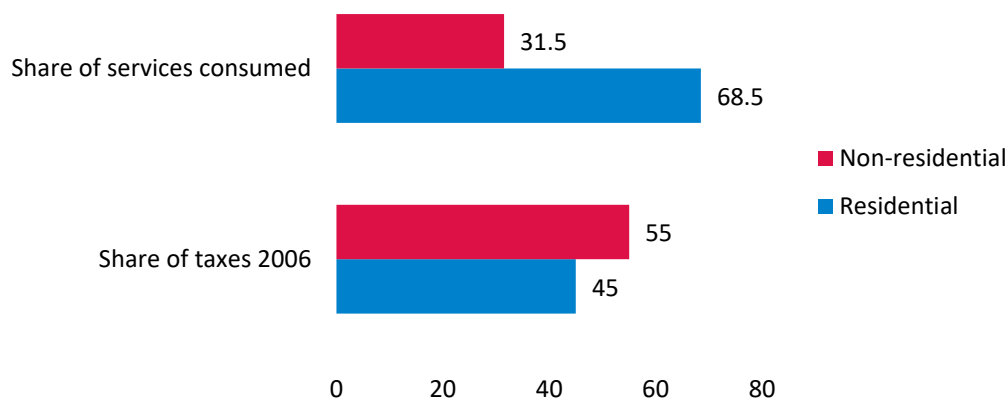
² Government of BC, 2017, Small Business Profile.

³ Truscott, Richard and Aerts, Aaron. 2016. British Columbia Big Municipalities Have Major Property Tax Imbalance.

⁴ MMK Consulting Inc, 2017. City of Vancouver – Consumption of Tax-Supported Municipal Services, Volume 1 – Main Report.

Figure 3:

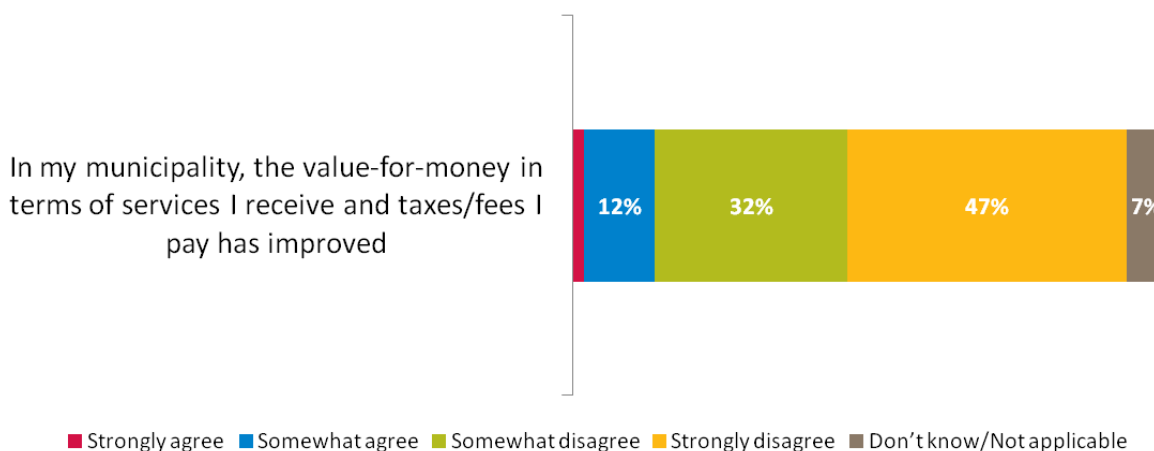
Share of taxes vs. share of services used



Source: MMK Consulting Inc., 2007. City of Vancouver – Consumption of Tax-Supported Municipal Services, Volume 1 – Main Report.

Figure 4:

Has the value-for-money in terms of services that business owners receive and taxes/fees they pay improved?



Source: CFIB Municipal Issues Survey, November 2017, n=639.

While excessive spending occurs in many municipalities across BC, this iteration of the report places an emphasis on the 20 largest municipalities by population⁵. This allows for a more uniform comparison, as larger municipal governments have similar spending habits and taxation practices. Furthermore, larger municipal governments tend to levy a disproportionate amount of property taxes on business owners, so scrutiny of their spending patterns is

⁵ Municipalities examined are: Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, City of North Vancouver, Coquitlam, Delta, District of North Vancouver, Kamloops, Kelowna, Maple Ridge, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Port Coquitlam, Prince George, Richmond, Saanich, Surrey, Township of Langley, Vancouver, Victoria

particularly warranted⁶. Finally, these municipalities are widely representative of BC as they encompass over three-quarters of BC's population and are regionally and economically diverse⁷.

A Note on Municipal Rankings

Municipal performance on spending is assessed by ranking municipalities against one another. The rank is calculated through an even split between two different measures: a municipality's 2006 to 2016 spending increase and its 2016 per-person spending level, thereby placing an equal importance on a municipality's long-term spending trend and its latest spending habits.

Both measures are important and distinct from one another. For example, a municipality may have had a low increase in its spending from 2006 to 2016, but at the same time it may have a high per-person operating cost. In this case, the municipality would be rewarded for its good long-term spending trend and penalized for its poor per-person spending level.

In general, a municipality with a trend of large increases in spending and a high current spending level will receive a poor rank, while a municipality with a low spending level and low or downward trend will receive a good ranking. See Appendix 1 for a more detailed discussion of the report's methodology.

2. Key Findings

Province-Wide Highlights

- Only 8 out of 152 municipal governments in BC have kept operational spending at or below levels of inflation plus population growth over the 10 year period examined (2006-2016). No major municipal government with more than 25,000 residents made the list.
- BC's two major cities, Vancouver and Victoria, each increased their operating spending per person by 32 per cent and 30 per cent respectively from 2006 to 2016, after adjusting for inflation and population growth (see Table 1). Vancouver's rank worsened to 68th overall, while Victoria improved in rank to 76th.
- In 2006, the average operating spending per capita for all BC municipalities stood at \$973. In 2016, that dollar amount increased to \$1,243 per person when adjusted for inflation, representing a 28 per cent increase in operating spending per capita from 2006 (See Figure 5).
- In 2006, the average operating spending per person for the twenty largest municipalities stood at \$1,080. In 2016, that dollar amount increased to \$1,537 per capita when adjusted for inflation, meaning that a 25 per cent increase in per capita operating spending from 2006.

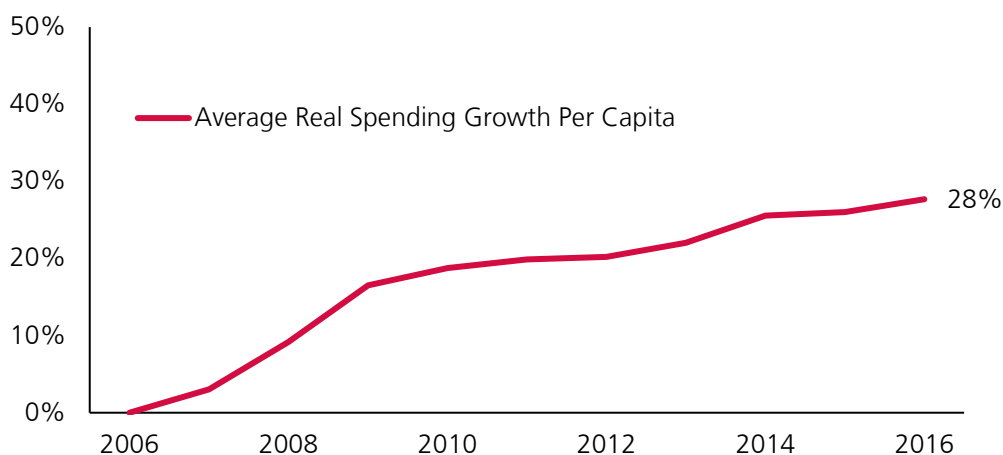
⁶ See British Columbia Big Municipalities Have Major Property Tax Imbalance for further details on this trend

⁷ See BC Stats 2016

- Real property tax growth has outpaced population growth in BC nearly four-fold, rising a total of 43 per cent between 2006 and 2016 alone. During this time, population grew only 12 per cent.
- According to the City of Vancouver Budget 2017, a median residential unit saw an \$83 increase in their property tax bill between 2016 and 2017, while a median business saw an increase of \$152. These increases are based on a 3.9 per cent increase in property taxes.
- Municipalities have ample opportunity to diversify revenue sources and cut costs without cutting services. Some municipalities have already started doing this by sharing resources, making the most of publically owned assets, investing in new technologies, and changing inefficient practices. For example, the City of Victoria was able to reduce paper use through the development of an online parking application.

Figure 5:

Real growth in per capita spending for all BC municipalities between 2006 and 2016



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; BC Stats, Population Estimates; BC Stats, CPI. 2006-2016.

3. Twenty Largest Municipalities – Summary of the Results

Table 1 ranks spending across BC's 20 largest municipalities. This year, only three of the largest municipalities made it into the top 20 out of all 152 municipalities assessed on fiscal sustainability: Port Coquitlam, Maple Ridge, and Kelowna. This is notable because we should expect the largest municipalities to be leaders in providing value to their residents.

- Port Coquitlam ranked first of the major municipalities in terms of fiscal performance. They have relatively low per capita operating spending of \$1,235 but where the municipality shined is in controlling spending increases. Real per capita operating spending from 2006 to 2016 increased the least among the cities at 7.6 per cent.

- Maple Ridge and Kelowna ranked second and third best respectively. Surrey had the lowest per capita spending in 2016 at \$1,057.
- The Township of Langley ranked as the worst major municipality due to the large per capita increase between 2006 and 2016, 50.1 per cent growth over the period. However, their per capita expenditures still remain below the average for major municipalities, so if they curb spending growth their rank will improve considerably.

Table 1:

BC Twenty Largest Municipalities' Operating Expenditures - by Rank

Municipality	Rank 20 Largest*	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	Last Year Overall Provincial Rank	2015-2016 Operating Spending Per Capita Growth	Rank (by 2015-2016 Operating Spending Per Capita Growth)*	Population Growth 2015-16	Real Spending Growth 2015-16
Port Coquitlam	1	9	7.6%	1,235	19	-0.3%	6	1.3%	0.9%
Maple Ridge	2	17	17.9%	1,139	46	-6.8%	1	3.5%	-3.5%
Kelowna	3	19	10.3%	1,560	32	0.1%	9	1.4%	1.5%
Coquitlam	4	25	17.4%	1,284	27	-1.5%	3	2.2%	0.6%
Chilliwack	5	35	26.5%	1,063	22	0.2%	10	0.4%	0.6%
City of North Vancouver	6	41	14.4%	1,691	31	3.9%	20	-0.8%	3.0%
Richmond	7	44	19.1%	1,508	63	-3.9%	2	3.1%	-1.0%
Nanaimo	8	46	23.0%	1,398	38	-0.3%	7	2.9%	2.6%
Surrey	9	48	31.0%	1,057	36	0.6%	11	3.2%	3.8%
Prince George	10	49	14.6%	1,810	84	-0.4%	5	-1.4%	-1.8%
Vancouver	11	68	21.7%	1,944	64	2.6%	16	1.1%	3.8%
Saanich	12	69	35.5%	1,332	74	-0.1%	8	1.7%	1.6%
Kamloops	13	72	29.0%	1,685	83	-0.5%	4	1.1%	0.7%
Burnaby	14	73	33.9%	1,514	51	3.7%	19	-0.2%	3.4%
Victoria	15	76	22.2%	2,065	87	1.0%	12	0.7%	1.7%
District of North Vancouver	16	83	31.8%	1,748	89	1.3%	13	0.3%	1.6%
Delta	17	84	30.5%	1,823	77	3.2%	17	0.0%	3.2%
Abbotsford	18	91	45.9%	1,275	61	2.4%	15	0.9%	3.4%
New Westminster	19	97	29.2%	2,225	91	3.2%	18	2.6%	5.8%
Township of Langley	20	103	50.1%	1,388	96	1.8%	14	3.4%	5.3%
Average	~	57	25.6%	1,537	59	0.5%		1.4%	1.9%

Green = best; Red = worst. 20 = worst rank.

Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016. The "overall rank" assigned to each municipality is an equally-weighted combination of two indicators: (1) 2006 - 2016 real operating spending per capita growth, or percentage growth in operating spending over the past 10 years, adjusted for inflation and population growth; and (2) 2016 operating spending per capita * Last year's ranking is not directly comparable to the rank in this year's report owing to a different base year being used. See Appendix 1 for details.

- New Westminster and Abbotsford ranked 19th and 18th, respectively, out of the 20 municipalities. New Westminster's \$2,225 per capita spending in 2016 was the highest for any major municipality, whereas Abbotsford had significant spending growth over the ten year period.

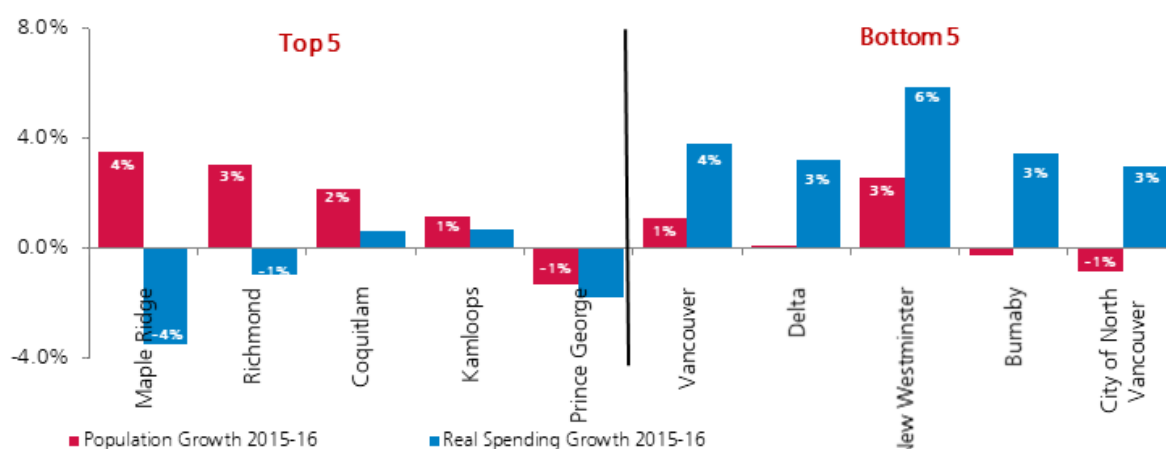
Short-Term Trends (2015 – 2016)

Short-term spending ranks are awarded based on operational spending growth per capita between 2015 and 2016. While an examination of the ten-year trend allowed an assessment of long-term municipal spending trends, a short-term investigation reveals recent habits. Between 2015 and 2016, Maple Ridge has seen considerable improvement. This positions them in the lead for short-term spending restraint. That operating spending per capita growth declined by 6.8 per cent indicates fewer dollars were spent per resident in 2015 than 2016. The cause of this is their real spending growth was negative while they experienced positive population growth. This contrasts with the City of North Vancouver, who experienced growth in operating spending per capita of 3.9 per cent between 2015 and 2016.

Figure 6 demonstrates the best and worst performers for short-term spending restraint.

Figure 6:

Municipal Real Operating Spending and Population Growth: 2015 to 2016, Five Best and Five Worst Performing Major Municipalities



Source: CFIB analysis of BC Government data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016.

Overall, the average increase for the twenty largest municipalities was 0.5 per cent. This is a relatively moderate increase, and is an improvement over previous years. However, looking at each municipality individually shows their situations vary greatly. While the top five municipalities were able to reduce their per capita spending throughout the year, the average increase for the bottom five was 3.3 per cent.

Interestingly, the best and worst five performing municipalities experienced comparable population growth during this period (within 5 per cent of each other), while their spending growth varied considerably. Prince George, Burnaby, and the City of North Vancouver all experienced negative population growth. However, municipal spending declined in Prince George. In contrast, Burnaby and the City of North Vancouver increased municipal spending.

Prince George's ability to decrease spending indicates they may have better practices in place to control spending growth than Burnaby and the City of North Vancouver, and should be commended. Additionally, Maple Ridge, Richmond, and Coquitlam decreased municipal spending after adjusting for inflation, despite experiencing positive population growth. This was likely possible without a sharp decline in services since they had experienced spending growth beyond inflation and population growth in previous years.

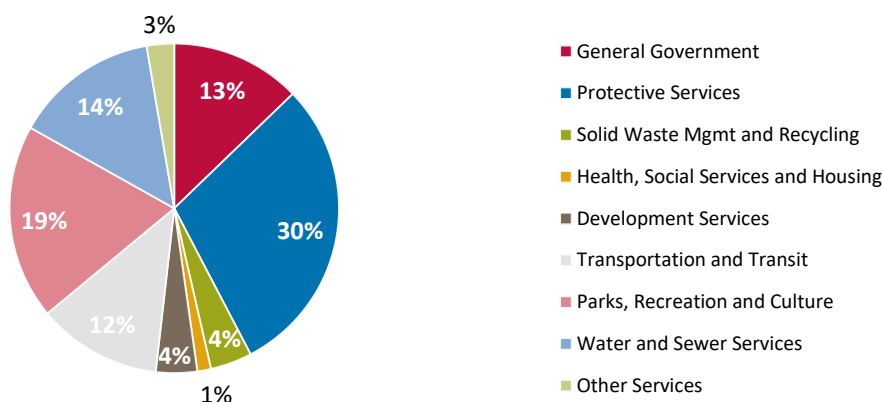
The broader implications of these results is that population growth does not always necessitate municipal spending growth. Thus, it is clear that municipalities have the capacity to decrease their spending while their population grows and retain service levels. Additionally, it demonstrates the current inflated state of spending across municipalities.

4. Municipal Spending Trends

In 2016, aggregate municipal operating spending in BC totalled \$7.9 billion. Nearly one-half of this was spent on general government and protective services combined. Besides this, little change occurred between 2015 and 2016. It is important to note that although the distribution of spending experiences little fluctuation from year to year, increases to overall spending has meant that the number of dollars spent on each category has increased.

Figure 8:

Municipal Spending, 2016



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. 2016. Local Gov't Stats, Expenditure. Sch402_2016.

A Note on Public Sector Wages

While public sector employees are required for municipalities to function, municipal wages have grown at an unsustainable rate. Figure 9 shows the growth of fire, police, and CUPE employee wages was much higher than the rate of inflation between 2006 and 2016. Victoria and Vancouver are shown, as they are the province's two largest municipalities. Since protective

services make up 30 per cent of municipal expenditures on average, the effect of increases in wages on those budgets is of serious concern.

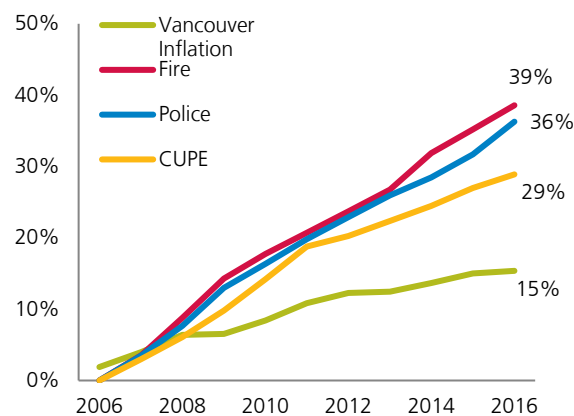
CFIB recognizes that wages are set through collective bargaining and arbitration processes with the applicable unions, meaning it is not entirely in municipal government's hands. However, the current rate of wage increases is simply unsustainable. BC municipal government employees receive about 17 per cent greater compensation than comparable employees in the private sector⁸. To reduce that gap, municipalities need to work together with the provincial government to ensure they have more leverage in negotiating new collective agreements.

In addition to unsustainable increases in union employee pay, local government executive salaries have risen at a rate beyond what is either prudent or sustainable. The combined salaries of the chief administrative officers in the 13 Greater Victoria municipalities was more than \$2.2 million in 2017⁹. It is true that in order to retain talent municipalities must offer competitive compensation, however municipalities must ensure this is not excessive or unreasonable. Measures such as cost sharing agreements can be put in place for municipalities to keep talented executives on their payroll without emptying taxpayers' pockets.

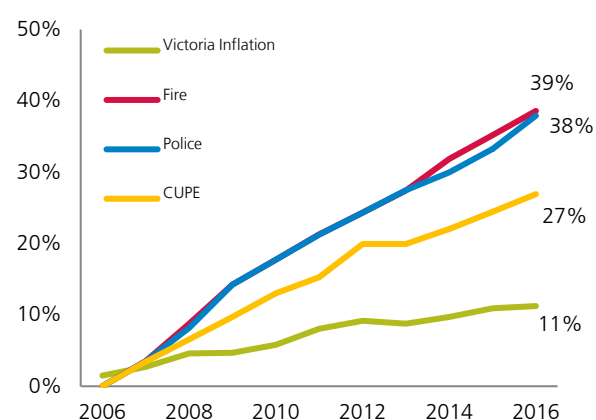
Figure 9

Cumulative Municipal Wage Growth for Public Sector vs Inflation 2006-2017

Vancouver



Victoria



Source: See Appendix 7 for individual collective agreement sources

* Rates based on CUPE: Pay Grade 2; Fire: Battalion Chief (Victoria and Vancouver); Police: First Class Constable

* For Victoria, no collective agreement covering 2013

* Inflation calculated using CPI from July 2017 for BC, Victoria, and Vancouver

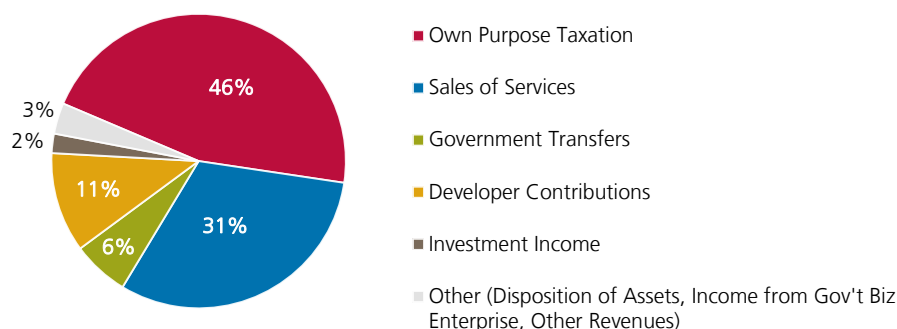
5. Municipal Revenues and Property Taxation

⁸ CFIB, 2015, *Wage Watch*. Includes premium on wages and benefits.

⁹ Times Colonist, Cost of running capital region's 13 bureaucracies add up

In 2016, total municipal revenue in BC was more than \$9.7 billion. As municipal revenue streams enable government expenditures, analysis of sources of municipal revenue is imperative in any examination of municipal spending. Figure 10 demonstrates that property taxes, referred to as own-purpose taxation, made up 46 per cent of all municipal revenues in 2016.

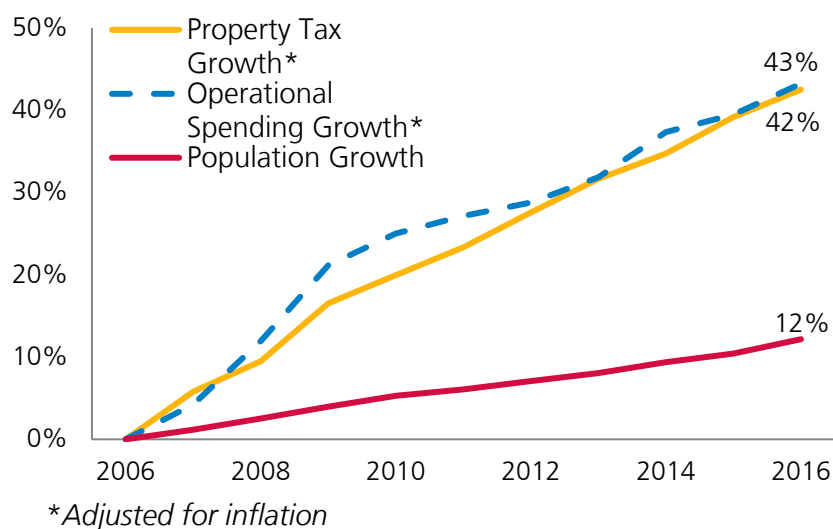
Figure 10:

Sources of Municipal Revenue, 2016

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. 2016. Local Gov't Stats. Revenue. Sch401_2016; BC Stats, CPI.

A correlation between property taxes and municipal spending is evident in Figure 11. Property taxes are the primary revenue mechanism of municipal governments, which means property taxes and spending are closely related. Also clear in Figure 11 is an increase in population is not the primary cause of increased government revenues or spending. Thus, due to higher municipal spending levels, each taxpayer is shouldering a heavier burden.

Figure 11:

Property Tax and Operational Growth Spending, Inflation Adjusted (2006-2016)

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. 2016. Local Gov't Stats. Tax Rates & Tax Burden. Total Taxes & Charges. Sch703_2006-2016; BC Stats, CPI.

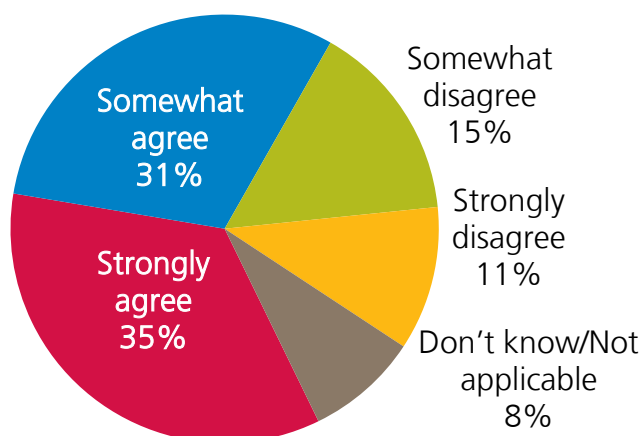
Because there is a noticeable gap in the tax rate between residential and commercial properties, higher taxes are especially alarming for small business owners. In a recent survey, 66 per cent of small business owners agreed the cost of their lease and/or property taxes had increased significantly (over 20 per cent) over the past three years (Figure 12). In 2006, per capita spending on property taxes was \$600. By 2016 this had reached \$762 representing a 27% growth rate in per capita property taxes. This is the hypothetical tax burden on each citizen, but a business will pay significantly more. For instance, the median tax bill for a single family property according to the City of Vancouver's most recent budget is \$2,207. The median tax bill for a business property is \$4,049. This is not an easy weight to carry for current business owners and discourages entrepreneurs from entering into business, which is why it is critical municipalities control spending to curb this burden.

"... I feel one issue being overlooked is the current state of our municipalities. They have become bloated, sluggish and covered in red tape. The current cost required to keep these municipalities afloat is astronomical - leading to property taxes that are not sustainable..."

CFIB member, Coombs

Figure 12:

The cost of my lease and/or property taxes has increased significantly over the past three years (i.e. 20 per cent)



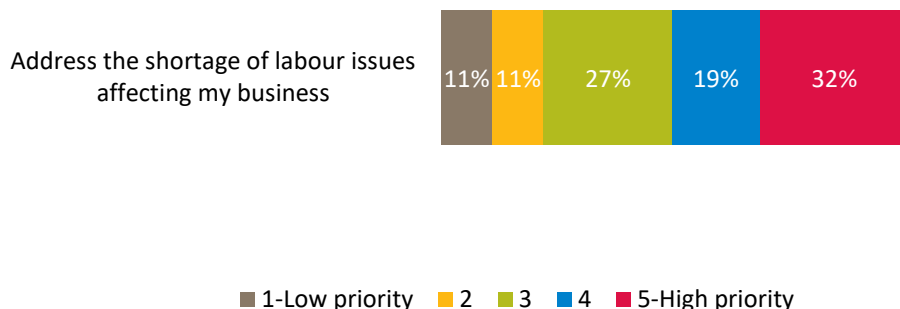
Source: CFIB Municipal Issues Survey, November 2017, n=1,594.

The growth of property taxes is not just concerning to business owners because of the effects on their own tax bill. Property taxes create a significant obstacle to affordable housing in BC, which further impedes small business from accessing the labour they require. In the second quarter of 2018, the job vacancy rate in British Columbia was 3.4 per cent. Only Quebec had a

higher job vacancy rate across the country¹⁰. Access to adequate labour is rated as a top priority for CFIB members, and the affordability crunch has taken a toll on their ability to find enough employees to maintain current operations or expand their business (Figure 13).

Figure 13:

What level of priority do you place on the following (1 lowest, 5 highest)



Source: CFIB Government One Year Report Card Survey, June 2018, n=833.

6. Municipal Innovation in Cost Saving and Diversifying Revenue Streams

Rather than simply increasing property taxes, there are other ways for municipalities to boost revenue without increasing costs significantly.

It is important to distinguish between raising revenue and saving costs, as cities may have to absorb upfront costs to diversify revenue streams. Because overspending is a pervasive problem across BC's municipalities, they should focus on methods of revenue generation that require little upfront costs.

In addition to finding new revenue sources, attempts to adopt cost-saving measures are laudable and should be recognized. This section will consider various practices that have been adopted by municipalities and is meant to serve as a best practice guide.

Using the methodology established in a Manning Centre paper, *Municipal Efficiencies: Examples of Cost-Saving Initiatives from Across Canada*, CFIB reached out to Chief Administrative Officers of 30 municipalities throughout BC to find out how they save money and raise revenues¹¹. While only five municipalities responded (Surrey, Nelson, Victoria, Port Coquitlam, and Burnaby), much can be learned from their responses. Their answers fell under four general themes: sharing resources, making the most of publicly-owned assets, investing in new technology, and changing inefficient practices.

¹⁰ CFIB, 2018, *Canada's job vacancies rate reaches new heights*.

¹¹ Whittaker, John. 2016. *Municipal Efficiencies: Examples of Cost-Saving Initiatives from Across Canada*.

Share resources

One important way for municipalities to ensure taxpayers receive quality services without the depletion of city funds is for multiple municipalities to share resources. Last year's report discussed how the City of Nelson shares its Chief Financial Officer with Slocan, Silverton, and Salmo¹². This effectively curtails costs and helps smaller municipalities attain talent and services they may not otherwise have access to due to financial limitations. It is a fiscally responsible way to access high-end talent.

Sharing resources can also be helpful where many municipalities are clustered together. Earlier in the report, it was noted that salaries for the Chief Administrative Officers of the 13 municipalities in the Greater Victoria Area combined were \$2.2 million. This services a population of 383,360 people – a size that is comparable to some of the largest municipalities in the province¹³. To gain greater efficiency in the provision of services, municipalities in the Greater Victoria Area could share resources in a similar way, which would considerably drive down the costs to taxpayers.

Sharing resources does not necessarily have to occur between multiple municipalities. It can also take place within the municipality if multiple departments share resources, as the City of Burnaby demonstrates. By making changes to their staff schedules to make them more efficient, vehicle users in the same department have been able to share vehicles, which has enabled the city to achieve a net-zero increase to their City Hall fleet of vehicles. Municipalities can also share resources with the private and non-profit sectors.

When planning for the development of a new headquarters for Victoria's Fire Department, the City consulted with both private and non-profit organizations throughout the process. This resulted in plans for a multi-use space that can be shared.

Make the most of publicly-owned assets

Publicly-owned assets can be used to generate funds for municipalities. There are many examples where municipalities have taken the lead on this. A popular option is leasing out city facilities at times they are not being used – this method is utilized by four out of the five municipalities who responded to our inquiry. Nelson estimates this increases their revenues by approximately \$600,000 per year; this represents about two per cent of Nelson's total operating budget – a significant source of revenue with little cost to the municipality.

Furthermore, Nelson contracts out its employees and services to smaller municipalities in the region. One great example of this is the work it does with its police force. Nelson acts as the remand centre for the region, puts its police officers on secondment to the RCMP road safety unit, and provides 911 services for smaller municipalities. They estimate that altogether these practices generate approximately \$630,000 in revenue for the city and makes effective use of

¹² Truscott, Richard, Aerts, Aaron, and Muriel Protzer. 2017. BC Municipal Spending Watch 2017: 10th ed. Trends in Operating Spending, 2005-2015.

¹³ See "Costs of running capital regions 13 municipalities adds up"

their employees' time. Nelson spends \$5.9 million on protective services, meaning they are recouping over 10 per cent of that by providing this service to neighboring municipalities.

The sale or lease of creative resources is another way municipalities can raise revenues. Port Coquitlam, for example, has put this into practice. The City entered an agreement in 2017 for digital signage within the city that will bring in revenue exceeding \$3 million over 10 years.

When municipalities assess the best use of assets, they should consider the needs of industries in their communities. This was put forward by Burnaby who capitalized on the growing needs of the local film industry by charging a fee for access to city-owned spaces.

Invest in new technologies

Many municipalities have gained efficiency through investments made in new technology. This is an area where changes can have both a monetary and an environmental impact. One commonly cited method was changing street light bulbs to LED technology. Surrey was able to minimize their upfront costs by completing this during their annual re-lamping program. They estimate that after eight years this program will save them \$2 million per year.

When cities become more energy efficient and tech savvy, they can save resources while also increasing accessibility. The adoption of an online mapping system that contains information on property, capital projects, and road closures allowed Victoria to expand customer service while reducing the time frontline staff spent on routine inquiries. Likewise, through the development of a parking app, the city was able to decrease printing costs.

Another suggestion, put forward by the City of Burnaby, was the use of cost-effective synthetic turf fields in suitable places. The city found that turf fields were better able to meet the needs of the community as they are better equipped to handle high usage from sports teams. Additionally, they require less maintenance like irrigation and weeding, which reduced the operating costs of field maintenance in Burnaby by one-third.

Change inefficient practices

Even small changes can make a big difference in the cost of municipal operations. For example, a minor adjustment to the default settings on city printers so they print in black and white on both sides decreased annual costs for Surrey by over \$100,000. Similarly, cultural shifts can reduce the amount municipalities spend on printing. Another suggestion from both Surrey and Victoria was to distribute digital copies of Council's Agenda. This reduces the amount of paper used and the time city employees spend on the assembly of Council packages. This is both a positive change for the environment and for the city's budget.

As labour is a major component of municipal budgets, the adoption of practices that save employee time should be a priority. For example, Victoria reduced the amount of time legal staff spent on routine matters through the use of pre-approved templates.

Similarly, Surrey decreased the labour cost of illegal dumping clean up. The City created a centralized business unit this crew reports to, allowing more effective distribution of labour. This eliminated the need for seven paid staff and five to seven one-tonne trucks.

Municipalities should also look at regularly renegotiating contracts for external services. A good example of the savings from renegotiation is from the City of Victoria. They renegotiated the credit card fees they paid for city parking in 2012, decreasing fees from \$243,256 in 2011 to \$180,592 in 2012 – savings of over 25 per cent with no change to services or convenience provided.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Local business owners agree that municipal spending is sustainable when it is at or below the rate of inflation and population growth¹⁴. However, between 2006 and 2016, spending for most municipal governments was well beyond that measure. Excessive growth in operating spending by local governments leads to higher taxes, which in turn puts pressure on local commerce and stifles job growth, which is obviously bad for BC's economy.

There is ample opportunity for municipalities across the province to take meaningful strides towards sustainable spending practices. This iteration of the report can act as a starting point for municipalities to become competitive through innovation and the initiation of more responsible spending practices than are currently in place.

CFIB recommendations:

1. **Limit increases in operating spending growth to no more than inflation and population growth.**
2. **Increase transparency in reporting financial data.** While the BC provincial government collects and reports data on operating spending annually, there is considerable room to improve reporting requirements. Discrepancies exist in the way data is reported. For example, differences can exist in the way municipalities classify expenditures. Increased oversight and uniform standards are necessary to ensure the data collected from one municipality is comparable to that from another municipality. Additionally, increased transparency on the generation of municipal revenues and expenses would increase understanding of municipal spending and make it easier to commend improvements in spending practices.
3. **Limit increases to wages and benefits.** Currently, wages and benefits for public employees far exceed private sector norms. Not only does this have an acute impact on property taxes, but it also makes it harder for small businesses to compete when they wish to hire. The government needs to exercise restraint when providing employees with wage increases such that private wages can catch up with the public sector. A big factor

¹⁴ CFIB Municipal Issues Survey, July 2017

why this is the case is the current collective bargaining and arbitration process. Municipalities should work together and with the provincial government to reform how bargaining works, with a particular focus on ensuring a municipality's ability to pay is considered.

4. **Take measures to reduce the gap between what individuals pay in property taxes and the amount paid by small business.** In BC, business owners pay on average over two and a half times more property taxes than a resident on the same assessed property value.
5. **Conduct regular service reviews to identify superfluous costs and ways to increase revenue.** This edition of the report included steps that some municipalities have taken to curb costs and increase revenue. These practices can be considered a starting point for other municipalities that hope to do the same. Governments need to learn innovative new practices and processes from each other and from the private sector so they can provide residents with high quality services while reducing their reliance on property taxes for revenue.

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Appendix 1

Methodology

The Municipal Spending Watch rankings are based on an equal weighting of growth in inflation-adjusted operating spending per capita (2006 to 2016) and 2016 operating spending per capita¹⁵. In order for the ranking system to be more intuitive, this year's report's ranking system works so that the best performing municipality is given a rank of one. In previous editions of this report, the worst ranked municipality was given a rank of one.

Capital expenditures, such as infrastructure building, are excluded from the report. This report only looks at local government *operating* spending. Starting in 2014, policing costs are included in this report (see Appendix 2). An implication of this inclusion is that this year's report is not comparable to previous editions (pre-2015) of the BC Municipal Spending Watch, since policing costs were excluded in previous editions.

In total, 152 municipalities are covered in this report. Barriere, Canal Flats, Clearwater, Sun Peaks, West Kelowna and Queen Charlotte were not included in this report since many of these municipalities are newly incorporated and do not have data stretching back to 2006. Zeballos has been excluded from this year's report as the municipality has a very small population that has decreased substantially since 2000. Spallumcheen has also been excluded since, at the time this report was written, the municipality had not yet submitted their 2016 financial records to the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for verification.

This report analyzes BC municipal spending statistics from 2006 to 2016, the most recent year available. Unless otherwise stated, data on municipal revenues and expenditures have been obtained from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing. Figures and tables on municipal spending represent CFIB calculations based on this data.

The year 2006 is used as the base year for comparing operating spending. This inevitably includes spending patterns during both economic upturns and economic downturns over the past 10 years. Municipal operating spending is calculated using total municipal expenditures, excluding capital spending. It is important to note that the rankings between this iteration of the report and previous versions are not directly comparable to editions prior to 2015. This is a result of CFIB's methodology being altered in 2015's and subsequent reports to look at a rolling ten year period (i.e. 2004-2014, 2005-2015, etc) rather than in previous reports which used 2000 as the base year.

Municipal population growth rates and provincial inflation growth rates are calculated based on BC Stats data from 2006 to 2016. The population figures have been updated from previous

¹⁵A standardized index is created for each indicator (between 1 and 100). A municipality with the highest real operating spending per capita growth is given a score of 1 while the municipality with the lowest 2004 – 2014 real operating spending per capita growth is given a score of 100. All other municipalities are given a proportionate score within that range. The same exercise is applied to the indicator for the 2014 operating spending per capita.

reports to obtain more recent estimates. All municipalities have been allocated the provincial inflation rate with the exception of those municipalities within the Greater Vancouver Region and the Capital Region, as separate inflation values exist for these two regions. To evaluate the degree of sustainable spending growth, CFIB considers population growth and inflation to be a reasonable benchmark for optimal spending increases based on survey responses from small business owners in BC¹⁶.

Appendix 2

Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	Change in Municipal Spending per Capita from 2015-2016 (%)	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending Growth (%)	2006-2016 Population Growth (%)
Highlands	1	2	-3	765	-4	20	24
Parksville	2	1	-5	1121	0	12	17
Armstrong	3	9	8	850	4	21	12
Langford	4	6	3	1081	12	60	56
View Royal	5	28	3	1115	3	15	11
Fort St. James	6	18	-9	1880	-2	18	30
Houston	7	24	-1	1531	7	-2	-1
Greenwood	8	71	-3	1679	-7	7	10
Port Coquitlam	9	19	8	1235	0	21	13
100 Mile House	10	62	-5	1845	-10	-4	2
Salmon Arm	11	21	12	1199	-1	25	12
Midway	12	55	1	1741	-3	9	8
Coldstream	13	13	25	664	3	41	13
Slocan	14	33	-7	2140	-1	-9	-2
Campbell River	15	16	10	1368	6	23	12
Lake Cowichan	16	15	17	1109	2	25	7
Maple Ridge	17	46	18	1139	-7	42	21
Cumberland	18	3	16	1306	15	48	28
Kelowna	19	32	10	1560	0	26	14
North Saanich	20	57	19	1203	-5	21	2
McBride	21	127	5	1800	-31	-8	-13
Rossland	22	80	13	1479	-7	23	10
Metchosin	23	5	30	687	-2	26	-3
Lake Country	24	7	18	1269	5	56	33
Coquitlam	25	27	17	1284	-2	46	24
Comox	26	44	22	1077	1	45	19
Gibsons	27	25	13	1477	3	24	9
Colwood	28	49	25	1013	-3	45	16
Pemberton	29	0	15	1474	15	23	7
Montrose	30	88	28	904	-10	27	-1
Port Hardy	31	26	14	1548	5	7	-6

¹⁶Based on CFIB survey data. Armstrong, Matthew and Jones, Laura. British Columbia Municipal Spending Watch

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Vanderhoof	32	123	22	1209	-23	34	10
Cranbrook	33	41	14	1619	0	25	10
City of Langley	34	23	21	1309	1	33	10
Chilliwack	35	22	27	1063	0	55	23
Keremeos	36	34	26	1084	-8	32	4
Qualicum Beach	37	17	25	1186	5	29	3
Smithers	38	104	8	1943	1	12	4
Central Saanich	39	48	23	1319	-3	22	0
Sooke	40	68	36	735	-2	83	34
City of North Vancouver	41	31	14	1691	4	31	14
Bowen Island	42	45	17	1573	1	22	4
Oliver	43	30	25	1232	4	31	5
Richmond	44	63	19	1508	-4	40	18
Kaslo	45	12	22	1399	10	14	-7
Nanaimo	46	38	23	1398	0	42	15
Sidney	47	53	21	1491	0	18	-3
Surrey	48	36	31	1057	1	74	33
Prince George	49	84	15	1810	0	11	-3
Anmore	50	20	32	1095	4	62	23
Mission	51	60	28	1313	-2	43	12
Sechelt	52	70	28	1305	-9	42	11
Ladysmith	53	54	29	1314	0	43	11
Port Moody	54	50	25	1536	2	50	20
Fraser Lake	55	124	20	1840	-14	27	6
Courtenay	56	43	28	1520	6	48	16
Nelson	57	118	-2	2872	-8	18	20
Chase	58	8	38	1135	-3	33	-3
Salmo	59	37	35	1269	8	55	15
Cache Creek	60	112	21	1924	-9	12	-7
North Cowichan	61	42	38	1188	2	47	7
Kimberley	62	103	17	2152	-5	33	14
Quesnel	63	86	18	2106	-3	10	-7
Williams Lake	64	93	22	1919	3	28	5
Castlegar	65	56	29	1617	-3	38	7
Fruitvale	66	14	46	856	2	53	5
Ashcroft	67	72	31	1533	-2	22	-7
Vancouver	68	64	22	1944	3	32	9
Saanich	69	74	35	1332	0	40	4
Hope	70	65	32	1497	3	23	-7
Powell River	71	69	24	1922	5	30	6
Kamloops	72	83	29	1685	0	42	10
Burnaby	73	51	34	1514	4	49	11
Lillooet	74	106	33	1590	-1	36	3
Pitt Meadows	75	75	41	1231	1	70	21
Victoria	76	87	22	2065	1	30	6
Peachland	77	79	35	1506	3	40	3
Alert Bay	78	100	2	3036	11	-8	-9
Nakusp	79	107	26	1964	1	40	11
Princeton	80	58	38	1470	2	42	4
Fernie	81	73	19	2325	9	19	0
Port Alberni	82	59	27	1947	9	16	-9
District of North Vancouver	83	89	32	1748	1	34	2
Delta	84	77	30	1823	3	34	3
White Rock	85	66	36	1609	7	39	3

Merritt	86	94	38	1564	1	43	4
Elkford	87	108	23	2235	-2	26	3
Vernon	88	92	42	1383	-4	59	12
Port McNeill	89	35	48	1118	6	37	-7
Port Alice	90	4	27	2080	-9	19	-6
Abbotsford	91	61	46	1275	2	61	10
Oak Bay	92	105	35	1842	0	38	3
Esquimalt	93	76	37	1737	0	30	-5
Burns Lake	94	10	32	2038	6	11	-16
Chetwynd	95	67	26	2345	8	30	4
Osoyoos	96	98	44	1517	2	47	2
New Westminster	97	91	29	2225	3	56	21
Summerland	98	115	33	2084	-2	38	4
Mackenzie	99	101	26	2436	6	-5	-25
Ucluelet	100	132	22	2612	-6	29	5
Warfield	101	82	54	1218	1	47	-5
Clinton	102	99	38	1927	-6	50	8
Township of Langley	103	96	50	1388	2	91	27
Dawson Creek	104	122	20	2816	1	30	8
Trail	105	102	31	2310	5	32	1
Masset	106	113	3	3623	-1	-8	-10
Lumby	107	29	52	1436	11	49	-2
Enderby	108	81	59	1189	0	57	-1
Penticton	109	121	28	2576	1	30	1
Golden	110	111	46	1775	5	40	-4
Grand Forks	111	131	31	2533	-1	29	-1
Hudson's Hope	112	141	9	3580	-9	9	1
Kent	113	78	55	1481	4	82	17
Duncan	114	90	57	1426	5	53	-3
Sparwood	115	85	37	2340	13	41	3
Creston	116	116	52	1675	-1	47	-4
Terrace	117	109	49	1831	5	35	-10
Telkwa	118	40	59	1409	11	60	1
Gold River	119	119	40	2298	-2	27	-9
Tofino	120	130	37	2538	1	66	21
New Hazelton	121	117	42	2394	4	42	0
Invermere	122	114	53	1911	-9	50	-2
Wells	123	120	24	3265	-7	21	-2
West Vancouver	124	133	33	2941	1	35	2
Port Clements	125	110	60	1720	5	32	-18
Prince Rupert	126	39	41	2752	-2	21	-14
Revelstoke	127	128	50	2447	1	46	-2
Silverton	128	149	37	3002	-25	47	7
Taylor	129	11	19	3974	-6	31	10
Fort St. John	130	125	62	2176	7	86	15
Sayward	131	137	38	3271	2	26	-9
Logan Lake	132	129	71	1994	3	62	-5
Lantzville	133	52	101	817	10	86	-8
Squamish	134	47	67	2645	44	105	23
Radium Hot Springs	135	138	64	2970	1	69	4
Harrison Hot Springs	136	140	86	2149	-2	68	-10
Valemount	137	95	77	2588	-6	66	-6
Kitimat	138	126	61	3346	19	30	-19
Sicamous	139	134	90	2056	14	77	-7

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Lions Bay	140	143	98	1851	-8	86	-6
Granisle	141	146	46	4234	5	25	-14
Lytton	142	144	40	4754	8	43	2
Port Edward	143	145	39	5088	5	13	-19
Hazelton	144	148	86	3309	-15	60	-14
Belcarra	145	139	117	1998	-1	95	-10
Pouce Coupe	146	147	95	3010	0	84	-6
Whistler	147	150	19	6630	-1	27	7
Tahsis	148	136	57	5012	18	27	-19
New Denver	149	135	125	2200	21	129	2
Stewart	150	152	79	4555	-7	56	-13
Northern Rockies	151	151	92	4772	-5	122	16
Tumbler Ridge	152	142	113	4847	22	69	-21

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. 2006-2016. Local Gov't Stats, Expenditure. Sch402_2006-2016; BC Stats, Population Estimates 2004-2014; BC Stats, CPI.

Appendix 3

Overall Provincial Rank, in Alphabetical Order (1=Best, 152=Worst)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	Change in Municipal Spending per Capita from 2015-2016 (%)	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending Growth (%)	2006-2016 Population Growth (%)
100 Mile House	10	62	-5	1845	-10	-4	2
Abbotsford	91	61	46	1275	2	61	10
Alert Bay	78	100	2	3036	11	-8	-9
Anmore	50	20	32	1095	4	62	23
Armstrong	3	9	8	850	4	21	12
Ashcroft	67	72	31	1533	-2	22	-7
Belcarra	145	139	117	1998	-1	95	-10
Bowen Island	42	45	17	1573	1	22	4
Burnaby	73	51	34	1514	4	49	11
Burns Lake	94	10	32	2038	6	11	-16
Cache Creek	60	112	21	1924	-9	12	-7
Campbell River	15	16	10	1368	6	23	12
Castlegar	65	56	29	1617	-3	38	7
Central Saanich	39	48	23	1319	-3	22	0
Chase	58	8	38	1135	-3	33	-3
Chetwynd	95	67	26	2345	8	30	4
Chilliwack	35	22	27	1063	0	55	23
Clinton	102	99	38	1927	-6	50	8
Coldstream	13	13	25	664	3	41	13
Colwood	28	49	25	1013	-3	45	16
Comox	26	44	22	1077	1	45	19
Coquitlam	25	27	17	1284	-2	46	24
Courtenay	56	43	28	1520	6	48	16
Cranbrook	33	41	14	1619	0	25	10
Creston	116	116	52	1675	-1	47	-4
Cumberland	18	3	16	1306	15	48	28
Dawson Creek	104	122	20	2816	1	30	8
Delta	84	77	30	1823	3	34	3
Duncan	114	90	57	1426	5	53	-3
Elkford	87	108	23	2235	-2	26	3
Enderby	108	81	59	1189	0	57	-1
Esquimalt	93	76	37	1737	0	30	-5
Fernie	81	73	19	2325	9	19	0
Northern Rockies	151	151	92	4772	-5	122	16
Fort St. James	6	18	-9	1880	-2	18	30
Fort St. John	130	125	62	2176	7	86	15
Fraser Lake	55	124	20	1840	-14	27	6
Fruitvale	66	14	46	856	2	53	5
Gibsons	27	25	13	1477	3	24	9
Gold River	119	119	40	2298	-2	27	-9
Golden	110	111	46	1775	5	40	-4
Grand Forks	111	131	31	2533	-1	29	-1
Granisle	141	146	46	4234	5	25	-14

Greenwood	8	71	-3	1679	-7	7	10
Harrison Hot Springs	136	140	86	2149	-2	68	-10
Hazelton	144	148	86	3309	-15	60	-14
Highlands	1	2	-3	765	-4	20	24
Hope	70	65	32	1497	3	23	-7
Houston	7	24	-1	1531	7	-2	-1
Hudson's Hope	112	141	9	3580	-9	9	1
Invermere	122	114	53	1911	-9	50	-2
Kamloops	72	83	29	1685	0	42	10
Kaslo	45	12	22	1399	10	14	-7
Kelowna	19	32	10	1560	0	26	14
Kent	113	78	55	1481	4	82	17
Keremeos	36	34	26	1084	-8	32	4
Kimberley	62	103	17	2152	-5	33	14
Kitimat	138	126	61	3346	19	30	-19
Ladysmith	53	54	29	1314	0	43	11
Lake Country	24	7	18	1269	5	56	33
Lake Cowichan	16	15	17	1109	2	25	7
Langford	4	6	3	1081	12	60	56
City of Langley	34	23	21	1309	1	33	10
Township of Langley	103	96	50	1388	2	91	27
Lantzville	133	52	101	817	10	86	-8
Lillooet	74	106	33	1590	-1	36	3
Lions Bay	140	143	98	1851	-8	86	-6
Logan Lake	132	129	71	1994	3	62	-5
Lumby	107	29	52	1436	11	49	-2
Lytton	142	144	40	4754	8	43	2
Mackenzie	99	101	26	2436	6	-5	-25
Maple Ridge	17	46	18	1139	-7	42	21
Masset	106	113	3	3623	-1	-8	-10
McBride	21	127	5	1800	-31	-8	-13
Merritt	86	94	38	1564	1	43	4
Metchosin	23	5	30	687	-2	26	-3
Midway	12	55	1	1741	-3	9	8
Mission	51	60	28	1313	-2	43	12
Montrose	30	88	28	904	-10	27	-1
Nakusp	79	107	26	1964	1	40	11
Nanaimo	46	38	23	1398	0	42	15
Nelson	57	118	-2	2872	-8	18	20
New Denver	149	135	125	2200	21	129	2
New Hazelton	121	117	42	2394	4	42	0
New Westminster	97	91	29	2225	3	56	21
North Cowichan	61	42	38	1188	2	47	7
North Saanich	20	57	19	1203	-5	21	2
City of North Vancouver	41	31	14	1691	4	31	14
District of North Vancouver	83	89	32	1748	1	34	2
Oak Bay	92	105	35	1842	0	38	3
Oliver	43	30	25	1232	4	31	5
Osoyoos	96	98	44	1517	2	47	2
Parksville	2	1	-5	1121	0	12	17
Peachland	77	79	35	1506	3	40	3
Penticton	109	121	28	2576	1	30	1
Pitt Meadows	75	75	41	1231	1	70	21

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Port Alberni	82	59	27	1947	9	16	-9
Port Alice	90	4	27	2080	-9	19	-6
Port Clements	125	110	60	1720	5	32	-18
Port Coquitlam	9	19	8	1235	0	21	13
Port Edward	143	145	39	5088	5	13	-19
Port Hardy	31	26	14	1548	5	7	-6
Port McNeill	89	35	48	1118	6	37	-7
Port Moody	54	50	25	1536	2	50	20
Pouce Coupe	146	147	95	3010	0	84	-6
Powell River	71	69	24	1922	5	30	6
Prince George	49	84	15	1810	0	11	-3
Prince Rupert	126	39	41	2752	-2	21	-14
Princeton	80	58	38	1470	2	42	4
Qualicum Beach	37	17	25	1186	5	29	3
Quesnel	63	86	18	2106	-3	10	-7
Radium Hot Springs	135	138	64	2970	1	69	4
Revelstoke	127	128	50	2447	1	46	-2
Richmond	44	63	19	1508	-4	40	18
Rossland	22	80	13	1479	-7	23	10
Saanich	69	74	35	1332	0	40	4
Salmo	59	37	35	1269	8	55	15
Salmon Arm	11	21	12	1199	-1	25	12
Sayward	131	137	38	3271	2	26	-9
Sechelt	52	70	28	1305	-9	42	11
Sicamous	139	134	90	2056	14	77	-7
Sidney	47	53	21	1491	0	18	-3
Silverton	128	149	37	3002	-25	47	7
Slocan	14	33	-7	2140	-1	-9	-2
Smithers	38	104	8	1943	1	12	4
Sooke	40	68	36	735	-2	83	34
Sparwood	115	85	37	2340	13	41	3
Squamish	134	47	67	2645	44	105	23
Stewart	150	152	79	4555	-7	56	-13
Summerland	98	115	33	2084	-2	38	4
Surrey	48	36	31	1057	1	74	33
Tahsis	148	136	57	5012	18	27	-19
Taylor	129	11	19	3974	-6	31	10
Telkwa	118	40	59	1409	11	60	1
Terrace	117	109	49	1831	5	35	-10
Tofino	120	130	37	2538	1	66	21
Trail	105	102	31	2310	5	32	1
Tumbler Ridge	152	142	113	4847	22	69	-21
Ucluelet	100	132	22	2612	-6	29	5
Valemount	137	95	77	2588	-6	66	-6
Vancouver	68	64	22	1944	3	32	9
Vanderhoof	32	123	22	1209	-23	34	10
Vernon	88	92	42	1383	-4	59	12
Victoria	76	87	22	2065	1	30	6
View Royal	5	28	3	1115	3	15	11
Warfield	101	82	54	1218	1	47	-5
Wells	123	120	24	3265	-7	21	-2
West Vancouver	124	133	33	2941	1	35	2
Whistler	147	150	19	6630	-1	27	7
White Rock	85	66	36	1609	7	39	3

Williams Lake	64	93	22	1919	3	28	5
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Source: Ministry of Community, Sport, & Cultural Development. 2006-2016. Local Gov't Stats, Expenditure. Sch402_2006-2016; BC Stats, Population Estimates 2006-2016; BC Stats, CPI.

Appendix 4

Municipal Spending Trends by Region

Municipal Governments, Vancouver, Coast & Mountains

Listed from Best to Worst (by Overall Provincial Rank)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	2015-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)
Port Coquitlam	9	19	8	1,235	0
Maple Ridge	17	46	18	1,139	-7
Coquitlam	25	27	17	1,284	-2
Gibsons	27	25	13	1,477	3
City of Langley	34	23	21	1,309	1
Chilliwack	35	22	27	1,063	0
City of North Vancouver	41	31	14	1,691	4
Bowen Island	42	45	17	1,573	1
Richmond	44	63	19	1,508	-4
Surrey	48	36	31	1,057	1
Anmore	50	20	32	1,095	4
Mission	51	60	28	1,313	-2
Sechelt	52	70	28	1,305	-9
Port Moody	54	50	25	1,536	2
Vancouver	68	64	22	1,944	3
Hope	70	65	32	1,497	3
Powell River	71	69	24	1,922	5
Burnaby	73	51	34	1,514	4
Pitt Meadows	75	75	41	1,231	1
District of North Vancouver	83	89	32	1,748	1
Delta	84	77	30	1,823	3
White Rock	85	66	36	1,609	7
Abbotsford	91	61	46	1,275	2
New Westminster	97	91	29	2,225	3
Township of Langley	103	96	50	1,388	2
Kent	113	78	55	1,481	4
West Vancouver	124	133	33	2,941	1
Squamish	134	47	67	2,645	44
Harrison Hot Springs	136	140	86	2,149	-2
Lions Bay	140	143	98	1,851	-8
Lytton	142	144	40	4,754	8

BC MUNICIPAL SPENDING WATCH 2018 – Trends in Operating Spending, 2006-2016

Belcarra	145	139	117	1,998	-1
Whistler	147	150	19	6,630	-1
Regional Average	76	70	36	1,855	2

Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016

Municipal Governments, Vancouver Island
Listed from Best to Worst (by Overall Provincial Rank)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	2015-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)
Highlands	1	2	-3	765	-4
Parksville	2	1	-5	1,121	0
Langford	4	6	3	1,081	12
View Royal	5	28	3	1,115	3
Campbell River	15	16	10	1,368	6
Lake Cowichan	16	15	17	1,109	2
Cumberland	18	3	16	1,306	15
North Saanich	20	57	19	1,203	-5
Metchosin	23	5	30	687	-2
Comox	26	44	22	1,077	1
Colwood	28	49	25	1,013	-3
Port Hardy	31	26	14	1,548	5
Qualicum Beach	37	17	25	1,186	5
Central Saanich	39	48	23	1,319	-3
Sooke	40	68	36	735	-2
Nanaimo	46	38	23	1,398	0
Sidney	47	53	21	1,491	0
Ladysmith	53	54	29	1,314	0
Courtenay	56	43	28	1,520	6
North Cowichan	61	42	38	1,188	2
Saanich	69	74	35	1,332	0
Victoria	76	87	22	2,065	1
Alert Bay	78	100	2	3,036	11
Port Alberni	82	59	27	1,947	9
Port McNeill	89	35	48	1,118	6
Port Alice	90	4	27	2,080	-9
Oak Bay	92	105	35	1,842	0
Esquimalt	93	76	37	1,737	0
Ucluelet	100	132	22	2,612	-6
Duncan	114	90	57	1,426	5
Gold River	119	119	40	2,298	-2
Tofino	120	130	37	2,538	1
Lantzville	133	52	101	817	10
Tahsis	148	136	57	5,012	18

BC MUNICIPAL SPENDING WATCH 2018 – Trends in Operating Spending, 2006-2016

Regional Average	58	53	27	1,571	2
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Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016

Municipal Governments, Thompson Okanagan
Listed from Best to Worst (by Overall Provincial Rank)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	2015-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)
Armstrong	3	9	8	850	4
Greenwood	8	71	-3	1,679	-7
Salmon Arm	11	21	12	1,199	-1
Midway	12	55	1	1,741	-3
Coldstream	13	13	25	664	3
Kelowna	19	32	10	1,560	0
Lake Country	24	7	18	1,269	5
Keremeos	36	34	26	1,084	-8
Oliver	43	30	25	1,232	4
Chase	58	8	38	1,135	-3
Cache Creek	60	112	21	1,924	-9
Ashcroft	67	72	31	1,533	-2
Kamloops	72	83	29	1,685	0
Peachland	77	79	35	1,506	3
Princeton	80	58	38	1,470	2
Merritt	86	94	38	1,564	1
Vernon	88	92	42	1,383	-4
Summerland	98	115	33	2,084	-2
Osoyoos	96	98	44	1,517	2
Lumby	107	29	52	1,436	11
Enderby	108	81	59	1,189	0
Penticton	109	121	28	2,576	1
Grand Forks	111	131	31	2,533	-1
Logan Lake	132	129	71	1,994	3
Valemount	137	95	77	2,588	-6
Sicamous	139	134	90	2,056	14
Regional Average	69	69	34	1,594	0

Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016

Municipal Governments, Kootenay Rockies & Cariboo Chilcotin Coast
 Listed from Best to Worst (by Overall Provincial Rank)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	2015-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)
100 Mile House	10	62	-5	1,845	-10
Slocan	14	33	-7	2,140	-1
Rossland	22	80	13	1,479	-7
Montrose	30	88	28	904	-10
Cranbrook	33	41	14	1,619	0
Kaslo	45	12	22	1,399	10
Nelson	57	118	-2	2,872	-8
Salmo	59	37	35	1,269	8
Kimberley	62	103	17	2,152	-5
Quesnel	63	86	18	2,106	-3
Williams Lake	64	93	22	1,919	3
Castlegar	65	56	29	1,617	-3
Fruitvale	66	14	46	856	2
Lillooet	74	106	33	1,590	-1
Nakusp	79	107	26	1,964	1
Fernie	81	73	19	2,325	9
Elkford	87	108	23	2,235	-2
Warfield	101	82	54	1,218	1
Clinton	102	99	38	1,927	-6
Trail	105	102	31	2,310	5
Golden	110	111	46	1,775	5
Sparwood	115	85	37	2,340	13
Creston	116	116	52	1,675	-1
Invermere	122	114	53	1,911	-9
Wells	123	120	24	3,265	-7
Revelstoke	127	128	50	2,447	1
Silverton	128	149	37	3,002	-25
Radium Hot Springs	135	138	64	2,970	1
New Denver	149	135	125	2,200	21
Regional Average	81	90	32	1977	-1

Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016

Municipal Governments, Northern British Columbia
Listed from Best to Worst (by Overall Provincial Rank)

Municipality	Overall Provincial Rank (1=Best, 152=Worst)	Last Year Rank	2006-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)	2016 Operating Spending per Capita (\$)	2015-2016 Real Operating Spending per Capita Growth (%)
Fort St. James	6	18	-9	1,880	-2
Houston	7	24	-1	1,531	7
McBride	21	127	5	1,800	-31
Vanderhoof	32	123	22	1,209	-23
Smithers	38	104	8	1,943	1
Prince George	49	84	15	1,810	0
Fraser Lake	55	124	20	1,840	-14
Burns Lake	94	10	32	2,038	6
Chetwynd	95	67	26	2,345	8
Mackenzie	99	101	26	2,436	6
Dawson Creek	104	122	20	2,816	1
Masset	106	113	3	3,623	-1
Hudson's Hope	112	141	9	3,580	-9
Terrace	117	109	49	1,831	5
Telkwa	118	40	59	1,409	11
New Hazelton	121	117	42	2,394	4
Port Clements	125	110	60	1,720	5
Prince Rupert	126	39	41	2,752	-2
Taylor	129	11	19	3,974	-6
Fort St. John	130	125	62	2,176	7
Sayward	131	137	38	3,271	2
Kitimat	138	126	61	3,346	19
Granisle	141	146	46	4,234	5
Port Edward	143	145	39	5,088	5
Hazelton	144	148	86	3,309	-15
Pouce Coupe	146	147	95	3,010	0
Stewart	150	152	79	4,555	-7
Northern Rockies	151	151	92	4,772	-5
Tumbler Ridge	152	142	113	4,847	22
Regional Average	103	104	40	2,812	- 0

Source: CFIB Analysis of BC Gov data published municipal spending, inflation and population data 2006-2016

*Telkwa protective services include provincial funds provided to fund Telkwa's Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Appendix 5

Regional Public Sector Wage Increases in BC

City of Vancouver (Vancouver, Coast, and Mountains Region)

Year	Vancouver CPI	Inflation	CUPE Local 15			Vancouver Firefighters' Union Local 18			Vancouver Police Union		
			Wage for Pay Grade 33 (\$/Hourly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth	Wage for Battalion Chief (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative wage increase	Wage Growth	Wage for First Class Constable (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth
2005	106	0%	37.82	1.00	0%	7778.00	1.00	0%	5691.00	1.00	0%
2006	108	2%	38.95	1.03	3%	7973.00	1.03	3%	5833.00	1.02	2%
2007	110.2	4%	40.12	1.06	6%	8254.45	1.03	3%	6037.16	1.06	6%
2008	112.8	6%	41.32	1.09	9%	8672.33	1.11	11%	6280.45	1.10	10%
2009	112.9	7%	42.77	1.13	13%	9111.36	1.17	17%	6590.72	1.16	16%
2010	114.9	8%	44.48	1.18	18%	9386.00	1.21	21%	6783.24	1.19	19%
2011	117.5	11%	46.26	1.22	22%	9623.00	1.24	24%	6984.82	1.23	23%
2012	119	12%	46.84	1.24	24%	9863.00	1.27	27%	7164.07	1.26	26%
2013	119.2	12%	47.66	1.26	26%	10108.00	1.30	30%	7346.17	1.29	29%
2014	120.5	14%	48.49	1.28	28%	10515.00	1.35	35%	7493.08	1.32	32%
2015	121.9	15%	49.46	1.31	31%	10779.00	1.39	39%	7680.42	1.35	35%
2016	124.6	18%	50.20	1.33	33%	11048.48	1.42	42%	7949.25	1.40	40%
2017	128.1	21%	50.95	1.35	35%	11324.69	1.46	46%	8148.00	1.43	43%

* Wages listed vary between hourly, bi-weekly, and monthly due to lack of uniformity within public records of collective agreements

* CUPE: wages for 2016 - 2017 calculated using wage increases stated in collective agreement between City of Vancouver and CUPE Local, 12016 – 2019 (see sources)

* Firefighters: 2007 – 2009 wages calculated by based on wage increases statated in collective agreement between City of Vancouver and CUPE Local 15, 2007 – 2009 (see Appendix 7 for sources)

* Firefighters: 2016 – 2017 wages calculated based on wage increases stated in collective agreement between City of Vancouver and CUPE Local 15, 2016 - 2019 (see Appendix 7 for sources)

* Inflation calculated using CPI. Inflation for 2017 calculated using CPI from July 2017

City of Victoria (Vancouver Island Region)

Year	Victoria CPI	Victoria Inflation	CUPE Local 50			International Association of Firefighters Local 730			Victoria City Police Union		
			Wage for Pay Grade 2 (\$/Hourly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth	Wage for Battalion Chief (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative wage increase	Wage Growth	Wage for First Class Constable (\$/Hourly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth
2005	106.9	0%	19.44	1.00	0%	7767	1.00	0%	32.33	1.00	0%
2006	108.5	1%	19.83	1.02	2%	7962	1.03	3%	33.14	1.03	2%
2007	109.8	3%	20.51	1.06	6%	8242	1.06	6%	34.30	1.06	6%
2008	111.8	5%	21.13	1.09	9%	8659	1.11	11%	35.86	1.11	11%
2009	111.9	5%	21.76	1.12	12%	9097	1.17	17%	37.87	1.17	17%
2010	113.1	6%	22.41	1.15	15%	9373	1.21	21%	39.02	1.21	21%
2011	115.5	8%	22.86	1.18	18%	9657	1.24	24%	40.18	1.24	24%
2012	116.7	9%	23.78	1.22	22%	9899	1.27	27%	41.21	1.27	27%
2013	116.3	9%	23.78	1.22	22%	10146	1.31	31%	42.24	1.31	31%
2014	117.3	10%	24.2	1.24	24%	10501	1.35	35%	43.08	1.33	33%
2015	118.6	11%	24.68	1.27	27%	10765	1.39	39%	44.16	1.37	37%
2016	120.7	13%	25.17	1.29	29%	11035	1.42	42%	45.71	1.41	41%
2017	123.9	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	11309	1.46	46%	46.85	1.45	45%

* Wages listed vary between hourly, bi-weekly, and monthly due to lack of uniformity within public records of collective agreements

* CUPE: no collective agreement in 2013, and no collective agreement as of writing this report for 2017

* CUPE: Collective agreement between City of Victoria and CUPE Local 50, 2006 – 2009 lists wages as bi-weekly. For comprehensiveness, bi-weekly wages have been calculated to equal monthly wages using a basis of 40 hours per week

* Police: 2016 – 2017 wages calculated based on wage increases stated in collective agreement between City of Victoria and CUPE Local 50, 2016 - 2018 (see Appendix 7 for sources)

* Inflation calculated using CPI. Inflation for 2017 calculated using CPI from July 2017

City of Kelowna (Thompson-Okanagan Region)

Year	BC CPI	BC Inflation	CUPE Local 338			International Association of Firefighters Local 953		
			Wage for Pay Grade 2 (\$/Bi-Weekly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth	Wage for Captain (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative increase	Wage Growth
2005	106.3	0%	1173.91	1.00	0%	6767.58	1.00	0%
2006	108.1	2%	1224.44	1.04	4%	6936.77	1.03	3%
2007	110	3%	1267.67	1.08	8%	7163.23	1.06	6%
2008	112.3	6%	1312.42	1.12	12%	7545.21	1.11	11%
2009	112.3	6%	1345.23	1.15	15%	7927.19	1.17	17%
2010	113.8	7%	1362.05	1.16	16%	8166.79	1.21	21%
2011	116.5	10%	1379.07	1.17	17%	8414.10	1.24	24%
2012	117.8	11%	1399.76	1.19	19%	8709.00	1.29	29%
2013	117.7	11%	1420.75	1.21	21%	8840.06	1.31	31%
2014	118.9	12%	1449.17	1.23	23%	9061.06	1.34	34%
2015	120.2	13%	1470.91	1.25	25%	9287.59	1.37	37%
2016	122.4	15%	1492.97	1.27	27%	9613.11	1.42	42%
2017	125.6	18%	1522.83	1.30	30%	9853.44	1.46	46%

* Wages listed vary between hourly, bi-weekly, and monthly due to lack of uniformity within public records of collective agreements

* City of Kelowna does not have its own Police Union, therefore Police is not included

* CUPE: Collective agreement(s) covering 2005 are not publically available

* CUPE: wages for 2010 – 2017 are calculated based on wage increases stated in the collective agreements between City of Kelowna and CUPE 338 for 2010 – 2013 and 2014 – 2018 (see Appendix 7 for sources)

* Inflation calculated using CPI. Inflation for 2017 calculated using CPI from July 2017

City of Prince George (Northern BC Region)

Year	BC CPI	BC Inflation	CUPE Local 1048			Prince George Firefighters' Union Local 1372		
			Wage for Pay Grade 2 (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative Wage Increase	Wage Growth	Wage for Captain (\$/Monthly)	Cumulative increase	Wage Growth
2005	106.3	0%	3191	1.00	0%	6658.00	1.00	0%
2006	108.1	2%	3288.84	1.03	3%	6658.00	1.00	0%
2007	110	3%	3386.68	1.06	6%	7064.00	1.06	6%
2008	112.3	6%	3487.77	1.09	9%	7422.00	1.11	11%
2009	112.3	6%	3592.13	1.13	13%	7798.00	1.17	17%
2010	113.8	7%	3699.75	1.16	16%	8033.69	1.21	21%
2011	116.5	10%	3810.62	1.19	19%	8235.79	1.24	24%
2012	117.8	11%	3924.76	1.23	23%	8441.69	1.27	27%
2013	117.7	11%	3924.76	1.23	23%	8652.73	1.30	30%
2014	118.9	12%	3954.11	1.24	24%	8869.05	1.33	33%
2015	120.2	13%	4034.01	1.26	26%	9090.77	1.37	37%
2016	122.4	15%	4113.91	1.29	29%	9615.00	1.44	44%
2017	125.6	18%	N/A	N/A	N/A	9854.00	1.48	48%

* Wages listed vary between hourly, bi-weekly, and monthly due to lack of uniformity within public records of collective agreements

* City of Prince George does not have its own Police Union, therefore Police is not included

* Fire: No wage increase for Captain for 2006 for the collective agreement between the City of Prince George and Local 1372, 2003 – 2006 (see Appendix 7 for sources)

* Fire: wages for 2010 – 2015 are calculated based on wage increases stated in the collective agreement between the City of Prince George and Local 1372, 2005 – 2010

* Inflation calculated using CPI. Inflation for 2017 calculated using CPI from July 2017

Appendix 6

Cumulative Wage Sources

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2012 to 2015 Collective Agreement between the City of Vancouver and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 15.*

http://www.bcbargaining.ca/content/1340/Vancouver_CUPE_15_2012-15.pdf

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2016 to 2019 Collective Agreement between the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Firefighters' Union Local 18.*

http://www.bcbargaining.ca/?search=1&company=Vancouver%2C+City+of§or%5B%5D=public§or%5B%5D=private&industry=&un=64178547dcbcf0bb992e6d6fee52c51e6adb3e7b5ab1b8498706d67f9164f6b6fcc0e3f05ba573e5961299ea3f4a8770&date_type=0&startdate=&enddate=&q=

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2016 to 2018 Collective Agreement between City of Victoria and Victoria City Police Union.*

<http://www.bcbargaining.ca/content/1749/GVLRA-Victoria%20Police%202016-2018.pdf>

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2016 to 2018 Collective Agreement between City of Victoria and Victoria City Police Union.*

<http://www.bcbargaining.ca/content/1749/GVLRA-Victoria%20Police%202016-2018.pdf>

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2010 to 2012 Collective Agreement between City of Kelowna and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 953.*

http://www.bcbargaining.ca/content/824/Kelowna_IAFF2012.pdf

BC Bargaining Database. 2017. *BC Collective Agreements – 2013 to 2019 Collective Agreement between City of Kelowna and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 953.*

http://www.bcbargaining.ca/content/1860/iaff_collective_agreement_with_schedule_a_and_b_for_2013-01-01_to_2019-12-31_-_final_signed_copy.pdf

Canadian Federation of Independent Business. 2018. *Canada's job vacancies rate reaches new heights.*

<https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en/media/canadas-job-vacancies-rate-reaches-new-heights>

City of Kelowna, Compensation & Benefits Manager. 2017. *2002 to 2005 Collective Agreement between Okanagan Mainline Municipal Labour Relations Association on behalf of the City of Kelowna and Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 338. PDF*

City of Kelowna, Human Resources. 2017. *Collective Agreement between the City of Kelowna and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 953. PDF*

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