VILLAGE OF WARFIELD
MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

FINAL REPORT

leftside partners inc.

NEILSON STRATEGIES

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INTRODUCTION

This *Final Report* represents the compilation of the three component reports prepared throughout the *Phase I Municipal Sustainability Study* together with the Committee's recommendation.

The purpose of the Phase I study was fourfold:

- document and examine the Village's services, finances, financial capacity, governance, development opportunities and challenges, and community characteristics
- assess the Village's sustainability as a standalone, autonomous municipality
- identify changes to consider within the current local government structure, or to the local government structure, to address sustainability concerns
- engage the community on the questions of municipal sustainability, potential changes to achieve sustainability, and the potential for local government restructure

The Study was led by an Advisory Committee established as a select committee of Village Council under section 142 of the *Community Charter*. The Committee was comprised of 7 residents who were appointed by Council based on a public call for candidates, and who served in a volunteer capacity, in addition to two (2) members of Council. The Mayor served in an ex-officio (non-voting) capacity and the Village's Chief Administrative Officer provided administrative support to the body. The Village commissioned Neilson Strategies Inc. and Leftside Partners Inc., a local government consulting team with considerable experience in service, finance, governance structure work, to undertake the Study.

The report's initial chapters provide an overview of the current state of the Village of Warfield, including a detailed account of the Village's services, finances, governance and community characteristics, as a precursor to assessing the Village's sustainability. The report begins with a review of British Columbia's system of municipal government, as well as how municipalities fit into, and receive services from, regional districts. An overview and profile of the Village, including demographics, context and priorities, is included in chapter two. The individual local government services provided to Warfield residents by the Village are outlined next, followed by the services provided by the regional district and provincial government. These first four chapters lay the foundation for the analysis of the Village's sustainability as a standalone municipality.

Chapters five and six are focussed on evaluating Warfield's sustainability, and on considering options to enhance sustainability. These chapters seek to determine if Warfield, as an autonomous incorporated municipality, has the ability to meet residents' needs for infrastructure and local government services in a cost-effective and affordable way over the long-term, delivering services that are supported by the residents and essential for fostering and maintaining a healthy resilient community. Sustainability in this context focuses on the long-term financial health and viability of the community, ensuring the municipality has the fundamental components to meet its servicing responsibilities without placing a disproportionate burden on current residents or future generations.

These two chapters focus on indicators, criteria and factors to help evaluate the Village's sustainability as a standalone municipality. The assessment relies not only on financial information such as budgets, reserve levels and borrowing capacity, but also on information related to the community's infrastructure, asset conditions and future expenses. Information on fundamentals such as population, demographics and assessment base is also taken into account. Key takeaways from the examination of each criterion or group of factors are used to illuminate the municipality's strengths and weaknesses and to identify options for services, service delivery, expense reduction and revenue generation to address challenges and enhance Warfield's sustainability. Sustainability conclusions are presented in chapter six.

Chapter seven identifies structural changes that have the potential to impact the underlying base fundamentals and associated borrowing capacity that could help to address the municipality's sustainability challenges. The options and impacts of the options referenced in the chapter are not intended to be detailed — detailed analysis would be undertaken as part of any future restructure study that the Village Council may choose to pursue through the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

Chapter eight provides a summary of the engagement process and feedback provided by residents at the Town Hall meetings and in the survey.

The final chapter includes the Study Committee's recommendation to Warfield Council, as passed unanimously by the Committee at its final meeting on March 31.

The consultants acknowledge and are grateful for the time, consideration and input provided by the Committee members, as well as the assistance and cooperation of Warfield staff.
Committee members included:

- *Vanessa Cederberg*
- *Steve Douglas (Chair of the Committee)*
- *Tom Hughes*
- *Grant Lenarduzzi*
- *Frank Marino (Mayor to participate in ex-officio capacity)*
- *Ray Masleck (Warfield Council)*
- *Gord Mattson*
- *Warren Mirko (Vice-Chair of the Committee)*
- *Fran Noone (Warfield Council)*
- *Sabine Seyffarth*

CHAPTER 1
MUNICIPAL OVERVIEW

Under Canada's *Constitution* (Section 92), provincial governments are responsible for creating and implementing their own systems of local government. All systems across the country feature municipalities of one type or another, and some form of regional governance. British Columbia's system is unique from all others in its use of regional distircts.

MUNICIPALITIES

Municipalities were first established in B.C. in the late 1800s. As noted above, municipalities are created by the provincial government, which is responsible for creating a system of local government. Within the provincial framework, municipalities are autonomous, responsible and accountable governments directed by democratically and locally elected councils. In BC municipalities are responsible for providing local services and governance to approximately 89 percent of the province's population.

There are currently 161 municipalities in BC, ranging in population (2021 Census) from 126 to more than 660,000 people and in size from 63 hectares to more than 8,500,000 hectares. Municipalities are classified as either a town, village, district or city depending on the size of their population and geographic area. Some municipalities are still referred to as townships, although that classification is no longer referenced in the legislation (*Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*) that describes the BC local government framework, and sets out the powers and authorities for municipalities to respond to the service needs and circumstances of each community.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

Municipalities are governed – that is, decisions on behalf of the municipality are made by – the municipal council. Councils are democratically elected to make decisions on behalf of their community, and are accountable for those decisions to their electorate. Councils are comprised of a mayor and councillors, and vary in size from five to 11 members. Council size is in part a function of the population of the municipality, but also depends upon the desire of council and its residents, as the size can be adjusted by council. In all cases the total number of council members is an odd number, and all members serve a four-year term.

Municipal councils have discretion to set policies, adopt bylaws, budgets and establish direction for their communities in accordance with legislation and other legal requirements. In some specific cases, and on some topics, council may be constrained by the need for input, approval from the electors or the Inspector of Municipalities before, for example, a bylaw is adopted or approval granted.

Municipalities are also subject to the jurisdiction of bodies such as Ombudsperson, the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the courts.

Municipal councils may only make decisions by bylaw or resolution. A resolution is a formal expression of opinion or a decision by council on a specific matter, whereas a bylaw is a document that formalizes a regulation made by council. Most matters can be decided by a simple majority of those present (if there is a quorum). A tie vote means that the motion fails, and if a council member chooses not to vote, abstention is counted as an affirmative vote.

Council oversees the general administration of the municipality. All local governments must have at least two officer positions, with minimum required duties set out in provincial legislation: one responsible for the local government's corporate administration and, the other for financial administration. The same individual can be appointed as both the corporate officer as well as the financial officer.

Council can establish any officer position by bylaw, and assign duties to the officer that the local government considers necessary, such as a chief administrative officer (CAO) to manage overall operations. Most municipalities appoint a CAO to lead the management team, and report directly to the mayor and council. The CAO facilitates the council's strategic direction for the future, advises on priority and high profile municipal operation matters, oversees the development of annual operating and capital budgets, and provides guidance and policy direction to municipal staff. Municipal councils may delegate some decision-making authorities to local government staff, subject to certain limitations.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Municipalities have the authority to establish a wide range of services under the *Community Charter* and other provincial legislation. There are a few services that a municipality is required to provide to its residents, including local roads, local emergency planning, and, if the municipality's population exceeds 5,000, policing. Aside from mandatory services, a municipal council may choose whether or not to offer a particular service in their municipality, based on local circumstances. Municipalities may provide services directly or indirectly – for example, through the regional district, with a private partner or with another government.

Most municipal services are provided to the entire municpality, such as road maintenance, or parks and recreation. However some services can be provided to just a portion of the municipality, such as street lighting or a sewer service, and the costs recovered only from those who benefit from the service. These services are called local area services and the municipality may impose taxes within the defined local area to pay for some or all of the cost of those services.

Municipalities are also empowered to provide services outside of their boundaries to other municipalities, unincorporated rural communities (parts or all of an electoral area of a regional district), First Nation communities, or to a combination of these participants, subject to agreement from the outside jurisdictions.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE

Property Taxes

Municipalities raise funds primarily through property taxation. There are two types of property taxes:

- parcel taxes, which are applied as set amounts per parcel, land area, or metre of frontage (an example in Warfield is the water, sewer and works and services parcel taxes that are levied per parcel)
- value taxes, which are based on the assessed value of the property, as determined by the value of the land, the improvements on the land, or both

Municipalities collect their own property taxes and have the authority to set their own municipal tax rates for all classes of property.[1] In municipalities, property tax bills identify a general municipal rate and amount owning to pay for the collection of municipal services provided. Regional district services in which the municipality participates are set out separately on municipal property tax bills, based on service requisitions issued to the municipalities by their regional districts. The tax revenues collected by each municipality for its regional services are remitted to the regional district by August 1 of each year.

Property Value Tax

Property value tax (also know as an ad valorem tax) is a tax applied to the value of a land and improvements (buildings and other fixtures) and is the principal source of revenue for most municipalities in British Columbia. Municipal councils have the authority to set general tax rates to recover the costs of services across the municipality through the annual budget process and financial plan bylaw. Municipalities must adopt a property value tax bylaw each year after the annual budget (financial plan). Municipalities set their municipal tax rates to raise the revenue required from the nine different classes of property, based on the tax revenue requirements in the budget, including the need to establish and replenish reserves, and their property assessment totals. Municipalities must set their tax rates for each property class, by bylaw, before May 15 of each year, and submit the tax bylaw to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Municipalities generally have broad authority to set tax rates. While tax rates may not vary within a property class (all Residential (Class 1) properties are taxed at the same rate), tax rates may vary between different property classes (the Residential (Class 1) tax rate may differ from the Business (Class 6) tax rate). The ability to establish

[1] There are some limits on the tax rates or ratios for certain property assessment classes. For instance the maximum tax rate that can be levied by any municipality on a Utility (Class 2) property is the greater of $40 per 1,000 or 2.5 times the Business (Class 6) property tax rate.

different tax rates for different property classes is referred to as a variable rate taxation system. The residential (Class 1) general municipal tax rate for Warfield was 3.4332 in 2024, which equates to $1,475.30 on an average single-family residential property valued at $429,717.[2]

As noted above, municipalities can also create local service taxes to pay all or part of the cost of a local area service that is only provided to a portion of the municipality, such as a street lighting or sewer service. The tax may be structured as a property value tax, a parcel tax or a combination of the two. The proceeds of a local service tax may only be spent for the local area service for which it is collected.

Other Revenues

In addition to property taxes, municipalities generate revenues from user fees and charges, such as land use application fees, building permits and recreation user fees. A further source of revenue is grants from other levels of government. Grants from provincial and federal government are particularly important for small communities, and are becoming increasingly important for costly infrastructure renewal in communities of all sizes.

There are generally two types of grants from other levels of government: unconditional and conditional grants. Unconditional grants are direct transfers with few (if any) restrictions on their use. Local governments may use such funds at their own discretion. Conditional grants are competitive, application-based grants awarded for specific projects, or are provided to assist with a specific service.

- **Provincial Unconditional Grants**

  Small municipalities — those with fewer than 19,000 residents — in British Columbia receive the provincial Small Community Grant each year. This grant is designed to assist municipalities with administration costs for services that are provided to meet local needs and priorities. As per the *Local Government Grants Act and Regulation*, the amount of the grant is calculated based on three factors, with an overall bias towards smaller municipalities:

  - a base amount
  - an equalization amount based on an assessment weighting factor, and
  - a population amount:
    - a municipality with a population of 5,000 or fewer, is multiplied by $50, or
    - if the municipality has a mean population of more than 5,000, $250,000 is subtracted from the amount determined by multiplying $25 by the difference between the municipality's mean population and 5,000.

[2] Not including services contracted to RDKB and paid for through the municipal property taxes, nor the utility (sewer or water) services paid through user fees and parcel taxes.

The amount allocated to Warfield under the Small Communities Grant in 2024 is approximately $463,000.

- **Federal Unconditional Grants**

  In September 2005, the federal and provincial governments along with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) signed *The Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenue Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities* (2005-2015). The agreement was subsequently renewed in 2014 (*Renewed Gas Tax Agreement*) for a further 10 years, representing a transfer of an estimated $21.8 billion in funding across Canada for local government infrastructure aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing cleaner air and water. In April 2024, 10-year *Administrative Agreements* came into effect to further extend the program.

  In BC, the program is administered by the UBCM. A portion of the program — the *Community Works Fund* — functions much like an unconditional grant, and is delivered to all municipalities and regional districts (except those within the Metro Vancouver region) through a direct annual allocation. The grant is intended to support local projects that align with the program objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and creating cleaner air and water. Projects must fall into a defined list of eligible categories.

  Community Works funding is delivered twice annually. Each local government receives a "floor amount" along with an amount based on population. Warfield received $269,804 in *Community Works* funding in 2023. Warfield is scheduled to receive $143,232 in 2024, 2025 and 2026, increasing slightly to $148,962 in 2027 and 2028. Local governments may accumulate the funds, and any interest earned, to support larger municipal projects. In BC, the gas tax program also includes an application-based conditional grant program, known as the *Strategic Priorities Fund*.

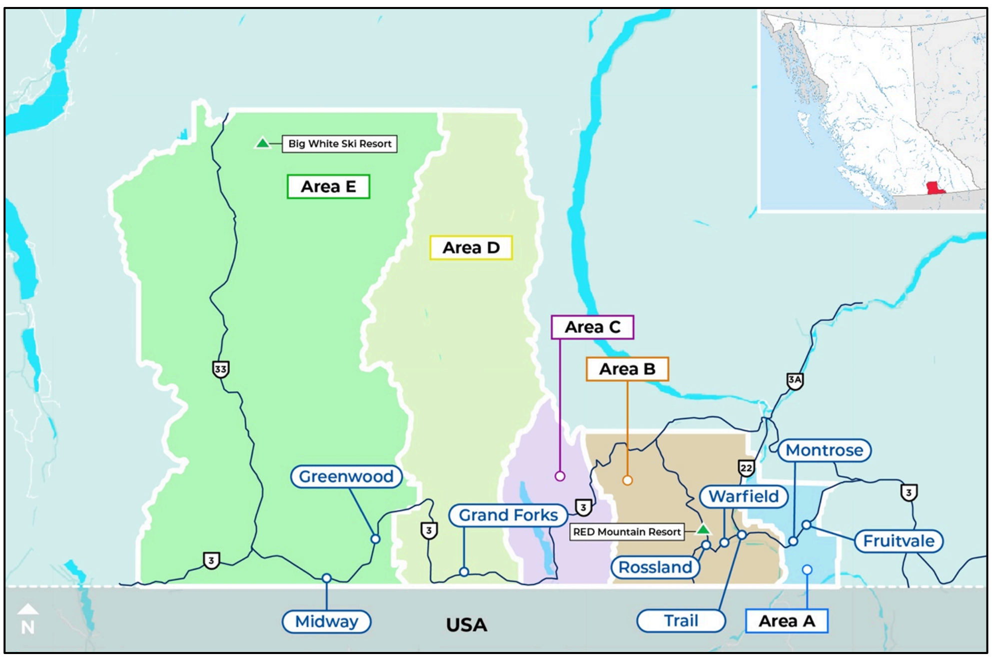
- **Conditional Grants**

  Conditional grants are typically competitive, application-based grants awarded to specific projects. For local governments, the federal and provincial governments are the principal providers of such grants; the majority of their conditional grant funding is earmarked for local government capital projects (e.g. sewer, water, roads). Some programs involve cost-sharing amongst all three levels of government (an example is the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program*), while others, such as the gas tax *Strategic Priorities Fund*, can be up to 100% federally funded. Application intakes are offered periodically; regional districts and municipalities submit project proposals based on local priorities and funding program objectives. In some cases, community non-profit organizations and private sector bodies are also eligible to apply.

REGIONAL DISTRICTS

With the exception of the most northern parts of the province, British Columbia is divided into 28 regional districts, one of which is the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB). The RDKB has a total area of 8,081 km^2, a population of 33,152 (2021 Census), and is situated on the converging, traditional and unceded territory of the Sylix, Secwepemc, Sinixt and Ktunaxa Peoples as well as the Metis Peoples. Each regional district includes a combination of municipalities and unincorporated electoral areas.[3] The RDKB has a total of eight municipalities, including the Village of Warfield, City of Rossland, City of Trail, Village of Fruitvale, Village of Montrose, City of Grand Forks, City of Greenwood and Village of Midway. Outside of the municipalities are five separate electoral areas — Area A, Area B/Lower Columbia-Old Glory, Area C/Christina Lake, Area D/Rural Grand Forks and Area E/West Boundary (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1
Kootenay Boundary Regional District



RDKB, similar to all regional districts, exists to provide local government services in response to the needs and instructions of its members. In this role, the RDKB and other regional districts:

[3] The sole exception is the Central Coast Regional District, which is comprised entirely of electoral areas.

- serve as the local government for electoral areas, providing them with basic local services such as community planning, plus a range of other services that areas choose to receive
- provide region-wide services to all electoral areas and municipalities
- provide a framework for different combinations of municipalities and electoral areas to participate in sub-regional services

REGIONAL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

Every regional district is governed by a board of directors consisting of two types of directors:

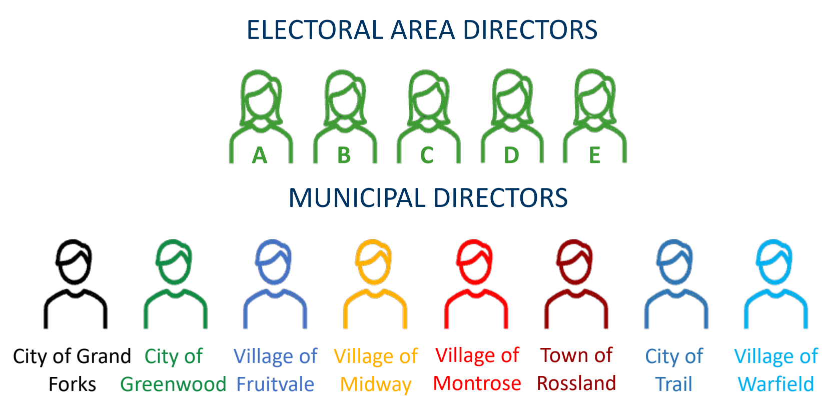
- electoral area directors, each of whom is elected directly for a four-year term by the voters in his or her electoral area
- municipal directors, each of whom is a member of a municipal council, appointed by his or her council to the regional board on an annual basis

The board selects its own chair, who has the authority to create standing committees of the board to study and give advice on specific services, general matters or other areas of business.

The voting strength of each municipality or electoral area in a regional district is a function of population size and voting unit. In the RDKB, the voting unit today is set at 2,500 people, which means that each jurisdiction of the RDKB receives one vote for every 2,500 residents, including residents who live on First Nations Reserves. For municipalities, the resulting voting strength is divided by five to determine the number of directors appointed to the board.

The RDKB Board consists of 13 voting directors, including one from each of the eight municipalities, plus one from each electoral area. Figure 1.2 presents the RDKB Board of Directors.

Figure 1.2
RDKB Board of Directors Composition
2024



Voting Rules

Some decisions at the regional district board table are made by the entire board of directors; other decisions, specific to individual services, are made only by the directors from the local jurisdictions that participate in the services. Decisions that involve all directors are made using *corporate votes*, of which there are two types:

- *Corporate Unweighted Votes* — These votes are those in which every director votes, and every director receives one vote. They are used to establish new services, make bylaws to exercise a regulatory authority, set rules to govern the conduct of the board's businesses, and take certain other actions.

- *Corporate Weighted Votes* — All directors vote on these matters but receive different numbers of votes based on the populations of their respective jurisdictions, and the regional district's voting unit. Corporate weighted votes are used to acquire or dispose property, adopt annual budgets, authorize borrowing, and address all other financial matters.

Decisions in which only a portion of the board participates are made using *stakeholder votes*. Stakeholder votes are used to make, change or repeal bylaws that govern the administration or operation of a service. Directors from jurisdictions that participate in the services are entitled to vote; other directors are not. All stakeholder votes are weighted, with directors receiving different numbers of votes based on their jurisdictions' populations and the regional district's voting unit. If there is only one participating area in the subject service, the entire board of directors votes. Figure 1.3 shows the voting strength for each of the RDKB's municipalities and electoral areas. Warfield has one vote on both corporate unweighted matters, and on decisions that are made using the corporate weighted and stakeholder votes.

Figure 1.3
Voting Strength for RDKB Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Directors & Voting Strength 2021 Census; Voting Unit 2,500		
	Pop	Directors	Strength
Electoral Area A	1,905	1	1
Electoral Area B	1,422	1	1
Electoral Area C	1,627	1	1
Electoral Area D	3,226	1	2
Electoral Area E	3,004	1	2
Village of Fruitvale	1,958	1	1
City of Greenwood	702	1	1
City of Grand Forks	4,112	1	2
Village of Midway	651	1	1
Village of Montrose	1,013	1	1
City of Rossland	4,140	1	2
City of Trail	7,920	1	4
Village of Warfield	1,753	1	1
Total	33,433	13	20

REGIONAL DISTRICT SERVICES

Regional districts provide a broad range of services to residents. With the exception of certain provincially-mandated services that regional districts are required to provide, the range of regional district services in any one region is determined by the board, in response to the wishes and instructions of individual jurisdictions.

The menu of services provided to jurisdictions therefore varies by regional district and can be different within each electoral area or community. Certain services may be provided to only a portion of an electoral area; others, referred to as sub-regional services, are provided to a combination of electoral areas and municipalities. Regional services are those that are provided to all member municipalities and electoral areas in the regional district.

Services are established to respond to needs identified by the board, electoral area directors, member municipalities, staff or residents. As part of the establishment process, proposed services must be assessed to determine their feasibility. Factors such as service scope, service cost and service delivery are considered. If deemed feasible, a service establishing bylaw must be developed and adopted by the full board of directors, including directors from jurisdictions that may not participate in the service. Ultimately, the bylaw must also be approved by the province's Inspector of Municipalities, as well as by the electors who will receive and pay for the service. Elector approval may be obtained through a petition, an alternative approval process, or a referendum. In some cases, approval can be given on behalf of electors by the participating municipality's Council, or the participating electoral area's director.

Service reviews may be undertaken periodically to assess whether an existing service is still desired and effective. Some services have provisions for service reviews written into their establishing bylaws; others have "sunset clauses" that require the dissolution of the service at a particular time unless all participants agree to extend it. The *Local Government Act* has provisions that enable any individual participant to initiate a statutory service review. The *Act* allows participants to withdraw from most services if service reviews do not satisfactorily address concerns.

Required Services

Regional districts, as noted, establish and provide most of their services in response to the interests of and directions from their member jurisdictions. All regional districts, however, are required to provide certain mandated services, including:

- general administration for the region as a whole
- electoral area administration
- the processing of long-term capital financing for the regional district and member municipalities through the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia
- hospital capital financing through one or more regional hospital districts

- land use planning in electoral areas[4]
- solid waste management plan for the region as a whole
- emergency planning for electoral areas

Regional districts serve as the local governments for electoral areas. In this capacity, however, regional districts do not provide the same suite of local government services as that which is provided by municipalities to their residents. Certain key local services — namely local roads, but also tax collection and subdivision approval — are provided to rural areas by the provincial government. Other services, such as water and sewer treatment, can be provided by regional districts, but are in some cases provided by improvement districts or by independent private utilities. Services provided by private utilities are also outside of the responsibility and control of regional districts.

REGIONAL DISTRICT FINANCE

Unlike municipalities, which have the flexibility to collect and allocate general revenues to their services, regional districts must account for each individual service separately. More specifically, the cost of providing each service must be recovered using revenue generated for that service, and only that service. In addition, all costs incurred in providing each service, including a portion of regional district administrative overhead, must be covered by the revenue raised for the service. The full cost of providing street lighting, for example, must be raised through the street lighting service; and, taxes and other revenues raised for street lighting may only be used to fund the delivery of that specific street lighting service.

This service-specific nature of regional district finances reflects two key points:

- not all jurisdictions in a regional district participate in every service provided by the regional district
- jurisdictions pay only towards the cost of the services in which they participate

The total tax requisition assigned to an electoral area or municipality by its regional district will depend on the types and number of regional district services in which the jurisdiction participates, as well as on the size of the jurisdiction's assessment base relative to that of others. Warfield participates in a broad range of RDKB services, as detailed in Chapter 4. The tax requisition for services provided by RDKB to Warfield was $505,438 in 2024, resulting in a tax rate of 1.47874, which equates to $635.44 on an average ($429,717) residential property.[5]

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4 The exception is in areas where the Islands Trust provides land use planning service, such as on Gabriola, DeCourcy and Mudge Islands in the Regional District of Nanaimo.

5 Not including services contracted to RDKB and paid for through the municipal tax rate, such as building inspection and fringe area planning, nor the sewer or water contract services paid through user fees and parcel taxes.

CHAPTER 2
COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

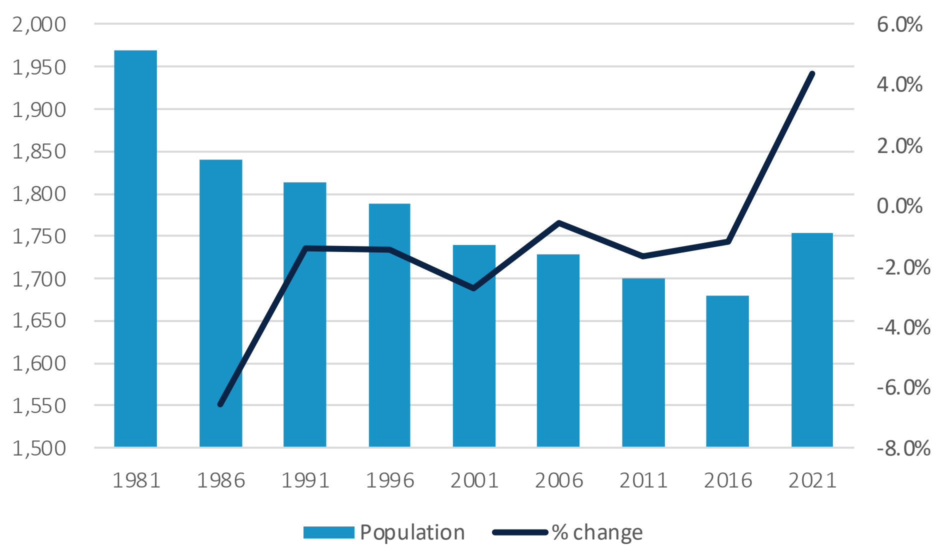
The Village of Warfield, incorporated in 1952, is located in southern British Columbia in the West Kootenay region. Warfield covers close to 1.9 square kilometers and is nestled between the City of Trail to the east and the City of Rossland to the west. Warfield's community amenities include an elementary school, an outdoor pool, recreation trails and neighbourhood parks, a community hall, and a small core of commercial services including a liquor store, restaurant and a gas station.

Warfield is home to a unique style of single-family dwellings, resulting from the 1938 construction of 150 homes by Cominco (now Teck). The houses shared similar features — bright colors, sharp sloped peaked roofs, small windows and small doors, and resembled houses featured in animated Mickey Mouse cartoons, earning Warfield its other nickname: Mickey Mouse Town. The Village's elementary school opened in 1949, the Warfield Community Hall followed in 1955, and the Warfield Centennial Pool opened its doors in 1967.

POPULATION

The 2021 Census showed that the Warfield grew in population by 4.3% between 2016 and 2021, the first time the municipality has grown in 40 years. Figure 2.1 illustrates this growth, as well as the population and growth rate over the past 40

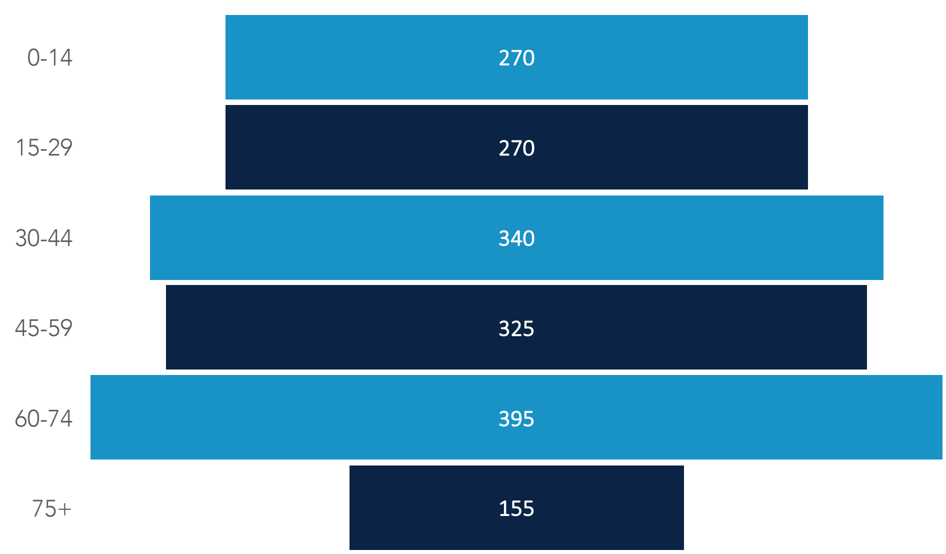
Figure 2.1
Population Growth, 1981 - 2021
(2021 Census Data)



years. The 2021 Census reported Warfield's population as 1,753. Despite the more recent growth, the Region's *2020 Housing Needs Report* estimates relatively flat population and household growth for the Village to 2031.

Figure 2.2 presents the 2021 age breakdown for Warfield, based on the proportion of the total population within each age category. The figure shows a relatively even distribution, with the largest proportion of residents between 60 and 74 years in age. Figure 2.3 shows the same population information, but broken down into 5-year increments, and including the proportions of residents identifying as male and female. Figure 2.4 shows the 2021 Census population for each of the RDKB jurisdictions.

Figure 2.2
Age Distribution – Warfield
(2021 Census Data)



LAND AREA

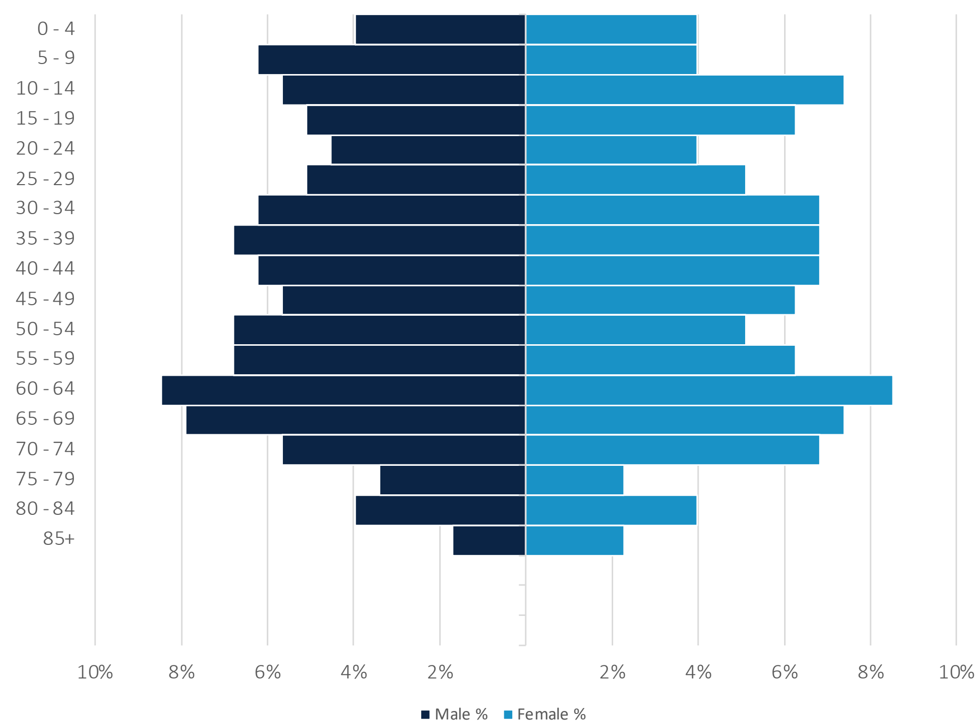
Warfield has a total land area of 189 hectares for a population density of almost 930 persons per km^2. Warfield's land base makes it the fourth smallest municipality in BC. Only Montrose, Slocan and Silverton are smaller in terms of land area.

HOUSING

The 2021 Census reported 828 private dwellings in Warfield, including 798 of which are occupied by "usual residents" which means that 96% of the dwellings are the primary dwellings or the place where the household or occupant spends the majority of their time.

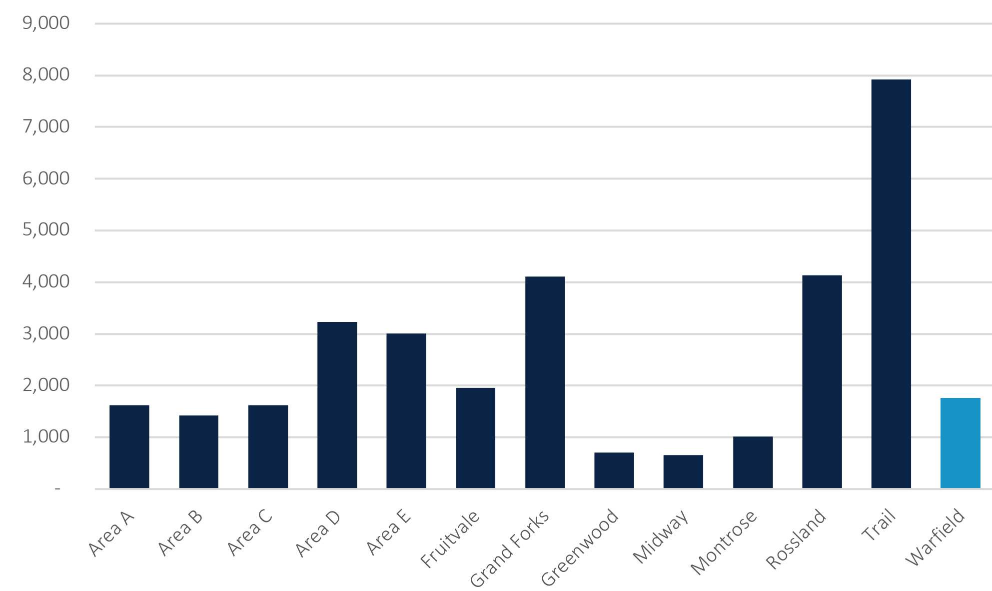
Single-detached houses comprise the vast majority of housing in Warfield. 2021 data notes that Warfield had 81% single-family homes. Other unit types include semi-detached, duplex or apartment units. The household size for Warfield is 2.2 persons; the average size of census families[6] is 2.7 persons.

Figure 2.3
Age Distribution by Gender – Warfield
(2021 Census Data)



6 Census family is defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either and/or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either and/or both partners; or a parent of any marital status in a one-parent family with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling.

Figure 2.4
2021Census Population — RDKB Jurisdictions



The majority of Warfield's housing stock was built prior to 1980 (87%). As noted previously, the housing that the area is known for is more than 80 years old, built by Cominco (now Teck) in 1938 for its employees. At that time it was common for local industry to build housing for workers. Cominco developed 316 lots in Upper Warfield.

The proximity of the Warfield community to Trail enables residents to access services, shops, and other amenities in downtown Trail. New people moving into the area are reportedly buying in Warfield in part to optimize the house size for the purchase price, relative to Trail, while still living in close proximity to work (e.g. Teck). The *Housing Needs Report* notes that stakeholders suggested that it is more economical for households to buy an older home and renovate in Warfield. Despite the lower house values, during the development of the *Housing Needs Report*, Warfield residents revealed concerns about increasing home prices in the community. Data supports this observation, with substantial increases to the assessed value of a representative single-detached homes in Warfield over the past five years, from $244,077 in 2019 to $429,717 in 2024.[7]

Based on 2020 data, there were 30 renters living in Warfield, and 20% of them spend more than 30% of their gross income towards housing costs. While the overall

7 Local Government Statistics, Schedule 704, BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The house value is calculated using the assessment values of single-family residential properties in Warfield divided by the number of single-family residential occurrences using BC Assessment data.

median income in Warfield is relatively high ($78,000), especially compared to the RDKB as a whole, the community does include a proportion of low-income renters.

The *Housing Needs Report* includes the estimated demand for housing units in Warfield by the year 2031 (13 new units). The housing chart shown in Figure 2.5 is from the *Housing Needs Report*, and reflects the required new homes over the period of 2019 to 2031, as well as the bedroom mix, assuming historical trends and development patterns. The chart also includes a potential development shift scenario that assumes that the new housing is able to respond to needs from seniors and smaller families, and deliver units that contain fewer bedrooms.

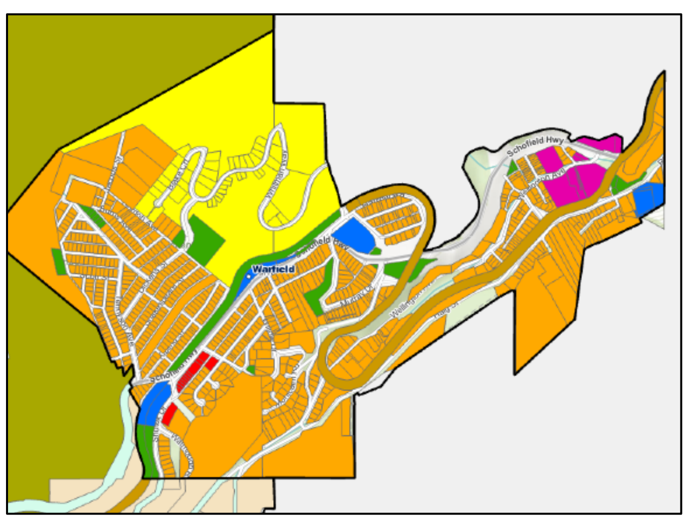
Figure 2.5 Anticipated Housing Units By Size
Warfield (2019 to 2031)
BC Stats (Housing Needs Assessment Report)

Table 6: Anticipated Housing Units by Size, Warfield (2019 to 2031)
Source: BC Statistics, Consultant Calculations

Unit Size	Baseline Scenario			Potential Development Shift Scenario		
	Net Units	Total Units	Mix	Net Units	Total Units	Mix
Bachelor	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%
1-Bedroom	0	22	2.6%	37	58	7.0%
2-Bedroom	4	259	31.0%	13	267	32.0%
3-Bedroom	6	355	42.6%	-16	334	40.0%
4+Bedroom	3	199	23.9%	-21	175	21.0%
Total	**13**	**835**	**100.0%**	**13**	**835**	**100.0%**

As noted in Warfield's Official Community Plan, the Emerald Ridge area of Warfield (see yellow area depicted in Figure 2.6) has significant development potential for additional residential units, including a mix of single-family and multi-family. Facilitating development of Emerald Ridge is one of Council's priorities (2023 – 2026). The Village's contracted planning firm, WSP, is preparing a Comprehensive Development Plan for the area. At full build-out, the multi-unit

Figure 2.6 Warfield OCP Designations

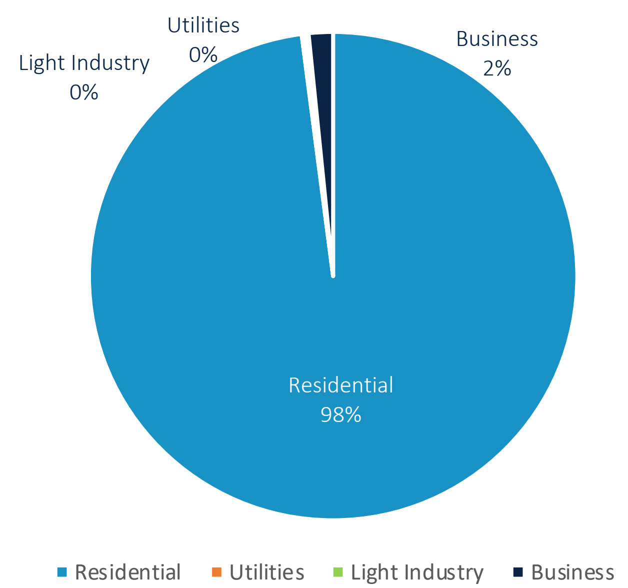


residential areas are anticipated to accommodate 100 new multi-unit dwellings, including 67 medium-density dwellings and 33 row houses. The single- and two-unit residential areas are being planned to accommodate 92 new principal dwellings with one secondary suite contained in each, plus one accessory suite for every two principal dwellings. This could result in a total of 230 new dwellings. The undeveloped parcels within this area should easily accommodate potential demand for new housing in Warfield over the next 5-10 years. The estimated population projection for Emerald Ridge, at build-out, is 480 people.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

For 2024, BC Assessment data shows the total assessment in Warfield as $323,023,400[8] — an amount that translates into a converted assessment of $3,341,393. The average assessed value of residential properties in Warfield in 2024 is $429,717. Figure 2.7 provides details on proportion of assessment values for all property classes in Warfield. As is obvious from the pie chart, the Village has a very limited diversity in its tax base, which is almost exclusively residential.

Figure 2.7
2024 Warfield Property Assessment



ECONOMY

The main employers for Warfield residents are not actually located within the municipality, but rather in Trail —Teck and Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital are

8 2024 Warfield Net Taxable Assessment

the two largest. Together, Teck and KBRH directly employ over 3,400 individuals and contribute to the economic base through wages, salaries and significant local spending, which helps to foster the local business community in the broader "Greater Trail Area" that encompasses Trail, Warfield, Rossland, Montrose and Fruitvale, as well as portions of RDKB Electoral Area A and B. In addition to direct employment, these two employers support many trickle-down jobs and provide niche opportunities for new business and industry related to the metallurgical and health care sectors.

Other industries in the area include tourism, primarily through Rossland's Red Mountain Resort, which is the largest employer in neighbouring Rossland, and offers winter skiing and snowboarding, but also summer mountain biking trails. Employers within Warfield's municipal boundaries include the elementary school, and municipality, including seasonal work at the outdoor pool.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan identifies Warfield's priorities that Council proposes to advance and wishes to achieve for the community. The priorities guide the use of the Village's resources, including funds, staff, time and energy. The Village's Strategic Plan was approved in 2023, and set out the following 10-year vision:

> *Warfield is a thriving community with opportunities for all citizens to connect and prosper. It is a desirable and affordable community, attractive to young families, seniors and other age groups that seek affordable housing options. It is a complete community that boasts a wide range of services, including robust utilities, a local elementary school and charging stations for electric cars and bikes.*
>
> *Principles of sustainability guide growth in Warfield. Economic development is pursued alongside, rather than in place of, progress on climate action and environmental protection. Financial plans address important infrastructure and service needs without burdening future generations. Active and engaged citizens ensure that major service and governance decisions receive broad support.*
>
> *Warfield remains a distinct part of the broader Greater Trail Area. Past years marked by service uncertainty and inter-jurisdictional mistrust have given way to strong collaboration, a recognition of shared values, and a new Greater Trail local government structure.*

The Village's priorities are grouped under four themes. The themes and specific priority projects and actions are summarized in the table (Figure 2.8) below:

Figure 2.8 Warfield Themes and Priorities

Themes	Priorities
Infrastructure	• Secure New Water Supply • Control Infiltration into Sewage Collection System • Upgrade Water Treatment Plant • Develop a Five-Year Capital Plan
Growth and Development	• Facilitate Development of Emerald Ridge • Increase the Supply and Diversity of Housing
Climate and Environment	• Increase Tree Canopy in Warfield • Facilitate the Use of Electric Vehicles • Improve Resiliency of Critical Infrastructure • Prepare for Climate-Related Disasters
Local Government Sustainability	• Ensure Proper Succession Planning is in Place • Invest in Important Corporate Systems • Strengthen and Diversify Municipal Revenues • Identify Most Appropriate Local Government Structure for Future Success

PLANNING CONTEXT

Warfield's Official Community Plan, completed and adopted by Council in 2017, also helps to define a vision for the community, and guide Council's work. The plan is centred around sustainability goals and determining what the Village will need to achieve in the long term to create a sustainable community that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The guiding principles for the plan include:

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Ensuring ecosystems are healthy by avoiding continuous encroachment into natural areas, and by reducing and eventually eliminating the ongoing build-up of synthetic materials, toxins, metals and fossil fuels in nature.

- **Social Sustainability:** Being inclusive and free of barriers for all people, so they can meet their physical and emotional needs, regardless of age, ability, income or ethnicity.

- **Economic Sustainability:** An economic system that is strong, resilient and adaptable; one that avoids undermining the social and ecological systems on which it is dependent.

- **Smart Growth:** Development that supports our overall sustainability objective by prioritizing infill, redevelopment, and densification strategies, which aim to enhance quality of life, avoid continuous encroachment into the natural environment, maintain ecological integrity, and save money over time.

CHAPTER 3
LOCAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY WARFIELD

This chapter of the *Report* provides an overview of each of the existing local government services provided to residents by the Village of Warfield

WARFIELD SERVICES - OVERVIEW

As a small municipality, the Village has a small staff of 8.4 FTE (see Appendix I for summary), including:

- 1 CAO/CFO (part-time)
- 1 accounting and operational support clerk
- 1 payroll and administrative clerk
- 4 public works staff (1 foreman, 3 operators)
- Preschool supervisor and assistant (part-time)
- Pool manager, guarding and cashier staff (15 staff for 2 months in summer)
- 2 summer students (full-time for 3 months)

Together the staff team provides and oversees a variety of services, including services delivered through contracts, such as planning services and corporate officer. Village services are summarized in the following chart (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Village Services

Village Service	Description
Recreation and Culture	Recreation programming, library services, seniors programing, youth group program, preschool, pool operations and maintenance, community hall, parks, special events and food advisory committee
Protective Services	Bylaw enforcement, servicing of hydrants, animal control , business licenses and building inspection
Planning and Development Services	Planning, mapping, GIS, and easements (issues associated with public rights-of-way). Referred to as "Environmental Development"
Transportation, Drainage and Street Lighting	Paved road maintenance, drainage ditches, storm sewers and catch basins, street cleaning, snow plowing and sanding, winter sand, retaining walls and flood control, street lighting, decorative lighting and street signs
Environmental Health	Yard waste collection, Village clean-up, trees and boulevard maintenance, rentals of Village assets
General Government and Fiscal Services	Administration, Council support, Village office, labour relations, records management, software licensing and IT support, insurance, audit requirements, legal support, elections, grants, training, asset management and public relations

Water	Operation and maintenance of the water treatment plant and the local distribution network
Sewer	Maintenance of local collection network, and funding Warfield's share of the regional sewage treatment plant operations and capital requirements

Information on each Village service, or group of services is provided below, including an overview, information on the range of services included, staffing, operational and capital budgets. Information from the Village's asset management database is also shared, including the asset renewal cost and condition. Most of the asset renewal cost estimates in the database were based on capital costs plus a component for design (15%), contingency (10%), and inspections or removal (10%), with values estimated in 2020 (so have not been increased to account for inflation). The condition of the assets was estimated at the same time. In some cases, such as underground sewer and water pipes, estimated condition is based on the date of installation (and calculations of remaining life based on commonly used engineering standards). Where the condition is more easily observed (above-grade assets such as roads, sidewalks and buildings), condition was assessed based on on-site inspection. [9]

RECREATION AND CULTURE

Service Overview

Recreation and culture represent a key function for the Village, and the services provide residents with quality of life. A significant portion of the Village's recreation services are provided through an agreement with the City of Trail, which enables Warfield residents to use the Trail facilities, including the aquatic and leisure centre and the Trail Memorial Centre (Cominco Arena) and pay "Greater Trail Resident" rates for use of facilities. It also provides residents with access to the Trail Library.

Assets

The Village's recreation and culture assets include:

- Community hall, works yard and Village Square Park – playground, benches and covered BBQ picnic area (2.74 acres)
- Warfield Centennial Pool (Kootenay Savings Water Park) – outdoor 25m pool with diving tank, two waterslides and spray park (1.15 acres)

The Village has six parks:

- Village Square Park – playground, benches and covered BBQ picnic area (part of 2.74-acre parcel above)
- Kootenay Savings Water Park – playground adjacent to pool and spray park (area included in the 1.15 acres above)
- Dickens Street Park – playground, playing fields, disc golf course – 3.79 acres

9 Updated 2024 asset management information was available after the completion of the initial phases of the Study. Updated replacement values and implications are referenced in Appendix II.

- Muzzin Park – 0.64 acres
- French Street Park – playground, basketball court – 0.25 acres
- Byron Street Park – 0.74 acres

The Village also features some trails through the Village, primarily located in rights-of-way owned by the Village. Level of service depends on the improvements, with paved path, and recent upgrades to Beaver Bend reflecting higher maintenance and service levels.

- Arnold Lauriente Way (paved path)
- Wagon Trail Row
- Beaver Bend (recently upgraded path)
- Rail Bed

Figure 3.2: Recreation and Culture Asset Renewal Cost (2020)

The renewal cost for the assets (playgrounds, community hall, pool and associated structures) as estimated in the Village's Asset Management database in 2020 is shown in Figure 3.2.

Staffing

The Village delivers the recreation and culture services through a combination of employees and contracts, including:

- Library and recreation services through an agreement with the City of Trail (5-year agreement extending until end of 2025)
- Senior's coordinator (0.5 time contractor shared with Rossland and Trail)
- Preschool – supervisor and assistant provide five hours of preschool during weekdays from September to June (0.67 FTE)
- Pool staff, including a manager and approximately 14 guarding and cashier staff to work during July and August, representing a total of 1.07 FTE.
- A contractor runs the youth programs (Warfield Youth Action Network), with hours offset by a Columbia Basin Trust grant
- The Village hires two summer students full-time from June through August (3 months) that assist with park maintenance, but also other public works duties including vacation coverage. Half of the summer student time has been allocated to recreation services (0.25 FTE)

The staff associated with the recreation and culture services (including public works staff time, pool staff, preschool) is an estimated 2.49 FTE, not including contracted senior's coordinator, Trail library and recreation services, and WYAN contractor.

Operating Budget

The Recreation and Culture operating budget is shown in Figure 3.3 on the following page. In addition to the operating costs, there are some capital items required over the next five-year period. Capital items from the municipal operations are grouped and referenced together at the end of this chapter.

Figure 3.3: Recreation and Culture Operating Budget

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Trail Recreation & Library contribution	$151,200	$145,400
Other Recreation (includes Senior's coordinator)	$18,300	$16,950
Youth Action Network	$40,000	$31,413
Preschool	$43,200	$38,795
Pool Maintenance	$85,700	$66,248
Pool Operations	$100,000	$109,069
Community Hall	$38,800	$35,500
Parks	$56,300	$53,021
Special Events*	$7,500	$3,212
Food Advisory	$3,200	$4,540
TOTAL	$544,200	$504,148

* *includes 2023 beautification expenses*

Revenues

The operating expenses for recreation and culture are partially offset by revenues that are generated specifically by the recreation services, including preschool fees, pool user fees, and rentals of the community hall. These are itemized in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Recreation and Culture Revenues

Revenue Source	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Youth Action Network	$40,000	$31,413
Preschool	$37,500	$33,594
Pool Admissions	$45,000	$43,181
Pool Concession	$12,250	$12,236
Community Hall Rental	$23,000	$20,256
Special Events	$3,500	$1,515
TOTAL	$161,250	$142,195

The gap between the department-specific revenues and operating costs, estimated at $382,950 for recreation services in 2024, represents the amount funded through property taxes.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Service Overview

The Village provides a variety of services under the broad protective services grouping that involve regulatory services,[10] including:

- Bylaw enforcement
- Animal control
- Building inspection
- Business licenses
- Hydrant maintenance

The following provides some further details on the delivery of these services:

- Bylaw enforcement is delivered through an agreement with the City of Rossland, where the Rossland Bylaw Enforcement Officer provides up to 10 hours of service per week.
- Animal control service level currently consists of purchasing dog waste bags.
- Building inspection and permits are delivered through a contract with the RDKB. The RDKB provides the service to all electoral areas and six of the eight municipalities in the region (Rossland and Grand Forks are the exceptions). The service costs are recovered through the regional requisition.
- The Village issues approximately 45 to 50 business licenses each year, including home-based businesses
- The Village maintains 80 hydrants to support the sub-regional fire suppression service, provided through the RDKB.

Assets

There are no specific Village assets related to the delivery of protective services. The Village does own the fire hall, which is leased to the RDKB for the fire service, and the Village is also responsible for maintaining a total of 80 fire hydrants. These assets are referenced and included elsewhere in the report (Administration and Water).

Staffing

The protective services are primarily delivered on contract – bylaw enforcement through Rossland, and building inspection and permitting through RDKB. Public works staff are involved with hydrant maintenance, totalling approximately 0.11 FTE (with some contract assistance). As staff receive additional training/experience, they will spend more staff time undertaking the hydrant maintenance.

[10] The Village's hydrant maintenance is included in protective services because it supports the RDKB fire suppression service, so while the time spent on hydrant maintenance is accounted for in protective services, the hydrant assets are referenced within the water service.

Operating Costs

Budgeted operating costs for Protective Services are shown in Figure 3.5 below, together with 2023 actual figures. The RDKB recovers the cost of providing building inspection and permitting costs through the regional district requisition. Revenues from permits are provided directly to the Village. The majority of the hydrant maintenance costs relate to parts and supplies ($25,000). Maintenance of the hydrants by public works staff is estimated to increase as staff receive training and gain experience. In 2024 the hydrant maintenance is budgeted for approximately $10,000 of internal labour, as well as $9,500 of contracted services.

Figure 3.6: 2023 Construction Value

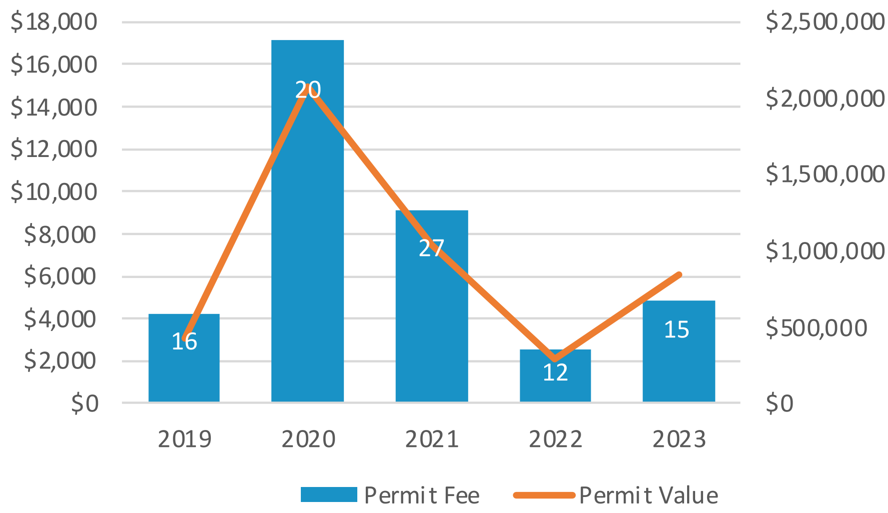
Figure 3.5: Protective Services Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Hydrant Maintenance	$45,000	$15,744
Animal Control	$2,200	$0
Building Inspection (contract with RDKB)	$38,350	$44,082
Bylaw Enforcement (contract with Rossland)	$17,500	$12,147
TOTAL	$103,050	$71,973

Revenues

Protective Service revenues include fines resulting from bylaw enforcement (estimated at $150 in the 2024 budget), business license revenues of approximately $5,800, as well as building permit revenues. Construction value for 2023 is highlighted in Figure 3.6. The resulting building permit fees were $4,850. Building Permit revenues are shown in Figure 3.7 on the following page, along with the total construction value of the permits and the number of permits issued over the last five years. It is worth noting that thus far the 2024 building permits have not kept pace with previous years, and actual revenues are likely to be well below the 2023 values.

Figure 3.7: Building Permit Revenues, Construction Values and Number of Permits, 2019 – 2023



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (Environmental Development)

Service Overview

The Village provides planning and development services, including:

- Development approvals – rezonings, OCP amendment, development variance permits, Board of Variance
- Preparation of (and amendments to) the Village's Integrated Official Community Plan as well as any other land use plans
- Property and planning-related inquiries (zoning, development potential), land title information
- Mapping services (as needed), including preparation of maps for staff reports, advertisements, sharing information and maps with consultants as needed

The Village's Integrated OCP was adopted in 2017, and the Zoning Bylaw prepared and adopted in 2021. Building inspection and building permits are provided through the RDKB. The Village also has an agreement with the RDKB that enables the Village to stay informed on, and participate in, decision-making (voting and on any directly related committees) for planning related matters in Electoral Area B in areas just west of the Warfield municipal boundary. The current agreement extends until the end of 2026, and the cost is based on a base amount of $1,000 plus an area-based rate of $4.14 per square kilometre. In 2024 the cost of the agreement was $1,013.

Assets

There are no assets associated with the planning and development/environmental development department.

Staffing

Planning and development services are provided by the Village but are delivered through contracts. The Village has a contract with WSP, and the firm provides all planning consulting advice, assists with amendments to zoning and OCP bylaws, and is currently finalizing a Comprehensive Development Plan for Emerald Ridge. WSP has also been appointed as the Village's Approving Officer.

Operating Costs

The costs of planning and easement services are shown in Figure 3.8 below.

Figure 3.8: Planning and Development Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
One-time planning projects and plans (e.g. CDP)	$17,500	$8,632
Other Contract Planning (e.g. planning applications)	$14,750	$17,639
Mapping, GIS, legal	$8,000	n/a
Easements and legal ROW expenses	$6,000	$2,530
TOTAL	$46,250	$28,801

Revenue

Planning receives revenues from development applications, when they arise. Fees are estimated to be $1,550 in the 2024 budget.[11]

TRANSPORTATION

Service Overview

The transportation function involves maintaining the Village's road network, including activities such as sweeping and sanding/snow removal, as well as stormwater management (ditches, pipes and culverts), and street lighting.

Assets

The Village's transportation assets include road and drainage infrastructure:

- 104,718 m^2 (10.47 ha) of local road paved surfaces (road overlay)
- 15 manhole covers (all in good condition)[12]
- 8 catch basins (all in good condition)
- 4,858 linear metres of stormwater pipes (transmission mains, service connections and culverts)

11 This figure is derived from the total Licenses/Permits revenue budgeted in 2024, less the building permit and business license fees referenced in the Protective Services revenues.

12 This figure refers to only the manhole covers that relate to the stormwater system; those that relate to the municipal wastewater system are included within the sewer infrastructure referenced on p. 40.

- A variety of equipment primarily associated with transportation services (76% of the Village's equipment costs are assigned to transportation services)
- Public works building, public works Quonset hut and sand storage

The Village's 80 streetlights are owned and maintained by Fortis BC, but funded by the Village. As part of the Village's asset management plan, an inventory, condition assessment and risk for all infrastructure was created in 2020. Figures 3.9 and 3.10 reflect the renewal costs of the stormwater and the road infrastructure (as recorded in 2020). The condition of the road overlay and the stormwater pipes are shown in Figures 3.11 and 3.12 below.

Figure 3.9: Stormwater Infrastructure Renewal Cost (2020)

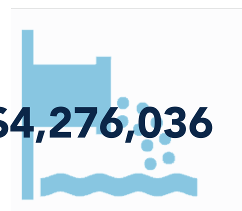


Figure 3.10: Road Overlay Renewal Cost (2020)

Figure 3.11: Stormwater Condition by Linear Metre

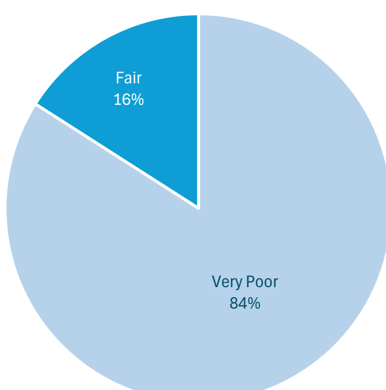
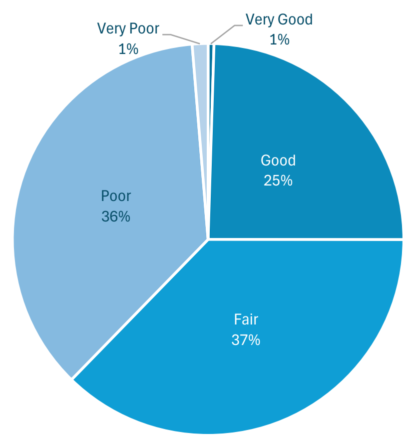


Figure 3.12: Road Overlay Condition by Area (m^2)



The following chart (Figure 3.13) provides the risk profile for renewal costs (estimated in 2020) for the transportation (road and stormwater) infrastructure components.[13]

[13] Note that the risk profile does not take into account capital upgrades between 2020 and 2023

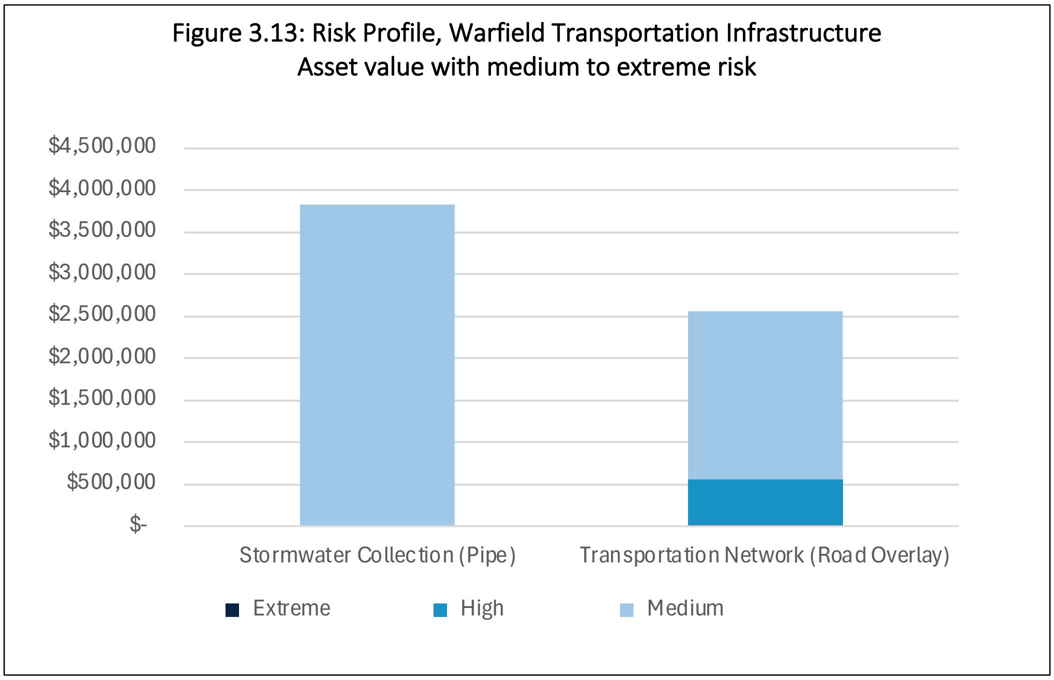


Figure 3.13: Risk Profile, Warfield Transportation Infrastructure
Asset value with medium to extreme risk

Staffing

Transportation services are provided primarily by public works staff, although some contract services are also used to assist in the delivery of the service. The public works staff consists of a public works foreman, and three public works operators. The public works department makes use of a public works consultant to assist with a variety of public works related tasks. Transportation is budgeted for an estimated 2.46 FTE in 2024. In addition, half of the two summer student positions (0.25 FTE) has been accounted for in the transportation FTE total.

Operating Costs

The costs of transportation services are shown in Figure 3.14. Of the operating budget for 2024, almost 44% represents labour costs (including on-call, seasonal and overtime). Contractor assistance represents 15.5% of the transportation budget ($103,750).

Figure 3.14: Transportation Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Public Works facilities	$97,350	$92,567
Public Works administration/on call	$116,100	$121,975
Transportation	$308,550	$461,619
Street lighting and signs	$52,150	$50,869
Equipment	$96,650	$112,245
TOTAL	$670,800	$839,275

Revenue

Transportation services are generally paid for through property taxes, with no significant revenues.

Capital

The Village has a capital plan for roadworks and stormwater infrastructure as part of its general capital five year plan. The capital expenses for transportation are referenced together with other general fund capital items later in this chapter.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Service Overview

Environmental Health services include the garden and yard waste collection service, plus clean-up services within the Village, rentals to third parties, as well as maintenance of Village boulevards, including maintaining public trees.

Assets

There are no specific assets for Environmental Health services, because the yard waste collection is completed through a contract. The natural assets such as street trees have not yet been evaluated or included as capital assets in the Village's asset management database.

Staffing

The environmental health services are provided through a combination of contracts (yard waste collection, public tree maintenance) and public works staff. Total staffing represents 0.15 FTE.

0.15

Operating Costs

Operating costs for Environmental Health are shown in Figure 3.15 below.

Figure 3.15: Environmental Health Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Yard waste collection	$43,500	$84,178
Village clean-up	$4,900	$5,868
Third party rentals	$600	$0
Trees and boulevard maintenance	$73,500	$69,549
TOTAL	**$122,500**	**$159,595**

Revenues

The environmental health budget includes revenues from rentals, as well as fees for yard waste collection. Yard waste fees were $53.75 per residence in 2024 ($51.00 if paid on or prior to the last business day in February), resulting in $41,300 in revenue. The Village has $124,950 in rentals, the majority of which is rental of the fire hall to the RDKB fire service.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT & FISCAL SERVICES

Service Overview

General government includes all the administrative functions necessary to run the municipality, including supporting Council, as well as the functioning of the Village municipal office. Fiscal services such as bank services and leasing, are also included in this section. The Village has a lease through the Municipal Finance Authority for John Deere equipment that expired in April 2024, but is reflected within the 2024 budget. The lease for acquiring the Village's Vactor runs until April 2028.

Assets

The primary asset of the Village in this service category is the municipal hall building. An associated storage shed located on the same property (555 Schofield Highway) is included in the estimate of renewal cost for the buildings, shown in Figure 3.16.

Figure 3.16: Village Buildings Renewal Cost (2020)

Staffing

General government services are provided by a combination of Village staff and contractors. The general government staff include the chief administrative officer/chief financial officer (0.65 FTE), an accounting and operations support clerk (0.8 FTE), and a payroll and administrative clerk (0.7 FTE). Corporate officer support is provided

on contract. A total of 0.08 FTE from public works is associated with and assigned to general government services.

Operating Costs

The operating costs for general government and fiscal services is shown in Figure 3.17 below. When fiscal services is combined with general government, the labour costs reflect close to 47% of the combined 2024 budget.

Figure 3.17: General Government & Fiscal Services Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Legislative services	$59,250	$54,779
Administration/Labour	$397,400	$335,679
Office/Computer	$102,600	$84,284
Audit/Legal	$60,700	$112,038
Insurance	$76,500	$77,347
Election	0	0
Other	$73,600	$76,473
Bank service charges	$3,950	$3,429
Rentals & leases	$77,750	$90,889
TOTAL	$851,750	$834,918

Revenues

Although not necessarily generated specifically by the general government services or administration department, revenues provided through grants and miscellaneous sources are accounted for in the government services and administration section. Revenues include unconditional grants from the provincial government, intended to assist with administrative costs, but also franchise fees, taxes based on revenues earned by utility companies (required by legislation), penalties and interest charged during tax collection and miscellaneous fees. Revenues are shown in Figure 3.18.

Figure 3.18: General Government Revenues

Revenue Source	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
1% Utility Taxes	$23,750	$21,918
Franchise Fee (Fortis Agreement)	$23,550	$23,566
Interest	$37,500	$43,048
Penalties and Interest	$14,900	$17,311
Miscellaneous	$3,250	$5,463
Small Communities Grant	$463,000	$452,000
TOTAL	$565,950	$563,306

WATER SERVICES

Service Overview

The Village has a water treatment plant and municipal water distribution system with approximately 736 residential and 13 non-residential or mixed-use connections, and an agreement with Teck to supply chlorinated Columbia River water to the Village. The water supply agreement is scheduled to expire in 2026, but an agreement is currently being negotiated to extend that agreement to allow the Village additional time to establish its own water source independent of Teck. This section includes information on the existing system and assets, and the condition of those, as well as the plans underway to establish a new water source.

It is worth emphasizing that infrastructure is one of the Village's key themes identified within the strategic plan, including specific priorities referencing the need to secure a new water supply for the Village to support long-term needs, as well as to undertake upgrades to the water treatment plant to ensure it can continue to meet the needs of the community into the future.

- **Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System**

  A water distribution system for the communities of Annable, Lower Warfield and Upper Warfield was constructed in 1938, and subsequently upgraded in 1959, including the replacement of the original pump station and tank, and the addition of pressure reducing stations. Construction of the Village's water treatment plant was undertaken in 1965, funded by BC Hydro and constructed by Cominco in response to an expectation of an adverse impact on water quality caused by the construction of the Hugh Keenleyside Dam (originally called the High Arrow Dam when completed in 1968). According to a water treatment plant assessment report prepared for Warfield in 2022,[14] relatively little has changed at the plant since that time and most plant components are original. In 2008, Teck Cominco and the Village of Warfield entered into a Water Agreement to facilitate the transfer of control and responsibility for the water treatment plant over to the Village. The Village subsequently assumed ownership and operation of the water treatment plant as part of the initial phase of the agreement.[15]

  An assessment of the water treatment plant was completed in 2022 by True Engineering. The assessment noted that rehabilitation of the plant, and completion of some notable upgrades, could provide acceptable service levels for another 20-year period. The report highlighted the need for several upgrades, estimated at approximately $1,475,000:

  - Repair clarifier roof
  - Rehabilitate painted steel water retaining structures (gravity filters and flume)

[14] True Engineering, Water Treatment Plant Assessment, Village of Warfield, February 2022

[15] The agreement with Teck Cominco provides for the transfer of the water treatment plan, however it notes that should the Village no longer require the treatment facility, the plant would be transferred back to Teck ownership for $10.

- Install magnesium anodes (gravity filters and clarifier
- UV disinfection so the clarifier can be taken offline for maintenance and de-sludging
- Structural repairs to the building
- Heating and ventilation improvements
- Electrical and system control upgrades
- Replacement of natural gas piping and heating/ventilation improvements to the chlorination room
- Building lighting improvements and removal of obsolete electrical equipment

The cost estimate for the higher priority (first five year) upgrades in the assessment was $575,000, with priorities for years 6 to 20 totalling another $900,000 (Class C estimates). In 2023 the estimate for the treatment plant upgrades was updated to $1,675,000[16] in a pre-design report. Some issues and risks were identified in the report that could impact costs and require additional upgrades. The same report noted that the construction of a new water treatment plant (as an alternative) would likely be in the range of $8 million (Class D estimate).

➤ Water Supply

As referenced previously, Teck continues to provide chlorinated water to the Village of Warfield. In 2008, Teck and Warfield entered into a Water Agreement that obliges the Village to construct its own raw water supply by 2025. Although the use of any new supply will not be operational by the end of 2025, the Village is proceeding towards the construction of a new supply source. In 2022 an intake location was selected and preliminary design of an access road was completed. In 2023, a pre-design report provided concepts and costs for other major project components, including:

- River Intake
- Pump Station
- Access Road
- Watermain
- Existing Flume Pump House

The report estimated the intake cost to be approximately $10.9 million (in addition to the water treatment plant upgrades).

Alternate Solutions

Prior to commissioning the pre-design work for a new water intake, the Village funded a 2018 feasibility study that reviewed several future raw water sources. That study concluded that the Columbia River and the City of Trail treated water were the only viable sources of raw water.

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16 True Engineering Columbia River Intake Water Supply Pre-Design Report, March 2023 p. 14.

The recommendation from the 2018 feasibility study was that the Village of Warfield and City of Trail work towards an agreement which would result in Warfield receiving treated water from the City of Trail. However, the report acknowledged that linking the water system to Trail would trigger an amalgamation process – an element that was not evaluated as part of the process. The report concluded that if a solution between the Village of Warfield and City of Trail is not viable or supported, then the Village would need to complete preliminary design for a new Columbia River intake.

Subsequent to the pre-design report on the Columbia River intake, the City of Trail has been evaluating options for its own water system, that could potentially provide options for Warfield. [17] The decision to proceed with the Columbia River intake was therefore delayed while these other options were considered. The Village is currently assisting and working with Teck to finalize an extension to the Water Agreement to provide the Village with an extension (potentially another five years) to identify a feasible solution. At this point Trail has rejected an option that was under consideration, and the Columbia intake is back to being the Village's preferred solution. However, in the absence of significant grant funding, there is little capacity for Warfield to proceed.

Assets

The Village of Warfield has a total of 24.67 km of water pipes, including service connection lines, distribution force mains, and transmission force mains. The condition of these assets (as documented in 2020) is summarized in Figure 3.19. The renewal cost (2020) of the entire water distribution and treatment system is $23,382,313, including:

- Water treatment plant
- Reservoir and reservoir building
- Pump stations
- PRV stations
- Pipes (service connections distribution force mains, transmission force mains)
- 80 Hydrants
- Valves (Curb stops and main gates)
- Parts (Caps)

Figure 3.19: Village Water Distribution Renewal Cost (2020)

17 Trail was considering developing a second water line to cross the Columbia River that involved running a water line directly across the river from the Trail WTP, potentially creating alignment with Warfield, and negating the need for Warfield to construct a river intake. However, after an initial engineering review and feasibility assessment, Trail has decided not to pursue this option.

The components are itemized in the table (Figure 3.20) below, followed by a graph of the condition assessment of the water distribution pipes by linear metre. Because underground assets are not easy to inspect, pipe condition in the asset management databased is based on date of installation and estimates of life span.

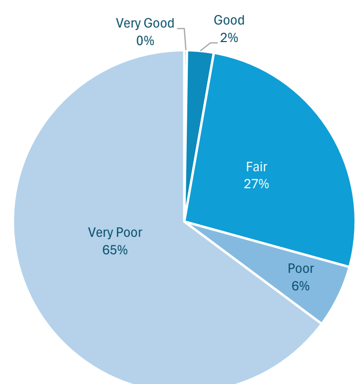
Figure 3.20: Water System Components and Renewal Costs

Service Component	Renewal Cost
Pipes	$7,428,463
Reservoirs (#1 and #2 Jacobs Street, 1 Bingay Road) plus building	$7,285,000
Treatment plant	$2,640,000
Valves (curb stop and main gate)	$2,400,000
Pump station and pump house	$2,258,000
PRV stations	$849,600
Hydrants	$500,000
Pump	$12,500
Cap	$8,750
TOTAL	$23,382,313

Staffing

The operation of the water treatment plant has been contracted to RDKB since 2011. The most recent agreement extends to December 31, 2025, and ensures that a trained and certified operator, with appropriate accreditation, operates the water treatment plant. The operations agreement includes testing, inspections, calibration, and adjustments to meet the requirements for the permits granted by the Interior Health Authority.

Figure 3.21: Water pipes condition by linear metre



The Village is responsible for the operation and maintenance of any pump station, reservoir or any part of the distribution system. The RDKB informs the Village of all required maintenance items noted during the operations of the treatment plant.

The Village's public works staff dedicates approximately 0.37 FTE to various water system maintenance related services.

0.37

Operating Costs

The estimated operating costs for the water system are included in Figure 3.22 below.

Figure 3.22: Water Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Administration	$20,100	$4,354
Purification and treatment	$249,100	$232,934
Operation and maintenance	$78,600	$77,470
Debt charges	$99,750	$99,722
Transfer to water reserve fund	$79,300	$79,300
Transfer to capital	$80,000	$75,000
TOTAL	$606,850	$568,780

Revenues

The water operating fund revenues come from a combination of the user fees, parcel taxes and a water system improvement tax.

The water user fee for residential properties in 2024 (as per Bylaw 946) is $549.30 per residential dwelling ($511 if paid on or before the last business day in February), and $264.10 for secondary suites ($245.70 if paid by the last business day in February).

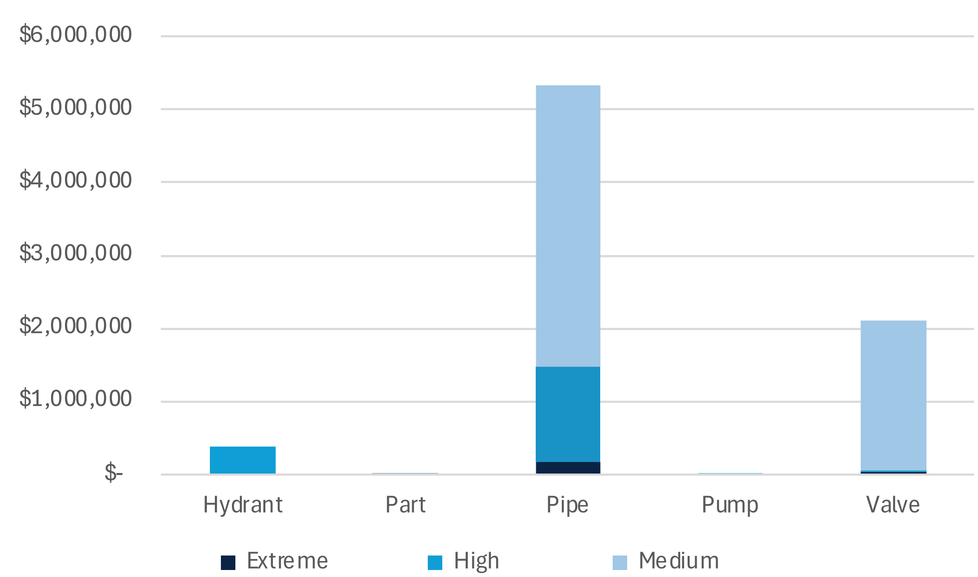
In addition to user fees, there is a "works and services" parcel tax, which helps to offset both operating and capital expenses, and a "water improvement parcel tax" intended primarily to fund water-related capital expenditures. The works and services parcel tax was $310 in 2024, and the resulting revenue is split between the General Operating Fund to offset public works expenses, and water ($79,360) that is transferred to the Water Capital Reserve Fund. The water improvement parcel tax in 2024 was budgeted for $120, resulting in approximately $95,000 in revenue.

Capital

As noted previously, the water treatment plant is in need of approximately $1,675,000 in improvements. The budget includes money set aside for water reserves and capital. In 2024, $79,300 (the works and services parcel tax) is budgeted to be allocated to water reserves, and an additional $80,000 is budgeted for water capital items. The financial goal is to gradually increase funding for capital from operating revenue. The budget also notes that the development of an independent water source that removes the Village's dependency from Teck will need to be factored into the Five Year Plan once estimates are available.

The following chart provides the risk profile for renewal costs (estimated in 2020) for the water infrastructure components.[18]

Figure 3.23: Risk Profile, Warfield Water System
Asset value with medium to extreme risk



[18] Note that the risk profile does not take into account capital upgrades between 2020 and 2023

VILLAGE OF WARFIELD MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

FINAL REPORT

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Figure 3.24 shows the planned capital expenses for the water fund anticipated over the next five years, as well as the funding source.

Figure 3.24: Water Capital Expenses and Funding Sources

Service Expense	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Intake					
Water Treatment Plant	$115,000				
PRV	$75,000	$115,000	$113,000	$122,000	$114,000
Conservation	$50,000				
Other	$260,000				
TOTAL	$500,000	$115,000	$113,000	$122,000	$114,000
Revenue Source					
Water Revenues	$80,000	$90,000	$100,000	$110,000	$114,000
Surplus	$105,000	$25,000	$13,000	$12,000	
Reserves	$115,000				
Gas Tax					
Grants	$200,000				
TOTAL	$500,000	$115,000	$113,000	$122,000	$114,000

Reserves and Operating Surplus

The Village has a water reserve fund, and a capital fund. At the end of 2023 the water reserve fund had $317,435. At the end of 2024, after transfers from the Village's revenues, as well as some expenditures, the water reserve fund is budgeted to be $283,335. In addition, at the end of 2023 the water operating fund had a surplus of $374,646.

SEWER SERVICES

Service Overview

The Village of Warfield provides local wastewater collection services to 734 residential connections, and 10 non-residential properties, (741 parcels) through a series of pipes and infrastructure within the municipality. The municipal system collects sewage and delivers it to the regional sewage mains, which receive sewage from the participating areas of Trail, Warfield, Rossland and a small portion of Electoral Area B (Oasis and Rivervale). The sewage is then processed in the Columbia Pollution Control Centre, located in Trail (see below). Warfield's share of the operating and capital cost of the regional treatment plant and inter-municipal collection is provided through a contract, and is recovered through the Village's levies on properties that are connected to the sewer.

Assets

Warfield's network of wastewater collection pipes totals 16.672 km of transmission mains and service connection pipes, 257 manholes, 5 cleanouts, 1 lift station and 1 pump. The renewal cost of the municipal system was estimated in 2020 at just under $9 million[19] and is shown in Figure 3.25. The condition of the pipes is depicted in Figure 3.26. Because underground assets are not easy to inspect, pipe condition in the asset management databased is based on date of installation and estimates of life span.

As noted previously, the RDKB owns the CPCC and the transmission mains that collect the municipal sewage; those assets are not included here.

Figure 3.26: Municipal sewer pipes condition by linear metre

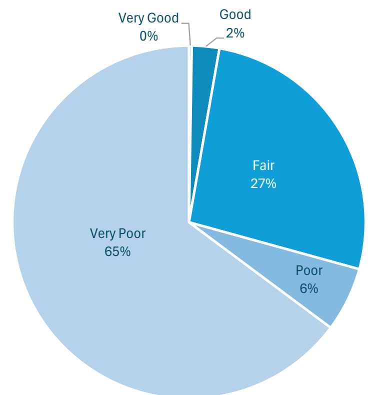


Figure 3.25: Village Sewer Distribution Renewal Cost (2020)

Staffing

The Village maintains the local sewer collection infrastructure through a combination of contracted services and public works staff at the Village. A total of 0.35 FTE is attributed to the sewer service.

Operating Costs

The operating costs of the sewer service include the labour for the local collection system and lift stations, but also the amounts allocated to the treatment contract through the RDKB. Operating costs are shown in Figure 3.27 on the following page.

19 No adjustments have been made for inflation in the Asset Management Program capital estimates, nor any changes resulting from any capital expenditures since 2020.

Figure 3.27: Sewer Operating Costs

Service Component	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Administration	$7,500	$0
Maintenance and collection	$83,250	$31,795
Lift stations	$12,050	$694
Regional District contract	$325,000	$274,277
Transfer to capital/reserve fund	$120,000	$173,220
TOTAL	$547,800	$479,986

Revenue

The costs of providing sewer services are recovered primarily through parcel tax ($570 in 2024) and non-residential sewer user fees. Connection fees provide some limited additional revenues. User fees vary for non-residential uses depending on the type of business and the combination of residential units on the site.

Capital

As noted previously, the sewer infrastructure is in need of upgrades. Figure 3.28 provides the risk profile for renewal costs (estimated in 2020) for the Village's sewer infrastructure.

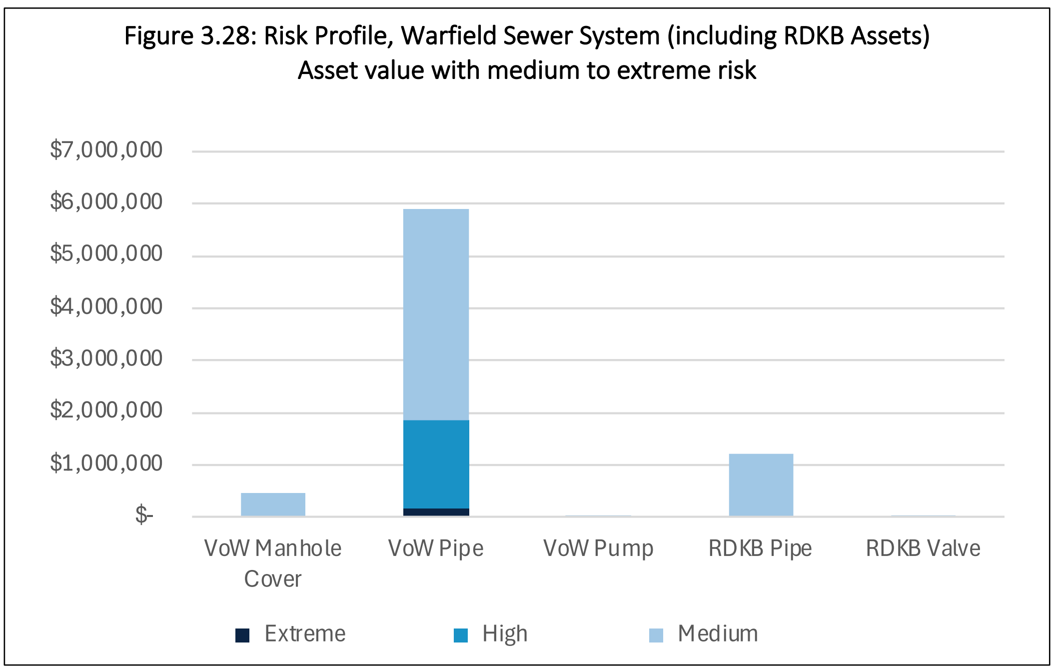


Figure 3.29 on the following page shows the planned capital expenses for the sewer fund anticipated over the next five years, as well as the funding source.

Figure 3.29: Sewer Capital Expenses

Service Expense	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Inflow & Infiltration	$75,000				
Lines & Mains	$240,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000
Lift Stations					
Other					
TOTAL	$315,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000
Revenue Source					
Sewer Revenues	$120,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000
Surplus	$70,000				
Reserves					
Grants	$125,000				
TOTAL	$315,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000

As noted in Figure 3.29, $120,000 is budgeted to be set aside from the sewer operating budget in 2024 for sewer capital works, with $115,000 in subsequent years.

In addition to the works referenced above, the RDKB will be undertaking significant work to upgrade the treatment facility (CPCC), which will include debt to fund the local share of the project. Operating costs are expected to increase with the plant upgrades.

Reserves

The Village does not have a sewer reserve fund; capital items are funded through the sewer operating fund revenues (see Sewer Revenues in Figure 3.29), as well as the fund's surplus. At the end of 2023 the sewer operating fund had a surplus of $872,481.

GENERAL CAPITAL PLAN

The Village does not have a history of building capital reserves, and until recently did not have established asset management practices. In past years the Village used surplus funds to supplement operations, and maintain a lower tax rate. However, over the past few years the Village has advanced its capital planning and asset management practices, and is setting aside funds in anticipation of significant future capital works and infrastructure renewal costs, and considering amortization costs. Over the past few years the Village has built an asset management database to help the Village evaluate risks and costs for the Village's infrastructure.

The table (Figure 3.30) on the following page shows some of the capital costs anticipated over the next five years relating to the general Village services (not including sewer and water funds), as well as the funding sources.

Figure 3.30: 5 Year Capital Plan – General Services

Service Expense	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Administration		$40,000			
Transportation	$345,000	$229,000	$115,000	$150,000	$300,000
Recreation & Culture	$64,500		$74,300		
TOTAL	$409,500	$269,000	$189,300	$150,000	$300,000
Revenue Source					
General Revenues	$72,450	$119,000	$189,300	$150,000	$239,300
Surplus	$18,550				$60,700
Reserves	$168,500				
Grants	$150,000	$150,000			
TOTAL	$409,500	$269,000	$189,300	$150,000	$300,000

Reserve accounts

The Village has reserve accounts set aside for equipment, general capital, growing communities fund, and the community hall. Not including the water reserve fund (referenced previously), or the gas tax funds, the Village had an additional $1,105,906 in reserve fund accounts at the end of 2023 (beginning of 2024).

At the end of 2023, the Village had $1,587,064 in unspent gas tax funds that can be spent on eligible infrastructure categories. In addition, approximately $60,000 from other grants (Columbia Basin Trust and UBCM 911 grants) had not been spent at the end of 2023.

A surplus for the general operating fund also exists. At the end of 2023, the general operating surplus was $273,989.

Figure 3.31 provides a summary of the unspent funds at the end of 2023, as referenced in the Village's audited financial statements, including reserve fund and operational surplus amounts.

Figure 3.31: Reserves and Surplus – End of 2023

Accounts/Funds	End of 2023 Total
Water Reserve	$317,435
Equipment Reserve	$1,119
General Capital Reserve	$69,089
Community Hall Reserve	$1,809
Growing Communities Fund	$943,889
Community Works Fund (Federal Gas Tax)	$1,587,064
Other Grants (unspent – Columbia Basin Trust and UBCM 911 Next Generation)	$60,163
General Fund Surplus	$273,989
Water Fund Surplus	$374,646
Sewer Fund Surplus	$872,481
TOTAL	$4,501,684

CHAPTER 4
REGIONAL DISTRICT & PROVINCIAL SERVICES

This chapter of the *Report* provides an overview of each of the regional district services the Village participates in, and therefore receives and pays for, as well as services provided by the Province and provincial agencies.

REGIONAL DISTRICT SERVICES

The RDKB provides many services to Warfield. As noted in Chapter 3, the Village has contracted RDKB to deliver some municipal services such as building inspection and operation of the municipal water treatment plant. Those contracts and agreements were referenced in the municipal services in Chapter 3, and recovered through property and parcel taxes and user fees.

In addition to those contract arrangements, the Village participates in several regional and sub-regional services that are established by and through the RDKB, with costs apportioned to those that participate in the service. This section summarizes the following services that are provided to Warfield by the RDKB, including whether the service is provided on a regional basis (to all electoral areas and municipalities) or sub-regional (to a sub-set of jurisdictions):

- Regional administration and General Government
- Planning and Development
- Feasibility Studies
- Police Based Victims' Assistance
- Regionalized Solid Waste Management
- Emergency Preparedness
- 9-1-1 Emergency Communications
- East End Economic Development
- Culture, Arts and Recreation in the Lower Columbia
- Fire Protection Regionalized East End
- Cemeteries – East End
- East End Transit
- East End Sewer Utility

Administration and General Government (Regional)

Similar to the administration services at the Village of Warfield, this service provides for legislative, legal and administrative support to the RDKB Board of Directors and RDKB staff. The service enables the sharing of the the costs of corporate administration (legislation, voting, record keeping, bylaws, legal matters, Freedom of Information & Privacy Protection), finance, human resources, information technology, communications, occupational health and safety, and climate action and sustainability. Costs for administration of electoral area services and support for electoral area directors is recovered separately and allocated only to electoral areas.

Regional Planning and Development (Regional)

In addition to providing land use planning and development services for the region's five unincorporated (electoral) areas, the RDKB planning department provides services to the region's municipalities, including:

- floodplain management and other environmental protective measures that apply to the land base across our region
- coordination of land use strategies with municipalities in urban fringe areas
- preparation of housing needs reports for the broader region
- preparation of multi-jurisdictional studies and initiatives, such as the South Kootenay Agricultural Strategy and multi-use transportation corridor connecting South Kootenay communities
- Hosting of an interactive web map service, and development of GIS-based mapping products for the entire region

Reserve for Feasibility Studies (Regional)

The region has a reserve for feasibility studies, typically used to support analysis for new regional services proposed by electoral areas or municipalities. All the region's jurisdictions (eight municipalities and five electoral areas) are participants in the service. There are no contributions to this reserve planned for 2024, however some studies are anticipated in 2024, so annual requisitions of close to $15,500 (shared amongst all regional jurisdictions) are anticipated in future years.

Police Based Victims' Assistance (Sub-regional)

Victims' assistance is a service that provides 24-hour access to professionally trained staff and volunteers to support victims following a traumatic experience. The service is provided at the Greater Trail and District RCMP detachment and services the municipalities of Rossland, Trail, Fruitvale, Montrose, and Warfield, as well as Electoral Areas 'A' and 'B'. The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary and the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General co-fund the program.

Regionalized Solid Waste Management (Regional)

Solid waste management at the RDKB includes the management and operation of the region's solid waste facilities (landfill and transfer station), as well as a solid waste planning function, the preparation and updating of a solid waste management plan for the region, and coordination of curbside collection of garbage and organics.

- **Curbside Collection**

  Warfield transitioned to having RDKB provide weekly curbside collection of garbage in October 2023 to help facilitate the collection of organics at the same time. RDKB provides organics and garbage collection in Rossland, Warfield, Trail, Montrose, Fruitvale, and Areas A & B. Garbage collection is a user-pay, bag-tag system that allows for the dual collection of garbage and food waste at the same time using split packer trucks. Weekly curbside garbage collection is provided to single-family homes and multi-family units (four units or less) in the Kootenay region. Apartments and businesses contract garbage collection through private waste haulers. The cost of garbage collection is on a per tag basis, at $3 per tag (for one can of garbage). Residents can purchase garbage tags at the Village hall or Petro Canada. The cost of the broader service, including organics collection, is recovered from residents in Warfield through the regional requisition, (2024 requisition is $59,270).

Recycle BC provides bi-weekly curbside collection of recycling throughout the Regional District. Both the garbage and organics collection, as well as the curbside recycling are provided through contracts with GFL Environmental.

- **Landfill Operations**

  The RDKB owns and operates three landfill sites, three staffed transfer stations and four unstaffed transfer stations. The landfill closest to Warfield is the McKelvey Creek Landfill, located at 1900 Hwy. 3B in Trail. The landfill is open seven days a week, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. In addition to receiving garbage from commercial customers and household waste from the general public, the McKelvey Creek landfill provide areas for the collection of recyclable materials (including garden waste, clean wood waste and scrap metal), product care depot (paint, pesticides and flammable liquids), construction/demolition waste, and disposal of controlled waste (controlled waste requires approval), as well as furniture, appliances, mattresses and empty propane tanks.

- **Solid Waste Management Plan**

  The Province of BC's *Environmental Management Act* mandates that regional districts prepare and regularly update solid waste management plans. A solid waste management plan reflects a long-term vision for how each regional district manages its solid waste, including diversion and disposal. The RDKB's *Solid Waste Management Plan* (SWMP) outlines commitments to solid waste diversion and management to 2025, and was last updated in 2005. The plan has been supplemented by the region's Organics Management Strategy that was completed in 2019.

Emergency Preparedness Program (Regional)

The RDKB Emergency Program is responsible for implementing the region's Emergency Plan to support residents during emergencies. The program offers preparedness tips for floods and fires and provides communications as well as supports during emergencies through the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). All the region's municipalities are participants in the service and actively involved in the regional emergency management program through the regional EOC.

911 Emergency Communications (Regional)

The RDKB provides 911 emergency telephone service for the entire regional district. The RDKB partners with Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) who administers the service to nine regional districts through E-Comm, a 911 service provider located in the Vancouver area.

East End Economic Development (Sub-regional)

The East End Economic Development supports the newly merged Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society (LCCDTS) and Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation (LCIC). The corporation and parent organization recently amalgamated into one entity that handles both economic and community development. The partnership is supported by the five eastern municipalities — City of Rossland, City of Trail, Village of Warfield, Village of Montrose, Village of Fruitvale and electoral areas A & B of the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary. The City of Trail provides its contribution through a direct municipal agreement rather than through the RDKB.

The combined mandate is still to provide economic development services within the Lower Columbia Region, foster economic growth and serve as the 'first place of call' as opportunities develop. The new structure is intended to help the organization more efficiently pursue funding and partnerships, and eliminate administrative duplication. The goal is to maintain all economic development activities while broadening the scope of work to include community development. The merged entity is working with its municipal stakeholders (Rossland, Warfield, Trail, Montrose, Fruitvale and Areas A and B) on a rebrand and new name.

Culture, Arts & Recreation in the Lower Columbia (Sub-regional)

The RDKB service supports recreation and cultural services in the Greater Trail area, through this service which supports a number of local arts and cultural organizations and facilities through grant funding, including the Trail and District Arts Council, (which, in addition to offering programs and events, manages the Bailey Theatre), Visual Arts Centre (VISAC) Gallery, Trail Museum and Archives and others.

Fire Protection Regionalized East End (Sub-regional)

The RDKB provides fire/rescue services across the region except in the Village of Midway (Midway Fire Rescue) and in the City of Grand Forks (Grand Forks Fire Rescue), which operate their own fire rescue services in close cooperation with the RDKB. The region employs full- and part-time paid and volunteer fire fighters that respond to structural fires, automobile accidents, wilderness rescues, natural disasters and other threats or hazards to human safety. They also perform fire inspections of public buildings. The RDKB east regionalized fire service rents the Village's fire hall as a base for responding to Warfield and area emergencies.

Cemeteries – East End (Sub-regional)

The Village participates in an "east end" cemeteries service to share in the costs of providing and maintaining a cemetery for residents. The service helps to maintain Mountain View cemetery, established in 1930 and located just above the Old Trail Cemetery on Highway 3B between Rossland and Warfield.

East End Transit (Sub-regional)

West Kootenay Transit offers scheduled service to major destinations and residential areas, regional services connect between larger West Kootenay communities – the 98 Castlegar/ Trail operates between Trail and Castlegar and the connecting 99

Castlegar/Nelson operates between Castlegar and Nelson – and health connections service that provides accessible transportation options to access non-emergency medical appointments. HandyDART is door-to-door, shared service for people who are unable to take the fixed-route service.

Funding for West Kootenay Transit is cost shared between the Regional District of Central Kootenay, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, City of Nelson and BC Transit. Funding for Health Connections service is provided by the Interior Health Authority. Decisions on fares, routes and service levels are made by local governments based on recommendations by the West Kootenay Transit Committee (made up of local government representatives), based on public feedback and information provided by BC Transit. Buses are operated by PW Transit. Operating costs are met by a combination of farebox revenues and joint local and provincial funding.

The Village of Warfield is serviced primarily by routes #46 and 48 that also service Rossland, and route 45 goes between Teck's Warfield plant and Trail.

East End Sewer Utility (Sub-regional)

The RDKB owns the Columbia Pollution Control Center (Centre), which is a primary level sewage treatment facility within Trail that provides regional wastewater treatment and disposal for approximately 14,000 residents of Trail, Rossland and Warfield, as well as the two smaller adjacent rural communities of Oasis and Rivervale.

The current primary treatment consists of screening of the wastewater to remove trash and coarse solids, followed by gravity settling to remove grit, and primary sedimentation to separate crude solids from the raw wastewater. The treated water is disinfected using chlorine gas, and de-chlorinated prior to its discharge to the Columbia River. Waste solids from the primary clarifiers are stabilized in two anaerobic digesters and then dewatered and biosolids are disposed at the landfill, for inclusion into composting.

In December 2021, the RDKB announced it had received a $46 million infrastructure grant to modernize the sewer plant and upgrade to secondary treatment. The grant came from the federal and provincial governments through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The upgrades are expected to cost $63 million (2021 estimates).

REGIONAL DISTRICT REQUISITION

The cost of each of the services referenced above includes the administration costs allocated to that service, in accordance with the RDKB cost allocation policy approved by the Board. The requisition for each service included below is apportioned between the participating jurisdictions on the basis of converted assessment. An exception is the sewer service, which apportions the cost between the participating communities on the basis of monthly flows generated from each community, as well as the planning fringe agreements which reflect a base fee plus an area charge.

The following table provides the 2024 requisition amount from the RDKB to the Village of Warfield for each of the RDKB services, as well as the associated residential tax rate and resulting cost on the average valued residential property in Warfield. Note that the following represents the requisition for regional services that apply to all of Warfield, and does not include municipal services that have direct municipal agreements with RDKB that were referenced within the previous municipal services and budgets (general, water and sewer), including building inspection, water operations contract and sewer treatment.

Figure 4.1: RDKB Services and 2024 Requisition Amounts

Service	Warfield Requisition	Residential Tax Rate	Tax Impact*
Administration & General Government	$34,625	0.1013	$43.53
Planning & Development	$6,965	0.0204	$8.76
Feasibility Studies	$0	0.0000	$0.00
Victim's Assistance	$4,790	0.0140	$6.02
Regionalized Solid Waste Management	$59,270	0.1734	$74.51
Emergency Preparedness Program	$13,382	0.0392	$16.82
911 Emergency Communications	$10,624	0.0311	$13.36
East End Economic Development	$21,077	0.0617	$26.50
Culture, Arts & Recreation	$13,780	0.0403	$17.32
Fire Protection Regionalized East End	$230,025	0.6730	$289.19
Cemeteries – East End	$30,481	0.0892	$38.32
East End Transit	$80,482	0.2355	$101.18
Adjustment	($63)	(0.0002)	($0.08)
TOTAL	$505,438	1.4787	$635.44

** on an average single-family residential property assessed at $429,717*

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Province of BC provides a number of services to Warfield, including:

- Police
- Schools
- Health
- Ambulance

- **Policing**

  Under the *Police Act*, responsibility for policing rural and unincorporated areas of British Columbia, as well as municipalities with population below 5,000, rests with the provincial government. The province contracts delivery to the RCMP. Services include uniformed patrols, response-to-call duties, investigative services, community-based policing, traffic enforcement and administrative support to provincial detachments.

  Warfield is served by the Kootenay Boundary regional detachment, which is part of the Kootenay Boundary regional detachment that services Castlegar, Grand Forks, Kaslo, Midway, Nakusp, Nelson, Salmo, Slocan Lake, as well as the "Trail & Greater District" which includes Warfield, Fruitvale, Montrose and Rossland. The Trail and Greater District area, with a service population of 12,192, has an authorized strength of eight shared general duty/general investigation service officers (three officers in charge and five general investigation officers) that are based in the Trail detachment. The City of Trail, because they have a population that exceeds 5,000, have their own municipal unit with an authorized strength of 14, that is funded separately (Trail pays for 70% of its policing costs).

  The province pays 70% of the total RCMP cost for Warfield; the federal government pays the remaining 30%. The provincial government recovers 33% of the legislated cost (just under 50% of its portion) through the police tax, which all unincorporated areas and municipalities under 5,000 population began to pay in 2007. The tax is collected as a property value tax (land and improvements). The 2024 residential police tax rate in Warfield is 0.2972 per $1,000 assessed value, or a total of $127.71 on an average (2024) residential home in Warfield ($429,717). It is worth noting that in 2024 Greenwood has the same residential police tax rate as Warfield, but the rate is higher than the other RDKB municipalities under 5,000 (Montrose, Fruitvale, Rossland, Midway, Grand Forks), which is in part a reflection of the municipal tax base.

  The total amount collected from Warfield from the police tax in 2024 was $101,583. Expressed differently, the amount recovered for policing represents $57.95 per capita (based on 2021 Census numbers). There are no other direct costs for policing services levied to Warfield.

- **Schools**

  The province is responsible for education services, which are delivered by the Kootenay-Columbia School District #20. The Board of Trustees that governs the School District is comprised of nine trustees. The Board's duties and responsibilities include public oversight of education, finance, facility management, human resources, and policy, as well as public meetings and community consultation. Webster Elementary School is the only public school within Warfield.

  Funding for schools is recovered through school taxes levied on all properties.

The school tax rate for Warfield was 1.7434 in 2024, or $749.17 on a residential home (valued at $429,717). The school tax raised a total of $579,643 from all the properties in Warfield in 2024.

- **Health**

Interior Health is the authority mandated (and funded) by the province to deliver health care programs and services to residents of Warfield. Interior Health delivers a wide range of services, including:

- hospital services
- home and community care
- long-term care
- seniors care
- end of life care
- environmental health
- prevention and health promotion
- mental health and substance use
- public health

Almost all areas of the province are located within regional hospital districts. While many hospital districts share the same boundaries and local government jurisdictions as regional districts, Warfield and all RDKB jurisdictions are part of the West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital District, which includes the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) and RDKB. The main purpose of the WKBRHD is to provide funding for hospital equipment and capital projects. Projects and priorities are proposed each year by the Interior Health Authority (IHA), with a list developed in consultation between the IHA and WKBRHD. The hospital district typically pays for 40% of the cost of approved projects while the remaining 60% is funded by the Provincial Government or through donations provided by local hospital foundations. A hospital district property (value) tax is levied in every regional hospital district to raise the hospital district's portion of funding.

In Warfield the taxes that are directed to local healthcare facilities show up on the property tax bills as the WKBRHD tax. The two main hospitals servicing the WKBRHD include the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) in Trail as well as the Kootenay Lake Hospital in Nelson. KBRH opened in 1954 and offers a variety of health-care services including 24-hour emergency and trauma services, Level 2 laboratory, acute and obstetrical care, psychiatry, and chemotherapy.

The tax rate for the WKBRHD in 2024 is 0.15775, or $67.79 on a home with an assessed value of $429,717. The total funds raised from Warfield toward hospital facilities in 2024 was approximately $53,000.

Some recent capital projects funded in part by the WKBRHD include the redevelopment of the KBRH, with the most recent improvements completed in

2023. Improvements over the past five years included a two-storey addition that is home to a new emergency department and day surgery unit, as well as renovations and upgrades to the pharmacy, oncology, physiotherapy departments, the cast clinic and a renovated health information management area. The new emergency department opened in 2020, with the expanded pharmacy, renovated oncology department, a modernized physiotherapy department and an upgraded cast clinic completed in 2022.

- **Ambulance Service**

  The BC Ambulance Service is a provincially-funded and delivered service provided by BC Emergency Health Services. The BC Ambulance Service provides emergency pre-hospital treatment and transportation by ambulance, and is the largest provider of emergency health care in Canada.

  BC Emergency Health Services operates three dispatch operations centres in Vancouver, Victoria and Kamloops that manage the receipt of all 911 calls and coordinate responses to those calls. The centres operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are the first point of contact for people requiring emergency pre-hospital care. The Kamloops Dispatch Operations Centre provides service to the RDKB, including Warfield. In 2019, new technology was implemented that enables the emergency medical call-takers to answer and process 911 requests for service for any of the three dispatch centres, and the communities they serve.

  BC Ambulance Service dispatch operations centres are staffed by emergency medical dispatchers and call takers. When a call for help is received, they use a medical priority dispatch system to assess the severity of the patient's condition and respond with the appropriate help. The BC Ambulance Service prioritizes how ambulances are dispatched based on the caller's description of the nature and extent of the medical condition or injury, which allows for the most critical patients to be attended to first. An updated system for assigning paramedics, ambulances and other resources to 9-1-1 calls was introduced in 2018. The new Clinical Response Model is aimed at more accurately matching resources to the needs of the patient.

  Dispatch Operations coordinates the movement of paramedic crews (including helicopters and bike squads) to provide optimum coverage of resources and sharing of information to ensure the fastest and best possible response to patients. Dispatchers work closely with partner agencies such as police, fire, search and rescue and coast guard to ensure that British Columbians have access to timely and effective care. Provides service to all communities outside of the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, throughout the Interior and Northern BC. Covering one of the largest geographical areas in North America, Kamloops Dispatch Operations Centre receives an average of 500-600 calls a day and is responsible for dispatching ambulances to 98 communities throughout British Columbia.

The ambulance service is not taxed separately, so there is no specific tax rate related directly to BC Ambulance Services.

TECK

Although not a regional district or provincial service provider, Teck, formerly known as Cominco, provides water services to the Village of Warfield. The company built a fertilizer plant and a residential area for its workers in the 1930s, as well as the necessary infrastructure services. Warfield incorporated as a village in 1952, and while the incorporated area did not include the fertilizer plant, Cominco continued to provide infrastructure services to the incorporated community. Only recently has the Village begun to secure a water supply independent from Teck. As noted in Chapter 3, water from the Columbia River is pumped by Teck to reservoirs where it is chlorinated and pumped to the Warfield Water Treatment Facility. The Warfield Water Treatment Plant treats water with rapid sand bed filtration, and chlorination before water is supplied to the Village of Warfield. Teck has in place procedures to deal with potential emergency situations such as microbiological or chemical contamination, Columbia River contamination, loss of pumping facilities, loss of chlorination, loss of treatment facilities, cross connection contamination, broken water mains, power failure, terrorism/vandalism, railway accident (adjacent to pump house). The Village of Warfield has responsibility for testing the water and to notify water users of any water related health risks.

As noted previously, the Village is in the process of identifying a plan and the associated works to secure its own water supply. At that time, the Village would no longer rely upon Teck for water services.

CHAPTER 5
SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

This chapter provides an overview of the factors that are considered and criteria used to evaluate the sustainability of Warfield. Each section outlines the criteria and factors, identifies how they relate to municipal operations or viability, and applies the criteria to Warfield. Each section also comments on whether there are opportunities to impact or change the current results, and highlights the key takeaways.

The section covers the following factors:

- Property Assessment Base
- Property Tax Levels
- Population, Demographics and Growth
- Operation Expenses
- Capital Projects, Asset Management and Reserves
- Borrowing Capacity
- Incorporation Criteria

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT BASE

BC Assessment classifies all real property in the province into nine different classes (see Figure 5.1) for the purpose of assessment. Properties may be assessed as having more than one class, such as farm and industrial, or residential and commercial.

Property assessment values and property classes are determined by BC Assessment. Municipalities do not have direct control over the value of their assessment base, although they can influence the types of uses permitted within the municipality through zoning and Official Community Plans (OCPs). The municipality's assessment base reflects the range of uses permitted, how lands and built structures are currently being used, and the current market for those lands and uses. Each property in every class is assessed annually by BC Assessment to determine the property's value.[20] In each local jurisdiction, the values for all properties in each class are added together to determine the total assessed value for that class. The totals for all classes combine to equal the jurisdiction's total assessment base.

Properties in each class are taxed at a particular rate to generate the revenues to fund local services. In unincorporated areas, regional district boards each year determine the Class 1 (residential) tax rate for each service provided. Rates for the other eight property classes are determined using variables that are set by the province, pursuant to the *Regional District Tax Regulation* (see Figure 5.1). These variables result in tax rates that are higher than the residential rate in five classes.

[20] The assessment methodology varies by class.

In municipalities, the tax or "mill" rates for all classes — not only residential — are set each year by the municipal council. Municipalities have the authority to set their own tax ratios, taking into account the characteristics of their own tax base, the relative burden of the services used by and provided to the property classes, as well as policies to encourage different uses. For instance, a municipality may wish to have a lower Class 6 property tax rate for businesses to encourage economic development and attract businesses to their area, whereas another municipality may have a very healthy industrial or stable business sector and choose to recover a greater proportion of taxes from those uses. Provincial data show that councils in almost every municipality set tax rates for several of the non-residential property classes, including Utilities (Class 2), Industrial (Class 4 and 5), and Business (Class 6), above the Class 1 level. In 2024 Warfield was the only municipality in British Columbia that had a lower tax rate for Class 6 (Business) than for Class 1 residential uses.[21]

Figure 5.1
Property Assessment Classes

Class	Property Description	RD Tax Variable
Class 1	Residential	1.0
Class 2	Utilities	3.5
Class 3	Supportive Housing	1.0
Class 4	Major Industry	3.4
Class 5	Light Industry	3.4
Class 6	Business and Other	2.45
Class 7	Managed Forest Land	3.0
Class 8	Recreation Non-Profit	1.0
Class 9	Farm	1.0

* Section 1, *Regional District Tax Regulation*

The assessment values combined with the tax rates in each property class impact the distribution of taxes throughout the community. Accordingly, the overall composition, or diversity, of the total assessment base is an important consideration for municipalities as it affects their ability to assess and recover property taxes. Ideally, municipalities will have not only a high property tax base, but also a diverse tax base with significant proportions of business and industrial uses. Such diversity enables jurisdictions to spread their local tax burdens across more than just residential properties.

It should be noted that diversity of property assessment classes is an indicator of resilience and sustainability not only from the perspective of property taxation, but also as a reflection of the health of the local economy. Non-residential property classes such as Class 5 (light industrial) and Class 6 (Business) are important to the local economy as wealth and employment generators. Many municipalities rely

21 Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, *Schedule 702 – 2024 Tax Rates.*

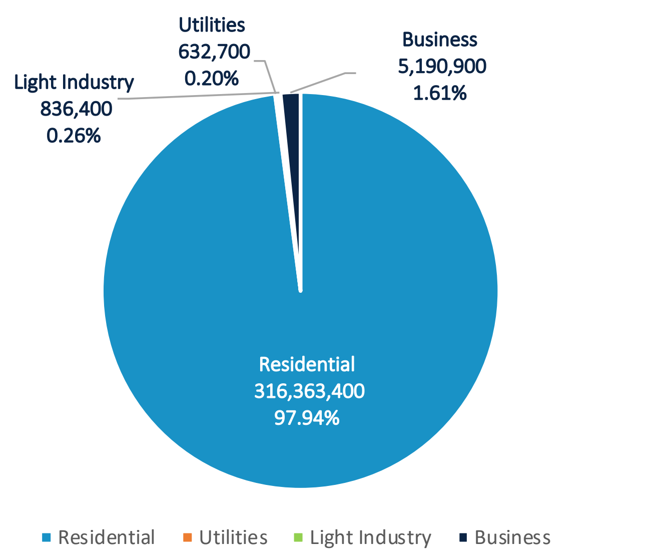
heavily upon the property tax paid by key non-residential employers. Other non-residential uses generate visitors or tourism dollars that boost the local economy. A lack of assessment diversity can limit economic generators and revenue generating opportunities, in addition to total property tax revenues.

The assessment base of Warfield is considered and evaluated both in terms of overall value and diversity. The *Interim Report* referenced Warfield's property assessment base, and noted the lack of diversity (see Figure 5.2). BC Assessment data for Warfield indicate that the 2024 total assessment was $323,023,400[22] — an amount that translates into a converted assessment of $34,180,327. The average assessed value of single-family residential properties in Warfield in 2024 was $429,717. Figure 5.2 provides details on proportion of assessment values for all property classes in Warfield. As indicated in the chart, the Village has very little tax base diversity — almost 98% of all assessment is Class 1 residential. Figure 5.3 places Warfield's assessment base in the context of the other municipalities in the Kootenay Boundary Regional District (RDKB).

Ability to Change

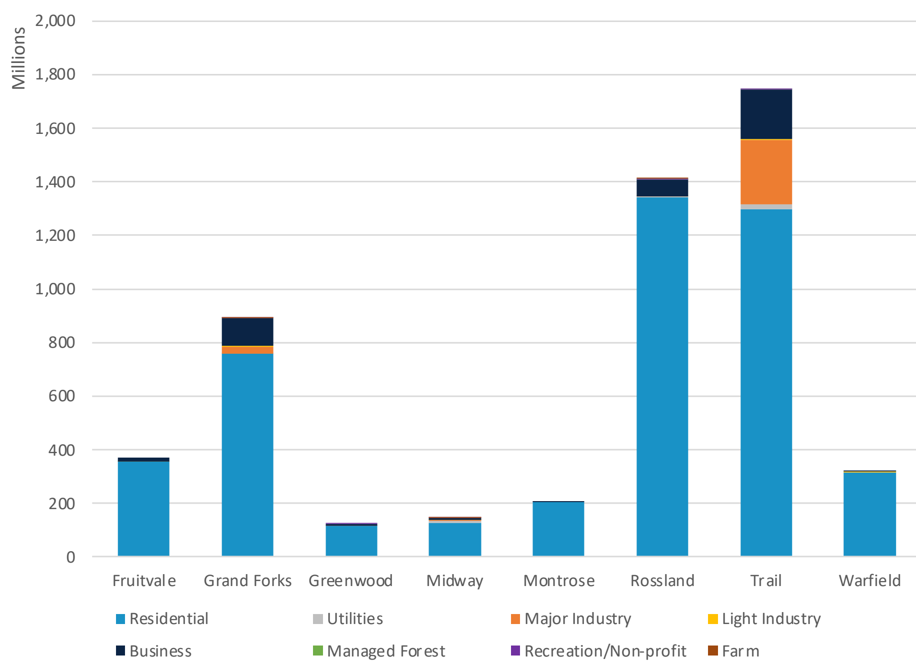
While municipalities do control the OCP designations and zoning of properties, the composition of the local tax base evolves over time with property development and redevelopment, and reflects physical characteristics, location, land ownership, permitted uses as well as the ability of the surrounding population to support different business and employment uses. Proximity to other centres and communities also influences the need for and viability of commercial and industrial uses. Designating land for industrial or commercial use does not necessarily result in the development of those uses within the community, or translate into a more diverse tax base.

Figure 5.2
2024 Warfield Property Assessment



[22] 2024 Warfield Net Taxable Assessment

Figure 5.3 General Purposes 2024 Assessment Tax Base
RDKB Municipalities



In 1938, 150 homes were built in Warfield by Cominco, the company that owned and operated the local mine and smelter. The community evolved initially for families that worked in the adjacent mining operation. The ongoing provision today of the community's water supply by Teck is a reminder of this historical link. The existence of Teck as a significant employer in the region remains a benefit to the municipality's economy, but also influences Warfield's prospects of developing its own commercial and industrial assessment base. Warfield is in an unusual and difficult position of being adjacent and linked to an industry that does not contribute to the community's tax base.

When considering opportunities to improve the diversity of the tax base, the primary factors are available vacant land and the vision the OCP sets for the community — put differently, vacant lands and the anticipated uses for those lands. A community with an area of vacant land that is being planned for light industrial uses, for example, provides the prospect (depending on the market) for industrial uses that may diversify the local economy and tax base.

The Village of Warfield is constrained in part because of its very small land base of 189 hectares, which gives the Village the distinction of being the fourth smallest municipality in the province. Emerald Ridge, an area of approximately 31 hectares in the northern limits of the Village, represents the primary undeveloped portion of the municipality. Emerald Ridge is undergoing a comprehensive development plan for residential uses (single, two-unit and multi-family), which would accommodate up to 330 total units (including maximum number of secondary and accessory suites) and an estimated 480 people at full buildout. The site has some servicing challenges, given its topography. A few other vacant residential parcels exist on the edges of the community, ranging in size between four and nine hectares, all of which are zoned for large-lot residential uses. There is potential for redevelopment, infill or higher intensity use of some properties within existing commercial zones (general commercial and comprehensive commercial). The OCP does not, however, contemplate significant future commercial or light industrial growth. The OCP notes that commercial uses found in the commercial core are generally cafes, professional services, personal services and studio space as well as light industrial uses such as automobile service and transportation depot. The Plan notes that the Village cannot accommodate heavy industrial uses due to the lack of suitable sites within the municipality. Some light industry is permitted in the Comprehensive Commercial land use in locations along Highway 3B/22 at the northeast gateway to Warfield, where adequately buffered from residential uses.

The OCP acknowledges that residents rely predominantly on neighbouring communities for amenities and services, and that "there is little opportunity for sprawl in Warfield due to constraints of the village boundaries as well as the steepness of adjacent hill sides. Most of the land within Warfield's borders has already been developed."[23] While the eventual development of Emerald Ridge will add to the overall value of the assessment base and population, it will not help to diversify the assessment.

Figure 5.4 on the following page provides a rough estimate of the impacts of developing the proposed residential uses at Emerald Ridge, using estimated assessment values consistent with new one and two-family homes. Figure 5.4 does not take into account any costs the Village may incur in servicing the properties, or the time for build-out and absorption of the units. The Figure does, however, provide a rough estimate of the value that could be realized through development of this area of the community. Newer dwellings generally have a higher-than-average assessed value, and residential uses in the Emerald Ridge neighbourhood currently command higher than average prices. The addition of $640,000 in additional tax revenue (not including the parcel taxes paid by any secondary suites or accessory suites that are developed), would enhance the municipality's ability to fund operations and infrastructure. If that additional tax base were present today, with all other values being equal, the newly-developed area would be the equivalent of adding almost 33% to the Village's current tax base.

It is worth noting that in the long-term, low density residential uses generally do not generate wealth for a community. Over the long-term low density residential uses typically cost a community more in terms of infrastructure servicing than higher density uses. The Village's OCP supports smart growth principles, and prioritizes infill, redevelopment, and densification strategies to enhance quality of life, avoid continuous encroachment into the natural environment, maintain ecological

23 *Imagine 2040, Village of Warfield Integrated Official Community Plan*, Bylaw 846, 2017, p. 28.

Figure 5.4
Assessment Base and Tax Impacts of Developing Emerald Ridge Lands

Development/Units	Per Unit Assessed Value	Total Assessment Base
67 multi-family units	$400,000	$26,800,000
33 row houses	$450,000	$14,025,000
92 one or two unit buildings	$600,000 (duplexes) x 42 $750,000 (singles) x 50	$25,200,000 $37,500,000
10 Vacant lots	$400,000 x 10 (improvements only)	$4,000,000
Less current assessed land value	($1,058,000)	$102,867,000
Municipal Property Tax Rate (2024)	3.4332	$353,163
Parcel taxes and user fees	$1429.30 (water, sewer, works and services, water improvement) x 202	$288,719
Additional tax revenue		$641,882

integrity, and save money over time.[24] While some additional infrastructure will be required, given that some of the road network and services already exists, the proposed residential development, which will include medium density units, is expected to generate additional revenues to support the municipality.

Another option available to some municipalities to increase the assessment base is to expand the municipal boundaries to take in other properties and land uses, usually from the surrounding (unincorporated) electoral area. Adjusting the boundaries between two municipalities, such as adding properties currently within the City of Trail, is also an option; however, it is one that that requires approval from both municipalities.[25] Warfield's current boundaries offer some expansion opportunities to encompass lands to the north of Warfield, or to the west between Warfield and Rossland. Teck is a major landowner in the area, which limits development potential; other adjacent lands are characterized by steep slopes, limiting the development and servicing potential of properties. Much of the lands to the north represent forested areas (Talus Hill), and are not consistent with the Village's vision of avoiding encroachment into natural areas. In all, while boundary expansion could be pursued, adjacent lands do not appear to offer significant opportunities to impact or diversify the assessment base in the short term.

24 *Village of Warfield Integrated Official Community Plan: Imagine 2040,* Bylaw 846, 2017, p. 10.

25 The final phase of the *Sustainability Report* will consider structural changes to the municipality, including changes or realignments of the boundary.

Key Takeaways

The most significant takeaways regarding Warfield's assessment base include the following:

- The municipality has a very high proportion of residential property class, and significant lack of diversity, relative to larger municipalities in the region.
- The municipality has a limited amount of vacant development land that offers opportunity to diversify the tax base.
- Development of the remaining area in Emerald Ridge would help to increase the size of the tax base and generate additional tax revenues for the Village.
- The municipality's OCP does not indicate a desire or vision for the community to significantly alter the diversity of its tax base, or to encroach on existing natural areas.
- Available options for expanding the Village's municipal boundaries would not significantly alter the development or tax class diversity, unless there were interest and willingness from the City of Trail to realign shared boundaries.

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAX BURDEN

The property tax burden on residents is related to the tax base referenced above. The most common way to compare the residential tax burden in different municipalities is to consider the average value of a single-family home in each municipality, and the combination of property taxes, parcel taxes and user fees paid. Figure 5.5 shows these 2024 figures for the municipalities within the RDKB. In the past five years the Warfield property tax burden has consistently been lower than in Rossland (although the differential has never been as high as in 2024), and higher than Montrose and Trail, although that gap has narrowed in more recent years. In 2020 and 2021 Fruitvale had a lower tax burden than Warfield, but Fruitvale's tax burden has been higher than Warfield's for the past three years.

Figure 5.5: 2024 Property Tax Burden, RDKB Municipalities

	House Value	School	General Municipal	Regional District	Hospital	BCA MFA and Other	Total Variable Rate Taxes	Total Parcel Taxes	Total User Fees	Total Property Taxes and Charges
Grand Forks	$413,647	$724	$1,367	$722	$65	$125	**$3,003**	$0	$3,119	**$6,122**
Rossland	$657,378	$1,146	$2,657	$973	$105	$166	**$5,047**	$237	$723	**$6,007**
Fruitvale	$444,167	$774	$1,333	$1,154	$70	$145	**$3,476**	$950	$530	**$4,956**
Warfield	$429,717	$749	$1,475	$635	$68	$143	**$3,070**	$1,000	$561	**$4,631**
Montrose	$462,563	$806	$580	$1,228	$75	$146	**$2,835**	$576	$973	**$4,384**
Trail	$382,511	$667	$1,368	$777	$60	$13	**$2,885**	$410	$791	**$3,826**
Greenwood	$263,314	$461	$1,228	$136	$42	$87	**$1,954**	$0	$859	**$2,813**
Midway	$332,219	$582	$952	$158	$52	$97	**$1,841**	$75	$664	**$2,580**

Figure 5.6
Municipal Tax, Parcel Tax and User Fees
Residential property valued at $429,717 in Warfield, Fruitvale, Rossland, Trail* and Montrose

Municipality	Municipal Tax	Parcel Tax	User Fees	Total
Warfield	$1,475	$1,000	$561	**$3,036**
Fruitvale	$1,290	$950	$530	**$2,770**
Rossland	$1,737	$237	$723	**$2,697**
Trail	$1,245	$410	$791	**$2,446**
Montrose	$538	$576	$973	**$2,087**

** provincial statistics (Schedule 704), but includes Trail $260 residential 'Flat Tax'*

It is useful to note that the average value of a home in Warfield is higher than an average single-family home in Trail, but significantly lower than the average home in Rossland. Instead of showing the tax burden on an average property in each jurisdiction, as in Figure 5.5, Figure 5.6 presents the property tax, parcel tax and user fees property with the same value ($429,717) in the five jurisdictions that together make up the Greater Trail Area. The figure demonstrates that the taxes paid in Warfield are the highest for a property of the same value in the five different jurisdictions. Although each community has its own local context, services, challenges and priorities, the relative tax burden within other municipalities in the region can provide some pressure on Warfield Council as they establish property tax rates.

Ability to Change

Municipalities have the authority to set property tax rates at levels necessary to cover the costs of municipal operations. Local governments are not permitted to budget for a deficit, so expenditures cannot exceed their planned revenues. They therefore must set tax rates at a level that enables them to recover their expenses, while considering the impacts on residents and the ability of residents to pay. In regions with several municipalities in close proximity, such as Greater Trail, councils are also aware of the potential for tax burden to influence location decisions for prospective residents, if the burden becomes disproportionately high.

Key Takeaways

- The Village's tax burden on an average home is currently higher than Trail and Montrose, but lower than Rossland and Fruitvale, placing Warfield in the middle of the municipalities in the Greater Trail area

POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHICS AND GROWTH

As noted in the *Interim Report*, the 2021 Census showed that the Warfield grew in population by 4.3% between 2016 and 2021, the first time the municipality has grown in 40 years (see Figure 5.7). Despite the growth, the Region's *2020 Housing*

Needs Report estimates relatively flat population and household growth for the Village to 2031.

Population, demographics and growth are relevant to factors in the discussion on sustainability. Consider the following points:

- they speak to the desirability of the community and its potential to grow
- a sufficient base population is needed to sustain service levels and support good governance (as a base for volunteers, council members, municipal workers)
- diversity in the population base, with a healthy proportion of younger age cohorts, may help to bolster sustainability
- population growth can be associated with increases in the demand for services, but can also result in additional grant revenue (small communities grant is based in part on population, and the Community Works Fund is also allocated in part based on a per capita amount)

Figure 5.8 presents the 2021 age breakdown for Warfield, Trail and Rossland. The figure shows that Warfield has a higher proportion of youth (under 14) than Trail, but not as high as that in Rossland. Warfield has the highest proportion of youth aged 10 to 19 of the three municipalities. The proportion of young adults in Rossland is higher than in Trail and Warfield. From the age of 20 and older, Rossland has the highest proportion in each age 5-year age category until the age of 55 – 59, when the trend

Figure 5.7
Warfield Population and Population Growth, 1981 - 2021
(2021 Census Data)

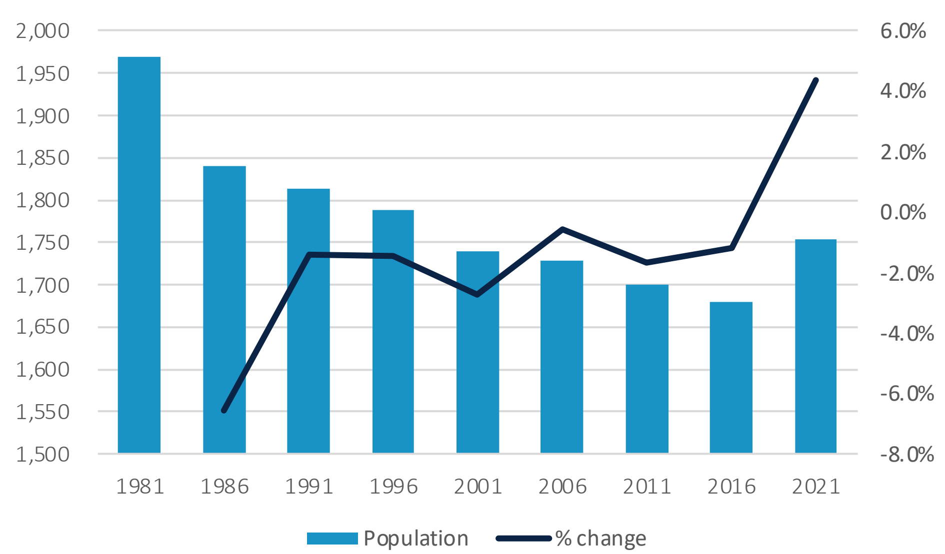


Figure 5.8
Demographics of Warfield, Trail and Rossland
2021 Census

	Warfield		Trail		Rossland	
Age Range	**Population**	**Percentage**	**Population**	**Percentage**	**Population**	**Percentage**
0 to 14 years	270	15.3%	1025	13.0%	755	18.2%
15 to 29 years	270	15.3%	1245	15.7%	550	13.3%
30 to 44 years	340	19.3%	1305	16.5%	1025	24.7%
45 to 59 years	325	18.5%	1435	18.1%	835	20.1%
60 to 74 years	395	22.4%	1940	24.5%	770	18.6%
75 to 89 years	145	8.2%	850	10.7%	205	4.9%
90 and over	15	0.9%	115	1.5%	10	0.2%

reverses and Trail has the highest proportion, followed by Warfield, then Rossland. Rossland has a significantly lower proportion of residents over the age of 65 (16.3%) relative to Warfield (22.9%) and Trail (27.8%). Rossland also has a high percentage of male residents (ratio of almost 2 to one, or 65 to 70% male) in most age categories, with some exceptions (30 to 39, 45 to 54, 80+). Warfield and Trail have more equal ratios between men and women, although Trail has a higher percentage of women in every age category from 45 and older, with the gap widening more significantly above age 55.

Ability to Change

Demographics, population and population growth are influenced by a number of factors. Without a significant catalyst, such as the entry of a new employer, or significant new development or building activity, changes to population and its composition evolve gradually over time. The current demographics in Warfield do not suggest any trends that would be concerning for sustainability. There is not, for example, a lack of young residents; nor is there over or under representation of any particular age cohort that may suggest a lack of workforce-age residents, or lack of services for any specific age demographic.

Key Takeaways

- Lower populations can present difficulties in sustaining a municipality (although when the population is close to 5,000, that presents other challenges related to additional expenses transferred to the municipality).
- Population growth at last Census period is a positive sign.
- No obvious concerns were noted with respect to demographics or male/female ratios that would serve to impact or limit the sustainability.

OPERATING EXPENSES

The *Interim Report* highlighted the current state of municipal operations, including the range of services offered, how services are delivered, and the cost to provide them. Operating expenses are generally influenced by:

- staff levels (labour typically represents the greatest component of operational costs)
- number and type of services provided
- level of service provided to the community
- service delivery options — i.e., the availability of options for delivering a service in efficient ways

In 2023, Warfield's municipal expenses on a per capita basis were among the lowest of expenses in British Columbia municipalities — indeed, of the 21 municipalities with lower per capita expenses, nine did not have either sewer and/or water services. Municipal expenses are not always easily comparable, given that each municipality offers a different range of services. Warfield's ranking, however, does suggest that the Village's operating expenses are neither excessive nor out of line with those of other municipalities.

One reason for Warfield's relatively low expenses is the range of services provided regionally or through other local government partners, including fire suppression (typically a relatively expensive service), sewage treatment, building inspection, garbage and organics collection, economic development, and significant recreation facilities. Figure 5.9 shows the per capita expenses for a variety of municipal service categories based on 2023 statistics.

Delivery Options

Warfield's municipal staff complement is lean given the range of services offered to the community. Several services, such as building inspection, bylaw enforcement, library, several recreation facilities, and operation of the water treatment plant are delivered — as noted — through contracts or agreements with either the regional district (RDKB) or neighbouring municipalities (Rossland, Trail) in efforts to reduce costs and achieve economies of scale. Other resources and expertise are provided through consultants or contractors, such as planning services through WSP, and contract CAO, corporate officer and public works consultant positions. The approach of seeking local government partnerships and using contractors is often a strategy used by smaller municipalities to minimize costs and maximize efficiency. Not all small municipalities have the ability to take advantage of these options —more remote municipalities often have a harder time attracting resources or finding partners to implement alternative service delivery options.

Public works is the one department where, although there is some contractor support, the services are primarily provided with in-house staff. A complement of four public works staff (foreman and three public works officers) spends the majority of their time on transportation services (maintenance, road clearing, drainage), but

Figure 5.9
Municipal Expenses per Capita (2023)

	Warfield	Rossland	Trail
Overall Municipal Expenses Per Capita	$1,936	$2,797	$3,140
Municipal Ranking (of 154)	22	76	94
Administration Expenses Per Capita	$427	$738	$341
Municipal Ranking (of 153)	79	117	59
Transportation Expenses Per Capita	$464	$431	$405
Municipal Ranking (of 153)	111	103	98
Parks and Recreation Expenses Per Capita	$294	$374	$996
Municipal Ranking (of 149)	60	78	139
Water Expenses Per Capita	$187	$185	$252
Municipal Ranking (of 141)	63	61	95
Sewer Expenses Per Capita	$179	$155	$99
Municipal Ranking (of 146)	83	67	25

Colour denotes lowest third (green), middle third (yellow), highest third (red) of the province's municipalities. Seven of the province's 160 municipalities did not report statistics in 2023.
2023 Statistics, BC Local Government Statistics

are also involved with maintaining a range of infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, drainage), as well as parks, equipment and municipal facilities (pool, community hall, etc.). The ability for public works staff to support a variety of services and facilities allows for efficient use of the staff resources. Transportation expenses are noted as having a relatively higher per capita cost in Warfield, and given the reliance of all public works departments on maintenance equipment, and the number of municipalities within the Greater Trail area, there may be potential to explore shared resourcing, expertise or equipment with adjacent municipalities to further minimize costs for the public works, and in particularly the transportation function.

Service Levels

The majority of Warfield's expenses are on the typical "hard" infrastructure services — specifically, water, sewer and roads. Aside from roads (transportation), which offer some ability to set and vary standards related to maintenance and to pedestrian and bike networks, hard services offer little opportunity to adjust service levels.

Recreation and culture, which is another function that comprises a double-digit proportion of the Village's expenses, offers greater flexibility for service level adjustments. When considering adjustments, however, it is important to acknowledge the value that recreational services provide to the community, and to recognize that these services typically foster a sense of place, improve residents' quality of life, improve health and can help to attract residents. Given these benefits, recreation and culture services are not often a popular option for cost-cutting or service level reductions. That said, Warfield's recreation agreement with the City of Trail concludes at the end of 2025. The agreement enables Warfield residents to use Trail facilities and programs at Trail resident rates, as well as use the library system. The cost was $151,200 in 2024 and is $157,000 in 2025. A decision to not renew may represent an opportunity to reduce the Village's expenses; however, such a decision could also result in Warfield residents paying higher rates when using Trail facilities.

Warfield's Centennial pool may represent an option for reducing service levels. At a net cost of $128,450 per year (2024 budget) the pool has a tax impact of $167 per year on an average residential single-family property (not including any user fees to use the pool), even though it is only open for two months of the year. There may be options to reduce service levels, including the potential to combine operations and coordinate schedules with the Rossland outdoor pool so that the two jurisdictions can share a pool manager and common group of lifeguards.

A function in which Warfield provides a service level above that of neighbouring Rossland is yard waste collection. Both municipalities recently transitioned to having the RDKB oversee both garbage and organics collection. Warfield levies a user fee for yard waste collection (garden waste, with branch pick-up on select days) which is provided 15 times a year through a contract with GFL. Rossland, on the other hand, provides one spring clean-up curbside collection (all residents also have the option of dropping yard waste off at the McKelvey Creek landfill in Trail for $5 a load).

Ability to Change

Municipalities have the ability to adjust the services they provide and the levels at which they are provided, depending on the needs of their residents and the municipal capacity. Some key services, such as sewage and water treatment levels, however, require minimum service levels that are set by the province. The cost of providing key "hard" services, such as water, sewer, and roads are also influenced by the level of maintenance. Each of these services, and their associated assets, has an optimal level of maintenance in order to maximize the useful life of the asset. Maximizing the life of the assets ultimately results in long term savings to the community, but the ongoing commitment to maintenance is both labour- and cost-intensive.

Where services and service levels cannot be adjusted, municipalities must instead consider the most cost-effective way of delivering the services, both in terms of who delivers the service (regional district, province, municipality, private contractor) and how the costs are shared. Figure 5.10 itemizes the Village's services, references the proportion of the 2024 operational budget that the service relates to, and notes possible options for service delivery that may offer operational savings, in addition to comments on impacts to the Village's overall operational budget.

Figure 5.10
Warfield Services, Delivery Options and Expense Impacts

Service	% VoW Expense 2024	Delivery Options	Potential to influence operational expenses
Sewer	15%	• Currently participate in shared treatment facility • Potential for additional sharing/contracting of duties and/or equipment	• Limited impact on expenses (less than 3% of overall expenses) • Primary expense is contract for treatment (which will increase with borrowing for plant upgrades), followed by capital contributions
Water	17%	• Current agreement with Teck for water supply • Operations of water treatment plant contracted to RDKB • Potential for sharing or contracting additional duties and/or equipment	• Addressing supply will be primary issue and expense • Cost of treatment upgrades • Need to build reserves • Maintenance and administration represent less than 3% of overall VoW 2024 operational expenses
Roads (Transp)	19%	• Potential for sharing or contracting maintenance duties and/or equipment	• Possible to reduce costs through sharing road maintenance, although having local staff to respond to a variety of PW issues represents a high level of service to the community
Parks	2%	• Potential for sharing or contracting maintenance duties and/or equipment	• Parks represents less than 1.6% of overall VoW 2024 operational expenses so reductions unlikely to have significant impact
Rec & Culture	14%	• Significant portion provided in partnership with Trail • Potential to explore options to change agreement • Reduce pool service levels (fewer hours; coordinate service with Rossland)	• Pool represents a significant cost • Preschool fees and community hall fees do not recover costs; explore additional uses for community hall, although both represent minimal opportunities for revenues • Reductions to Trail Resident recreation sharing and library costs could be significant
General Gov't & Fiscal	26%	• VoW uses contractors for CAO/CFO and corporate • Admin staff work 4-day week	• Staff levels lean for municipal operations, with minimal staff and reduced work weeks. Few opportunities to reduce costs.
Environ Health	3%	• Weekly garbage and organics provided by RDKB • Could reduce yard waste collection service	• Elimination of yard waste collection would remove $50 user fee
Protect Services	3%	• Bylaw enforcement contract exists with Rossland • Building Inspection by RDKB	• Minimal opportunities to reduce services; limited impact changes would have on overall expenses
Plan & Develop	1%	• Planning contractor delivers planning services and subdivision approvals	• Minimal opportunities to further reduce services; limited impact changes would have on expenses

Key Takeaways

- May be some opportunities to consider other partnerships for service delivery, particularly with transportation/public works (labour and/or equipment).
- Water supply options are already being investigated; no obvious cost savings have been identified through partnerships with the City of Trail.
- Some cost reductions may be possible with Trail recreation and with Centennial pool, providing noticeable impacts on expenses; but may impact quality of life and amenities for the community.
- Some service reduction options may exist in yard waste collection.

CAPITAL PROJECTS, ASSET MANAGEMENT AND RESERVES

The need for capital improvements was highlighted in the *Interim Report*; it was also identified as part of the Village's *2024-2028 Financial Plan*. The capital requirements stem from necessary replacements, renewal or upgrades to the Village's infrastructure, as well as to some projects that are needed to resolve issues with the Village's water supply. This section provides an overview of needs as identified in the Village's Asset Management database and *2024-2028 Financial Plan*. The capital requirements are then compared to the Village's reserves using a variety of metrics to identify required long-term infrastructure investments.

2024-2028 Financial Plan – Capital Projects

The Village's *2024-2028 Financial Plan* identified a number of general, sewer and water capital projects that were highlighted in the *Interim Report*, and are repeated in Figure 5.11 below. The capital projects identified within the plan have funding sources identified, including a combination of revenues, surplus, grants and reserves.

Figure 5.11
2024-2028 Warfield Capital Projects

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	5 Year Total
General Fund						
General Government		$40,000				$40,000
Transportation	$345,000	$229,000	$115,000	$150,000	$300,000	$1,139,000
Recreation and Culture	$64,500		$74,300			$138,800
Water						
Treatment Plant	$115,000					$115,000
Pressure Reducing Valves	$75,000	$115,000	$113,000	$122,000	$114,000	$539,000
Conservation	$50,000					$50,000
Other	$260,000					$260,000
Sewer						
Inflow and Infiltration	$75,000					$75,000
Lines and Mains	$240,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$115,000	$700,000
Totals	**$1,224,500**	**$459,000**	**$417,300**	**$387,000**	**$529,000**	**$3,016,800**

Asset Management

The Village has asset management information on the Village's water, sewer, road network, drainage and building assets including estimated replacement costs (2020 dollars), condition assessments, life expectancy and risk factors. The asset management database is a useful tool in assessing risk and making decisions regarding infrastructure investments.[26]

The process of developing an asset inventory and condition assessment includes many caveats and qualifying assumptions — many assets cannot be viewed and must be assessed instead using best management practices and assumptions regarding the life cycle of infrastructure and infrastructure components. Some assets have not been assigned any life expectancy in the database, further limiting the ability to assess risk, calculate amortization costs and other metrics to assist in investment decisions. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, asset management is helpful at guiding priorities and investment needs. Figure 5.12 reiterates the asset renewal (replacement) cost of each infrastructure type, which reflect the 2020 costs to replace an asset so that it provides the same function as it did before (including associated labour and installation costs).

The information can be combined with the Village's financial information to calculate some indicators promoted by Asset Management BC as tools for long-term infrastructure financial planning, including sustainable annual funding, annual funding gaps and accumulated infrastructure funding gaps.[27] The simplified equation to determine sustainable annual funding, at least for the purposes of long-term financial planning for asset management, is to divide the Village's asset replacement cost by its useful life. The definition is similar to the amortization of

Figure 5.12
Asset Renewal Costs

Asset	Renewal Cost
Storm water	$4,276,036
Municipal buildings	$6,234,400
Transportation (roads)	$5,465,889
Municipal wastewater infrastructure	$8,977,558
Water infrastructure	$23,382,314
Playgrounds	$915,000
TOTAL	$49,251,197

26 Updated 2024 asset management information was available after the completion of the initial phases of the Study. Updated replacement values and implications are referenced in Appendix II.

27 See *How to Write a Long Term Financial Plan for Asset Management, 2023 Edition*, developed by FIT Local Government Consulting Ltd. in partnership with Asset Management BC and the Government Finance Officers Association of BC.

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tangible capital assets that appears in the Village's financial statements, although the useful life estimates used for financial reporting (including in the Village's financial statements) are shorter than the age and remaining useful life estimated for much of the Village's infrastructure assets.[28] The concept, however, is similar in that amortization is intended to represent and communicate the annual cost of using that asset to Village Council, staff and residents. If municipalities set aside reserves each year equal to the amortization amount, they will be funding the future replacement costs over the amortization period.

The annual funding gap is a combination of the sustainable annual funding, less funding sources already used and identified, such as annual contributions to capital reserve accounts. The accumulated infrastructure funding gap takes into account the remaining years in each asset's life, and the amount that would ideally need to have been saved already, considering the point in the lifecycle. Put differently, it is the amount that would have already been saved, if the annual sustainable funding methodology had been placed into reserves throughout the life of the asset. The gap is therefore the amount needed to "catch up" given the amount of each asset's lifecycle that has already been "consumed." This number can be daunting, but is intended to be an indicator of where a municipality needs to invest more time to determine the asset condition to better assess risks and needs, rather than the assumption that the entire deficit needs to be eliminated imminently.

Based on the information available some highlights of the findings are included in Figure 5.13. The fact that most infrastructure has long lifecycles and that the condition assessment is often prepared based primarily on age and best practices, sensitivity analysis of the sustainable annual funding and accumulated funding gaps was also calculated and included in Figure 5.13, assuming all assets last for an additional 25% longer than the life span identified within the Village's database (e.g., for assets that have an estimated life span of 80 years, it was assumed they would

Figure 5.13
Asset Management Indicators

	Replacement Value	Annual Sustainable Funding	Accumulated Infrastructure Funding Gap	Accumulated Funding Gap if asset lasts 25% longer	Annual Funding Gap
Municipal Wastewater	$8,977,558	$110,197	$7,317,985	$5,672,377	$0
Stormwater	$4,276,036	$73,058	$3,908,345	$3,096,485	$5,980
Transportation (Roads)	$5,465,889	$261,794	$3,636,097	$2,870,453	$176,422
Water	$23,382,314	$297,886	$7,899,992	$6,181,578	$118,586
Totals	**$42,101,797**	**$742,935**	**$22,762,420**	**$17,820,893**	**$300,988**
Deduct Community Works Fund and Growing Communities reserves			-$2,530,953	-$2,530,953	
			$20,231,467	**$15,289,940**	

28 Much of the Village's infrastructure assets are estimated to have a useful life of 80 years, which is beyond that used in financial statements for amortization (60 years is more common).

last 100 years). The sensitivity analysis helps to establish a range of funding rather than a precise number, recognizing the limitations of the asset management assessments and assumptions.

Some other indicators have been used to consider different perspectives on the asset management information based on risk assessment as a way of prioritizing items rated in the database as extreme and high risk. Asset management risk takes into account the likelihood of performance failures, but also the impact of that failure. The impact of a manhole failing, for instance, would have a different rating than that of a water or sewer main. Figure 5.14 includes some indicators that help to highlight different aspects of the infrastructure challenges the Village is facing, and different ways of evaluating the appropriate investments needed. Figure 5.14 does not account for existing reserves or annual reserve funding that is already dedicated in the 2024-2028 budget, so does not identify a "funding gap," but rather provides an indication of the risk of upgrades.

It is important to remember the fact that many municipalities are facing similar challenges with respect to having significant accumulated infrastructure funding gaps and have insufficient reserves to help address infrastructure needs. Figure 5.15 provides some context from the City of Trail and City of Rossland's 2024 budget

Figure 5.14
Risk Indicators for Assets

	Extreme	High	Medium	**Total**
Municipal Wastewater Collection	$166,530	$1,685,539	$4,530,404	**$6,382,473**
Stormwater Collection			$3,827,606	**$3,827,606**
Transportation Network	$21,893	$538,492	$1,998,765	**$2,559,150**
Water Treatment and Distribution	$216,953	$1,710,247	$5,910,075	**$7,837,275**
Total	**$405,376**	**$3,934,278**	**$16,266,851**	**$20,606,504**

Investment to replace extreme risk assets in 5 years, high in 10 and medium in 30	
- Year 1 to 5	$1,016,731
- Year 6 to 10	$935,656
- Year 11 to 30	$542,228
Annual investment to replace extreme and high risk assets in 20 years	$216,983
Annual investment to replace extreme, high and medium risk assets in 25 years	$824,260
Annual investment to replace extreme, high risk and medium assets in 30 years	$686,883

Notes

Does not include building assets and any other assets assigned a low, nominal or null risk value deliberation process as a reminder that these issues are facing all communities, including others in the Greater Trail Area.

Figure 5.15
Warfield is Not Alone

To reiterate the point that many municipalities are facing similar infrastructure gaps, or deficits as they are often referenced, the following provides an excerpt from Rossland and Trail's 2024 budget process.

The City of Rossland, in 2024 budget process, increased its water user fees based on their infrastructure assessment, noting that the City estimates that about "50 per cent of water infrastructure is in 'poor or worse' condition, and will need to be maintained, upgraded or replaced in the next 10 years at a cost of about $34.6M or $3.5M per year." [9]

The City of Trail noted during its 2024 budget presentation that the City's water rates were not sufficient to fund capital into the future, and that there was a "significant deficit between potential capital projects and the annual net operating contribution to capital." [10] The City raised options for funding the deficit, including allocating additional funds from general surplus, allocating all the Community Works Funds to the water utility, borrowing $10 million in 2026 and pay back over 30 years (Interest is $14.9 million) or increasing the tax contribution.

Additional Projects

Asset management is generally intended as a long-term infrastructure investment planning tool, and not intended to replace detailed capital planning based on condition assessments. It is not likely to encompass all of the Village's future capital needs. Two projects not identified in the asset management process are the upgrades that have been identified for the water treatment plant, estimated at $1,675,000 (2023) and the need to establish a new water supply, due to the agreement with Teck, most recently estimated at $10.9 million. While funding for a portion of the water treatment upgrades ($115,000) is included in the Village's *2024-2028 Financial Plan*, the cost for the remainder of these two projects is in addition to the amounts identified through asset management.

Surplus and Reserves

Another measure of the health of a municipality is accumulated surplus. Accumulated surplus is the sum of operating and capital surplus, statutory reserves and equity in tangible capital assets, and is reported in municipal annual financial statements. When this figure is considered on a per capita basis, Warfield has the lowest accumulated surplus per capita of any of the 153 municipalities that shared financial statements with the province in 2023. The need for accumulated surplus depends in part upon on the infrastructure — a municipality with minimal infrastructure may

29 Jim Bailey, "Imminent increase in Rossland sewer and water rates," *Rossland News*, December 14, 2023.

30 City of Trail, 2024 – 2028 Draft Financial Plan presentation, May 1, 2024.

have a low accumulated surplus due to the lack of tangible capital assets, and reduced need to fund asset renewal. Given that the Village does have water, sewer and road infrastructure assets, having the lowest surplus per capita is just one indicator of the Village's need to continue building its reserves.

Several of the asset management indicators, including sustainable funding gap and the accumulated infrastructure gap, take into consideration the existing reserves. Warfield had not been making significant contributions to its reserves until a policy shift in 2021. The Village has made significant strides since that time and is now setting aside increasing reserve allocations and capital funding as part of their operating budget. Warfield also has some operating surplus as well as cumulative grant funding from gas tax as well as the growing communities grant that can be allocated to help address some of its infrastructure needs. The Village's reserve and surplus fund status is summarized in Figure 5.16.

While the asset management analysis provides guidance to the ideal annual contributions to reserves, and the annual gap given the current funding, another approach that some jurisdictions use is to establish reserve policies that that reference targets for operating and capital reserves. This practice is more common in regional districts, due in part to the complication of managing many discreet service and utility funds, each of which has its own operating reserve, and often more than one associated capital reserve (equipment, vehicles, capital etc.). Regardless, the parameters help provide a benchmark of what might be reasonable, particularly for

Figure 5.16
Reserves and Surplus – End of 2023

Accounts/Funds	End of 2023 Total
Water Reserve	$317,435
Equipment Reserve	$1,119
General Capital Reserve	$69,089
Community Hall Reserve	$1,809
Growing Communities Fund	$943,889
Community Works Fund (Federal Gas Tax)	$1,587,064
Other Grants (unspent – Columbia Basin Trust and UBCM 911 Next Generation)	$60,163
General Fund Surplus	$273,989
Water Fund Surplus	$374,646
Sewer Fund Surplus	$872,481
TOTAL	**$4,501,684**

water and sewer services which, like the regional district services, have their own separate funds. The RDKB's reserve policy not only sets targets, but also identifies their purpose and how they are to be used. The RDKB policy indicates that operating reserves should have sufficient funds for two months of operating costs (and notes four months costs as a maximum). Operating funds are to be created using surplus (excess operating revenues over operating expenses) from previous years. Minimums for capital reserves are funding adequate to fund the next three years of capital projects identified as capital reserve funded in the long-term financial plan (for that service). The maximum for the capital reserve accounts is funding adequate to fund all capital projects identified as capital reserve funded in the long-term financial plan of the specific service area. Figure 5.17 compares these policy terms, and what the RDKB policy indicates is appropriate, to the Village's existing reserve accounts (at the end of 2023).

While the policy represents one comparison, given that the Village does not have — and is not required to have — its surplus funds and reserve accounts set up as rigidly as those of the Regional District, the comparison is not as relevant. As well, the funding targets do not account for the funds the Village has in its gas tax and growing

Figure 5.17
Comparison of Surplus Targets with RDKB Policy

	RDKB Policy Minimum	RDKB Policy Maximum	VoW Funds (end of 2023)
RDKB Operating Reserve Policy	2 months rounded to highest $1,000	4 months, rounded to highest $1,000	
VoW General Operating Fund	$402,000	$804,000	$273,989
VoW Water Fund – Surplus	$102,000	$203,000	$374,646
VoW Sewer Fund – Surplus	$92,000	$183,000	$872,481
RDKB Capital Reserve Policy	Adequate to fund projects identified as capital reserve funded for the next 3 years of the long-term financial plan for that service	Adequate to fund all projects identified as capital reserve funded in the long-term financial plan for that service	
VoW General Capital	$567,800	$1,017,800	$69,089
VoW Water Reserve	$528,000	$764,000	$317,435
VoW Sewer	$420,000	$650,000	(Village only has the Sewer surplus fund, shown above)

communities fund accounts, not to mention the flexibility in the use of its surplus funds.

Ability to Change

Many of the indicators that rely on the asset management data are intended to assist in long-term financial planning. Using the information, municipalities can better prepare for future needs by identifying gaps and building reserves. Indeed, as noted earlier, the Village is now setting aside reserve funds that, if taken into account with the Community Works Funds, are close to the sustainable annual funding level, which represents significant progress from the financial situation five years prior. While the sustainable annual funding and annual funding gaps represent useful targets, addressing the "accumulated infrastructure gap" highlighted in this section, combined with establishing a new water supply system, is a more difficult challenge to address, with fewer options to fund this gap.

Key Takeaways

- The Village has a sustainable annual funding need of approximately $740,000 per year over the long-term. Given the existing reserve funding planned in the *2024-2028 Financial Plan*, the funding gap ranges from $183,000 to $301,000 depending on the ultimate life of its infrastructure assets. If the Village's Community Works grant funding, which is approximately $270,000 annually, is dedicated to infrastructure reserves, in addition to a minimal tax increase (2.7%), it is possible for the Village to reduce and eliminate the annual funding gap for these assets.

- In addition to that investment, the Village has a deficit, or accumulated funding gap, of $17.8 million and $22.7 million, which would represent a reduced $15.3 million to $20.2 million if the existing Community Works and Growing Communities funds (not the subsequent annual amounts) were used to reduce that deficit. It is not expected that municipalities have the capacity to simply eliminate their accumulated funding gap or infrastructure deficit; however, it is useful to understand the magnitude and scope of the deficit.

- In addition to this gap, which is based solely on asset management database (and does not include building assets), the Village is facing two significant water capital projects:

  - Water treatment facility upgrade, estimated at $1,675,000 (2023) with roughly 40% of those costs needed in the short (5-year) term, of which only $115,000 is currently allocated in *Financial Plan*

  - Estimated $10.9 million project to create the Village's own water supply, in response to an agreement with Teck to no longer utilize the company's water supply system that has thus far served the community

- Of the asset management database, $4.3 million represents infrastructure noted as extreme or high risk based on the condition and likelihood of failure and impact of that failure which, at the level of $740,000 reserve/capital funding referenced above, could be addressed in a six-year period

BORROWING CAPACITY

Municipalities have the authority to borrow funds for capital projects through the Municipal Finance Authority. The *Community Charter* limits municipal authority to borrow by capping the annual liability servicing costs for municipalities. Liability servicing costs cannot exceed 25 per cent of eligible municipal revenue. At the end of 2023, Warfield's available liability servicing capacity was at $577,250. If translated into 30-year loan at current MFA rates, this capacity translates into the ability to borrow close to $8.9 million. The annual payment to sustain that level of debt translates into $752 on an average property valued at $429,717 (tax rate of 1.75 per $1,000 of assessed value).

Figure 5.18 shows the borrowing capacity for each of the RDKB communities as at the end of 2023 (impacts are based on 2024 assessment), including impacts on an average house in each municipality (note that values of the average single-family house vary by municipality).

Figure 5.18
Borrowing Capacity

Municipality	Liability Servicing Capacity	Borrowing limit (30 years)	Impact on avg. home of borrowing full limit	Impact on avg. home of borrowing $5 million
Warfield	$577,250	$8.9 million	$752	$421
Trail	$4,324,090	$66.8 million	$291	$22
Rossland	$1,940,716	$30 million	$834	$139
Montrose	$342,522	$5.3 million	$755	$712
Grand Forks	$3,279,168	$50.7 million	$1,036	$102
Fruitvale	$637,260	$9.85 million	$718	$364
Midway	$432,748	$6.7 million	$578	$432

Liability and borrowing limits, and the impacts on average home, are just one indicator of the challenges for Warfield in borrowing to meet the municipality's needs, and the impact borrowing would have on its taxpayers. Figure 5.18 illustrates how the impact of the same amount of borrowing, in two different municipalities, can be quite different, given the different tax base (i.e. the fact that residents aren't carrying the majority of the burden), but also the different average property values.

Ability to Change

Given that the limits are set by legislation, there are limited opportunities to change the borrowing capacity of the municipality, without also increasing the revenues to the municipality. A municipality may exceed the liability service limit with the approval of the provincial Inspector of Municipalities, but approval only occurs in extreme circumstances, such as a health or safety concern.

Key Takeaways

- Warfield, barring any special permission by the province, does not have the capacity to borrow funds that equal the estimated costs for addressing its accumulated infrastructure gap, or even just the water intake project without grant support. The burden of borrowing even half the cost of the water intake project would result in a significant rise in taxes for Warfield residents.
- Borrowing the same amount has a reduced impact in adjacent municipalities of Trail and Rossland.
- The relative impact that borrowing has on residential properties is impacted not only by the size of the tax base, but the diversity of the tax base. Where the tax base is almost exclusively residential, residents must bear the full burden of borrowing costs.

INCORPORATION CRITERIA

Another perspective on municipal sustainability is to consider the factors that are used to establish boundaries for new municipalities. Figure 5.19 references the key considerations, associated criteria, and an explanation of why the factor is relevant for the establishment of a municipal boundary. Figure 5.20 then takes the criteria and applies them to the Warfield boundary to evaluate whether the community would be supported if Warfield were currently unincorporated, and proposed to be incorporated as a municipality today.

Ability to Change

The criteria included in Figures 5.19 and 5.20 are fairly consistently applied in providing an initial "technical" and impartial lens for the purposes of establishing boundaries for potential incorporation areas. It is not always easy for boundaries to optimize and/or satisfy each criterion; and there is always an element of community input to ensure proposed municipal boundaries honour and reflect community identity. However, the province, through the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, has overseen the creation of several new municipalities, and is also acutely aware of issues facing many of the existing municipalities in the province. The criteria have been developed over time and reflect the province's best efforts to help set new municipalities up for success and long-term sustainability. Those communities that do not meet many of the criteria therefore become less likely to receive grants from the province to even examine different structural options.

Key Takeaways

- Given some of Warfield's tax base (lack of diversity), lower population and minimal areas for growth, the community does not meet some of the key criteria for new municipalities. If unincorporated, the current Warfield boundaries would not likely meet enough of the municipal incorporation criteria to be a high priority to receive grants supporting an incorporation study.

Figure 5.19
Municipal Incorporation Boundary Criteria

Factor	Criterion	Explanation
Future Growth and Development	Incorporation boundaries encompass areas identified for future growth/development in any Regional Growth Strategy and/or Official Community Plan. Incorporation scenarios minimize the amount of protected agricultural land, and lands designated in the OCP as Agricultural, and Class 9 farmland within the boundaries. Incorporation scenarios represent areas that are large enough to allow for future growth, but sufficiently compact to facilitate efficient and cost-effective servicing.	The RGS and OCP were developed through processes that included a considerable amount of public engagement. The plans identify growth areas, and land use categories that reference where future development may occur, and that speak to allowable uses and densities. A range of land uses, such as Commercial, Medium Density Residential, and Industrial are important to include within the Incorporation Study Area boundary.
Property Assessment Class	Incorporation scenarios include properties that together cover a range of property assessment classes. In particular, efforts are taken to include Class 2, 4, 5 and 6 within municipal boundaries due in part to the impacts these uses often have on local services, the employment they provide, and the desire for a balance of residential and non-residential property assessment base. Incorporation scenarios seek to minimize properties identified by BC Assessment as Class 9 Farm, due to the tax impacts to those Class 9 properties (loss of residential exemptions) after incorporation.	A diverse tax base allows for sharing of the tax burden across the various property classes and provides opportunities to balance contributions from different uses during the establishment of tax rates.
Agricultural Land Reserve	Incorporation scenarios minimize the amount of ALR land included within the municipal boundaries.	Given that Class 9 (farm) properties lose tax exemptions in a municipal incorporation scenario, incorporation can present a burden for some ALR properties.

Factor	Criterion	Explanation
Local Government Services and Service Areas (water and sewer)	Incorporation scenarios include the whole of individual service areas, particularly for utility infrastructure (water and sewer).	Wherever practicable, efforts should be taken to include whole local service areas within a proposed municipal boundary. Service planning, governance, finance and operation are easier to manage when the entire service area is contained within one jurisdiction under the responsibility of one local government, and one jurisdiction has responsibility and control for both land use and utilities.
Potential Infrastructure	Incorporation scenarios accommodate the need for future infrastructure development, in particular anticipated expansion of sanitary sewer collection and treatment systems.	'Hard' infrastructure services are most efficiently provided where the jurisdiction has control over the utilities and the land use.
Local Road Network	Incorporation scenarios include only those roads that are required to facilitate efficient transportation and land use planning, complete communities and that are important to the local community. Incorporation scenarios, wherever practicable, include complete local roads, and do not create "orphan" road ends by excluding portions of no-thru roads.	Minimizing the number and length of local roads is an important cost consideration for any municipality. The longer the road network, the greater the operation and maintenance cost borne by the community.
Tax Base	Incorporation scenarios create an assessment base that is significant in value to support the municipal needs.	In addition to the diversity of the tax base, having a significant base helps to reduce the tax burden, particularly for fixed costs, contributes toward financial resiliency and increases the borrowing power.
Parcel and natural/physical boundaries	Incorporation scenarios follow established lot lines, and do not create municipal boundaries that divide lots. Incorporation scenarios use natural areas or community divisions, where possible, to help preserve communities of interest, and create logical, contiguous boundaries.	The use of logical contiguous boundaries assists in providing efficient servicing, and fosters a sense of community between neighbours.

Factor	Criterion	Explanation
Population	Incorporation scenarios should have sufficient population to sustain a resilient community, including long-term options for municipal candidates and representation. While there is no express minimum, the province has indicated a preference for communities in excess of 3,000 as an ideal target. Incorporation scenarios should represent areas with population densities that set the areas apart from their rural surroundings, and allow for the development and financing of efficient infrastructure.	While several municipalities in BC have small populations, larger populations are generally associated with economic viability and resiliency. Furthermore, larger populations are needed to ensure sufficient pool of candidates to fill council positions over time. Concentrations of people is a key factor in differentiating between urban development nodes and rural living. Density is also critical to the development of efficient infrastructure networks and more urban local services.
Community Input	Where practical, include whole settlement areas or communities within the boundary instead of dividing communities that identify as a node or place. Preference given to communities where issues regarding services, service levels and/or governance have been identified and where incorporation provides a potential solution to those issues.	Statistics Canada identifies Designated Places and Designated Centres based on input from the Province of BC. The boundaries of these designations may speak to sense of community. Other communities may develop or define themselves based on subdivision patterns, or key features or community hubs such as a park or local commercial area. Unless identified for inclusion through other criteria, areas that are satisfied with the current regional district model of services, service levels and governance, and have not expressed any interest in incorporation are generally not included.

Figure 5.20
Evaluation of Warfield's Boundaries

Evaluation Criteria	Comments
Future Growth and Development	
– Municipal boundary Includes areas identified for future growth/development in the OCP.	Includes Emerald Ridge which is the primary location for future development. The boundary offers few opportunities for expansion, particularly for industrial or commercial growth
– Boundary excludes lands that are identified as areas for rural residential development with densities below 1 unit per 4 ha.	The boundary includes some large lot residential lands that have some potential for subdivision, but few large rural acreages. Area is compact with reasonable density for servicing.
– Boundary excludes agricultural, ALR or farm class (Class 9) land where possible.	No ALR or farm class lands are included
– Represents compact area with good density for cost-effective servicing.	Boundary is limited by the existence of the Trail City boundary, limiting what might otherwise be logical boundaries that would improve Warfield's property assessment class diversity. Other adjacent lands are constrained by zoning (Conservation Area), as well as topography (steep slopes and hillsides). Some further lands along Highway 3B might be worth considering for inclusion.
Existing Settlements and Regulations	
– Existing settlement or community nodes are kept whole, and within the recommended boundary.	All significant existing development areas within the Warfield community, including medium-density residential zones and commercial zones are contained within the boundary.
– Incorporation scenarios include higher-density residential nodes and commercial areas that service those communities	Preferred options would be to include industrial areas that are adjacent to the boundary, and provide employment opportunities. Boundary encompasses the Warfield community, but the community is integrated with and receives services from adjoining areas.
Population and Population Density	

Evaluation Criteria	Comments
– Population within boundary exceeds 1,000, with preferred minimum of 3,000 – Population density sets the area apart from its rural surroundings, and allows for the development of efficient infrastructure.	Statistics Canada 2021 Census reports a population of 1,753, and a density of 929.3 persons/km^2 for Warfield. The population is low compared to adjacent municipalities of Trail and Rossland, but population density is higher than adjacent communities
Property Assessment Class	
– Includes properties that together cover a range of property assessment classes, and is significant in diversity (in particular provides a mix of residential and non-residential uses)	The municipal boundary contains limited properties assessed as Class 2, 4, 5 and 6. The 98% residential assessment does not meet recommended tax base diversity criteria.
Tax Base (Property Assessment Values)	
– Creates an assessment base that is significant in value.	At $323 million, the assessment base of the municipal boundary is not great; however, it is greater than the base in 37 of the 160 municipalities (23%) in BC today (2024 data). There is potential for an increase with the development of the Emerald Ridge development, but absorption is likely to take awhile, and development is still only Class 1 (residential). The assessment base, at 98% residential, would make the jurisdiction highly dependent on residential property tax revenues. Only six municipalities have a total assessment bases with a greater percentage of residential assessment value (2024).
Local Government Services (infrastructure and others)	
– Includes the whole of individual local service areas for water, sewer, that are provided to the community.	The boundary includes the entire water and sewer service area, as well as street lighting; however, a new water source has not yet been established and may require partnership with the City of Trail. The current preferred

Evaluation Criteria	Comments
– Accommodates the need for important future infrastructure development	source (new Columbia River intake) requires river access and intake pipes to be located within the City of Trail. Sewer treatment is done on a regional basis together with City of Trail and City of Rossland, so shared service provision already provided. While not infrastructure related, the proximity of Trail, and to a lesser extent Rossland, mean that recreation facilities are used by residents throughout the greater region; contributions to these facilities could logically be done on a broader basis. Library is currently provided through City of Trail.
Local Road Network	
– Includes only those roads that are required to facilitate proper transportation and land use planning, and that are important to the local community.	Road network is compact and reasonable for servicing the community.
– Includes complete local roads and does not create "orphan" road-ends by excluding portions of no-through roads.	
Natural/physical and parcel boundaries	
– Incorporation scenarios follow established lot lines and do not create municipal boundaries that divide lots	Some boundaries follow logical physical constraints (steep slopes), but others represent seemingly arbitrary borders with adjacent municipality (Trail).
Community Input	
– Preference given to communities where issues regarding service, service levels and/or governance have been identified and where incorporation provides a potential solution to those issues	Residents appear to identify with their community, but still recognize need for cooperation with adjacent communities, and access services beyond municipal borders

CHAPTER 6
SUSTAINABILITY CONCLUSIONS

This chapter draws conclusions from the analysis and key takeaways in the previous chapter that examined a variety of different sustainability indicators, and referenced options intended to bolster the municipality's sustainability. The review of the indicators revealed a mix of results, including some that confirmed the Village's capacity to operate sustainably over the long-term, with other results that call into question whether operating as a separate municipality is the most prudent approach. Figure 6.1 highlights some of the varying results.

Figure 6.1
Assessment Highlights

Positive	Negative
• The municipality has the capacity to set aside $740,000 per year in sustainable annual funding for water, sewer and roads projects, with a minimal $40 (2.7%) tax increase or combination of a lesser tax increase and increased user fee, helping to set the stage for future infrastructure upgrades, consistent with the Village's asset management inventory and assessment • The municipality has sufficient existing Community Works funding that could be used to address the more immediate water treatment upgrades that are not identified through the asset management database • The municipality has the potential to grow its tax base in the future, adding up to one third of the 2024 tax base and an estimated 480 people over time through the development of Emerald Ridge, which will enhance the Village's ability to maintain infrastructure and community services • The municipality experienced population growth in the last Census period • The municipality's operations are relatively lean, and the Village has taken advantage of opportunities to share service delivery and service costs	• The municipality's tax base is 98% residential, with no significant vacant lands available for diversifying the Village's tax base to reduce the burden of costs on residents • As one of the smallest municipalities in BC, Warfield has limited opportunities to accommodate growth or to diversify its tax base • The municipality has an agreement with Teck to implement a new water source for the community; a project that, without grant funding, will exceed its borrowing capacity. • Borrowing the Village's full $8.9 million limit would result in a $752 increase in taxes, or a 50% increase of the current municipal rate, not including the $2 million funding gap that remains. • Given the insufficiency of capital reserves over many years, the municipality has accumulated an infrastructure deficit (accumulated funding gap) of between $15.3 and $22.8 million • Based on the current land base, assessment base and population, if proposed as a municipality today, Warfield would not meet several of the province's standard criteria intended to help establish a sustainable municipality

Based on the analysis:

- If Warfield were currently an unincorporated community, the current Village boundary would not likely be supported as the basis for an incorporation study due to its inability to meet several key criteria for establishing municipalities — namely a diverse tax base with sufficient population and economic base with distinct service needs that set the community apart from adjacent communities.

- The Village is faced with upgrades to aging infrastructure — a problem that Warfield shared with many municipalities. The Village, however, lacks the borrowing capacity, and the diverse and sizeable tax base to soften the burden. The lack of any significant non-residential tax base (2%) places the burden of costs on residential users.

- Looming infrastructure upgrades are exacerbated by a lack of funding for reserves in earlier years, as evidenced by the accumulated infrastructure funding gap.

- The development potential of Emerald Ridge is encouraging in terms of building new housing stock in a higher-end part of the municipality. Some of the infrastructure is in place to service these new residences; however, additional utilities will need to be built. These additional utilities will add to the Village's maintenance costs. That said, an injection of newer residential building stock could help increase funds for the municipality. The Village could also continue to support other building efforts, including renovations, addition of secondary suites and accessory suites, which would have the added benefit of increasing housing with minimal service upgrades, as well as boosting the Village's population. Supporting new development is one of the Village's primary opportunities to generate additional revenues.

- The Village already has a lean municipal operation that takes advantage of partnerships with other local governments in the current service delivery. While expanded partnerships could continue to be explored, there are not many opportunities to significantly reduce municipal costs. Those options that are available, such as closing the pool and eliminating the Trail recreation agreement, may be unpopular due to the erosion of recreation services and programs that speak to quality of life offered by the community. Other service level reductions, such as yard waste collection, offer some options, but result in only minimal tax reductions for residents.

- Given the Village's inability to borrow significant amounts, together with the impacts of borrowing, grants remain one of the only realistic options to address some of the larger ticket infrastructure items such as establishing a new water supply. Given the need, the Village may want to consider funding a consultant grant-writer to devote dedicated resources to applying for various funding opportunities.

- The need to establish a new water supply, and the urgency with which that needs to occur, remains one of the key determinants of the Village's viability. Negotiations with Teck on the ability to delay any new water supply, or an agreement that acknowledges that the project cannot proceed until grant funding becomes available, would be key to long-term sustainability for the Village.

- If the municipality must resort to borrowing to fund the water intake, the full borrowing capacity of $8.9 million would result in an extra $752 in taxes, representing a 50% increase in the 2024 municipal tax burden on an average house (not including utility fees and parcel taxes). The remaining $2 million could be addressed in part with existing reserves (Growing Communities Fund), leaving an additional $1 million to be generated by the community.

It is worth reiterating that the infrastructure gap is not a problem that is unique to Warfield. The municipality's ability to address the gap, however, is constrained by its reliance upon residential assessment base in raising significant funds to address the needs, as well as the municipality's limited ability to borrow funds to address those needs. It is these two fundamental issues that are ultimately at the heart of the municipality's sustainability challenge.

While the analysis herein does not conclude that the Village of Warfield is unsustainable as a standalone municipality, it does raise sufficient concerns that warrant consideration of available alternatives. The community has historically identified as distinct from the City of Trail; however, the reality of the current cost-sharing of amenities and services, facilities and schools speak to the connections and integration of the communities. Any advantages that may exist from structural options that enable Village residents to benefit from the industrial uses that are already located in the immediate vicinity of Warfield, and help realize some of the upgrades needed to support the community (without the same magnitude of tax impacts), warrant further investigation and consideration.

The next paper to be provided by the consultants considers the impacts of structural changes, which unlike the options referenced in this chapter, have the potential to impact the underlying tax base fundamentals and associated borrowing capacity that could help to sustain the community.

CHAPTER 7
RESTRUCTURE OPTIONS

This chapter provides an overview of the restructure options available to the Village of Warfield that may help to address sustainability challenges highlighted in the previous *Sustainability Assessment*. The *Sustainability Assessment* report did not definitively rule out the option of continuing to operate the Village as a standalone municipality. It did note, however, that there are some key risk factors that will make continued operation difficult, as well as costly for residents. The limited borrowing authority, in particular, combined with the 98% residential tax base, presents some risks and challenges in securing a new water source (independent from Teck), as well as in responding to important infrastructure needs. The *Assessment* acknowledged that remaining as a standalone municipality would result in a significant cost burden for local residents, and noted that there were few opportunities to minimize the financial impact given the Village's lean operations and limited menu of services. Efforts to minimizing tax increases could, therefore, affect the Village's services that, through the *Study's* survey, were identified as being valued by its residents (see Chapter 8 and Appendix VII).

Regardless of the outcome of the *Sustainability Assessment*, it was always anticipated that this stage of the *Study* would include a report that identified, at a high level, possible municipal restructure options that could be explored as alternatives to being a standalone municipality. The two basic forms of local government restructure — amalgamation and becoming part of an electoral area (disincorporation) — were referenced in the mailout sent to all residents (see Figure 7.1 on the following page). This chapter explores these options in greater detail.

It is important to note that while the restructure options are discussed as alternatives that could be explored to address some of the challenges identified in the *Sustainability Assessment*, without any significant new grants or unanticipated revenue, any response to the community's impending infrastructure upgrades will almost certainly require an increase in taxes in all scenarios. Water and sewer system improvements that specifically service Warfield residents (and only Warfield residents) will need to be paid for by the users of those systems, regardless of the local government structure in place. Because infrastructure costs are recovered from users, it is anticipated that both restructure options would involve increased taxes over current rates. However, the increases required under one option may not be as significant as the increases under the other. As well, the different alternatives may provide for different financing opportunities for upgrades. The differences between the restructure options, and the respective financial impacts, would be investigated, analyzed and quantified in a future study.

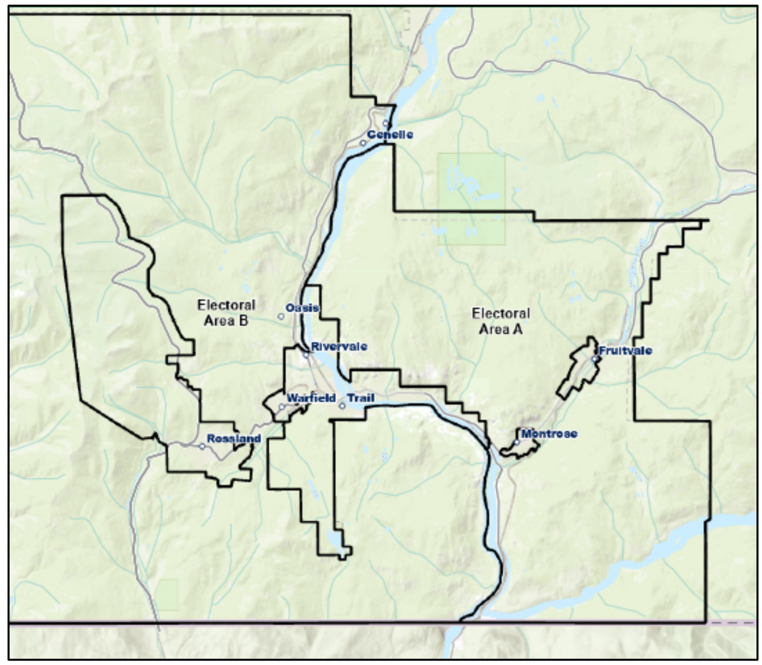
Figure 7.1: Options Overview

	Remain a standalone municipality	Amalgamate	Part of Electoral Area in Regional District
Features	• Decisions made for Warfield residents by locally-elected representatives (Warfield Council) • Servicing decisions made to respond to local needs	• Warfield residents would share some service costs across the larger amalgamated tax base. A larger municipality has the capacity to borrow more funds to help address the infrastructure needs of Warfield.	• As an unincorporated area, Warfield would receive the same services, but decisions for those services would be made by the RD Board with one director from the electoral area. Road maintenance would be provided by the province
Key Issues	• Inability to pay (or borrow) for looming infrastructure needs • Limited tax base and diverse tax base to spread burden of costs • Limited options to further reduce operational costs • Limited opportunities to expand tax base	• As part of a larger municipality, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels, with decisions made by RD Board of Directors • Road maintenance would be determined by the province, without local input
Governance	• Warfield residents elect Warfield Council members	• As part of an expanded municipality, all residents, including Warfield residents, would elect Council • Potential for a dedicated Warfield council member during a transition period	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents (together with other electoral area residents) would elect one electoral area director to participate on the RD Board of Directors
Anticipated Cost Impacts *(would be confirmed by a future study)*	• Taxes will rise to meet the community's infrastructure and service needs • Boundary expansions could be explored to augment tax base • All options to reduce service levels and costs would be explored	• Likely lower taxes than a standalone municipality due to the broader and more diverse tax base for shared services • Infrastructure that services only Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield residents/users	• Likely lower taxes than standalone municipality primarily due to the province assuming responsibility for roads (even when provincial rural tax is factored in) • Infrastructure services delivered only to Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield users

AMALGAMATION

Amalgamation with one or more neighbouring municipalities is an option that has been considered in Warfield in the past. It was identified in the Terms of Reference for this *Study* and was proposed by residents during the community engagement process. As previously noted, no local jurisdictions — the City of Trail, City of Rossland, RDKB or any of the other municipalities within the region — were engaged as part of this *Study* to determine if there is any interest in pursuing amalgamation together with the Village. Discussions with neighbouring jurisdictions have always been anticipated to be part of any subsequent study, and only pursued if the Committee, and subsequently the Village Council, confirmed interest in exploring restructuring options.

Figure 7.2: Map of Warfield and Surrounding Area



Notwithstanding that caveat, the City of Trail represents the most compelling opportunity for amalgamation given that the eastern portion of the Village shares a boundary of more than 5.8 km in length with Trail. The City Rossland's boundaries are also quite close to Warfield (1.3 km in straight-line distance at the closest point, or 3 km by road along Highway 3B). Given the cluster of municipalities that comprise the Lower Columbia sub-region, and the proximity of the Villages of Montrose and Fruitvale (see Figure 7.2), there exists the potential for a broader amalgamation with several jurisdictions combining. However, one of the challenges with amalgamation is obtaining agreement of each jurisdiction, both to participate in the necessary study, and to actually amalgamate. The province has a long history, tradition and policy of deferring to local municipalities to consent to any structural governance changes. The province's approach is reflected in local government legislation — specifically, section 279 of the *Community Charter* (under the heading "no forced amalgamations") states that two or more municipalities can only amalgamate if the merger is supported by more than 50% of the votes in separate referendums held in each municipality.

Due to this threshold, significant structural changes typically proceed after several years of contemplating, discussing and studying the option, and often after multiple attempts at structural change. It takes time for residents to consider, digest and ultimately support significant changes to their community's structure of governance. Having two municipalities agree to a combined future is challenging; involving additional municipalities only increases the complexity. While it has been studied more recently by a few jurisdictions, amalgamation of two municipalities is rare in BC, and has not occurred since 1995 when Abbotsford and Matsqui merged to form the City of Abbotsford. Multi-municipal restructures involving two or more municipalities (and often some electoral areas as well) are considered the most complex type of restructure and have not occurred since 1975.

Representation

Amalgamation with one or more municipalities in the region would have the effect of eliminating the Village of Warfield's five-member locally-elected Council. Instead, the Village would be part of a larger municipality served by a single larger Council, likely with seven members. Council members would be elected from the combined population within the expanded municipality. If combined with Trail, for example, the Village's population of 1,753 would be combined with the City's population of 7,920 to total 9,673 (2021 Census figures).

Transitional provisions could be explored in a future study to assist in the merging of two or more municipalities and provide for local representation from an "annexed" community on the Council of a newly expanded municipality.[31]

The population of the amalgamated municipality would determine the number of Council representatives that sit as municipal directors on the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB) Board, as well as the weighted vote in key RDKB Board decisions. If just Warfield and Trail were to amalgamate (assuming 2021 Census population), the amalgamated municipality (City of Trail) would designate one council member as a municipal director on the RDKB, with four weighted votes[32]. Once the municipality surpassed 10,000 population, the municipal director would have five weighted votes. The Village of Warfield would no longer have a representative on the RDKB Board of Directors; instead of 13 directors, there would be five electoral area directors and seven municipal directors. If an amalgamated City of Trail exceeded a population of 12,500, but less than 15,000, the municipality would have two municipal directors on the RDKB Board, each with three votes.

Services

After an amalgamation, services for Warfield would be provided by the expanded municipality. Amalgamation itself would not necessarily impact individual services or service levels — for instance, the pool could continue to operate as is, but the asset would be transferred to, with resourcing overseen by, the new municipality. Service levels would be determined for the expanded City as a whole and not specifically adjusted to reflect any distinct or specific needs for the Warfield area. Given the small size of Warfield, it is likely that an amalgamation involving Trail would result in the City staff assuming responsibility for providing services to Warfield, including

31 As an example, West Kelowna (unincorporated) considered joining the City of Kelowna in 2007 and the City proposed an increased number of Council members for an expanded municipality with two "wards" or constituencies for electing councillors from the two areas (2 from West Kelowna, 8 from Kelowna), with a Mayor elected at large. The change in Council representation and structure was proposed for a specific transition period.

32 The municipal director from the City of Trail currently receives four weighted votes.

services such as roads and park maintenance. In any amalgamation municipal staff, and in particular unionized employees, are often integrated into the newly expanded municipality where there is need for additional resources to service the expanded area (typically public works and maintenance roles).

Cost Impacts

As noted previously, where utility services are provided only to Warfield — the Warfield water system is a key example — residents who benefit the service are the ones who are responsible for paying for the cost of the service, including any associated replacement or necessary upgrades. Where infrastructure benefits the entire municipality — as in the case of roads, and potentially stormwater and sewer collection — service costs are shared by the broader municipal tax base.

Ideally, both jurisdictions involved in an amalgamation can benefit from the combined tax base and economies of scale, assets, facilities, and staff expertise. There are some cost impacts to consider that are based purely on the combined population, including the following:

- Small municipalities receive a "small community protection grant" to assist with administrative costs. There is a base amount, a portion based on assessment, and a portion of the grant based on population. The per capita grant amount is higher for smaller municipalities — i.e., those under 5,000 population.

- Community Works Funding (gas tax) is distributed to all local governments based on a base amount plus an amount related to population, with higher population communities receiving more grant funding.

- Small municipalities pay a provincial police tax that only recovers a small fraction of the actual costs of policing in the municipality. The remainder of that service is paid by the provincial and federal government. Once a municipality exceeds 5,000 population, the municipality becomes responsible for paying 70% of the policing costs for the community. When municipalities exceed 15,000 population, they become responsible for covering 90% of the policing costs.

- Any subsequent study would identify any restructure grants that might be available from the provincial government to help support the transition. The province notes that in the event of larger local government restructures, financial assistance may be available to moderate the transition to new tax rates and local government responsibilities.

BOUNDARY EXTENSION

A boundary extension is a type of municipal restructure that would involve expanding the boundaries of the Village of Warfield, rather than amalgamating Warfield with another municipality. Municipal boundary extensions are quite common, and typically occur where municipalities extend their boundaries to take in unincorporated lands just outside the municipal boundary. Extensions are often pursued because landowners in the adjacent electoral area wish to develop or to receive services, such as sewer and water, that are otherwise provided by the municipality.

The *Sustainability Assessment* noted that the Village has a limited land base with little land available, aside from Emerald Ridge, to encourage additional development aimed at increasing the Village's tax base. In particular, there is a lack of property suitable for commercial or industrial development. A boundary extension to include unincorporated lands surrounding the Village was considered, but the surrounding unincorporated lands did not seem to offer significant development opportunities, given the steep slopes and topography in the immediate area. Furthermore, a significant portion of the Village's boundary is shared with the City of Trail.

Adjustments between municipalities are possible, but require a more involved process of a concurrent boundary extension and reduction, and require consent from both parties. Typically adjustments between municipalities are pursued where there are advantages to both municipalities, and where they are supported by the affected landowners. A boundary adjustment that provided the Village with additional developable land and/or non-residential assessment could help address some of the Village's sustainability challenges; however, it is difficult to envision a boundary adjustment scenario that would be significant enough to help support the viability of the Village as a standalone municipality, and still be supported by both the property owner and the affected municipal jurisdiction(s). That said, the potential for any boundary adjustment could be explored with neighbouring jurisdictions as part of any subsequent study. Cost and service implications for the Village would depend on the type and value of the properties involved in the adjustment. Under a boundary extension, there would be no impacts to the Village's governance structure or status as a standalone municipality.

It is important to understand that any extensions to the Village boundary are expected to be contiguous to the existing boundary. The province's process guide indicates that a boundary extension proposal should not create an area "that would remain outside the municipal boundary and jurisdiction, resulting in a 'doughnut-hole' within the municipality. The only exception to this requirement is land designated as Indian Reserve or Treaty lands, which will not be included within a municipal boundary unless requested by the First Nation."[33] Similarly, a "satellite" boundary extension (i.e., lands included in the boundary that are not adjacent to the existing boundaries) is only considered in exceptional cases "such as a major industrial site (e.g. utility, saw mill or mine) for which the municipality is the major service centre or an area owned by the municipality used for municipal purposes, such as an airport, a recreation area/facility, or public works yard."[34]

[33] *Municipal Boundary Extension Process Guide*, Ministry of Community and Rural Development, March 2010, p. 6

[34] *Municipal Boundary Extension Process Guide*, Ministry of Community and Rural Development, March 2010, p. 7

ELECTORAL AREA (DISINCORPORATION)

In BC, communities outside of municipal boundaries are included in electoral areas and are both governed and serviced directly by a regional district. Regional districts are federations of both electoral (unincorporated) areas and municipalities. Figure 7.2 shows the electoral area and municipal boundaries in the eastern portion of the RDKB. If Warfield's municipal boundaries were dissolved, it is assumed that the community would become part of RDKB's Electoral Area B. Dissolving boundaries of a municipality is rare in BC. In 2021 the mountain resort municipality of Jumbo Glacier, which had no residents, was disincorporated after lands initially planned as a ski resort were turned into an Indigenous Protected and Conserved zone by the Ktunaxa Nation. Prior to that, the most recent examples occurred more than 100 years ago, including Sandon, a former silver town located 13 km east of New Denver, in 1920 and Phoenix, located near Grand Forks, in 1921 after the town became deserted.

Representation

Electoral areas are represented on their local regional district board of directors by one electoral area director who is directly elected by residents within the electoral area. The RDKB currently has five electoral area directors (representing electoral areas A, B, C, D and E), and eight municipal directors representing the eight municipalities that are also members of the regional district. The Area B electoral area director, based on 2021 Census population figures, would have an increased voting strength of two votes for all weighted votes if the Village of Warfield population were added to Area B.

Regional district decision-making is much different than that which occurs under a municipal council. As part of an electoral area, decisions on Warfield services would involve representatives from other jurisdictions (other electoral areas or municipalities, or both). For services that are provided to only one electoral area, or part of an electoral area — a situation that would exist for Warfield's water system, the Village's sewage collection system, Warfield pool, and community hall (among others) if provided by the RDKB — decisions would be made by the entire RDKB Board of Directors. Decisions on services that are provided to more than one jurisdiction could be made in several cases by only the participating areas' directors. With only one representative on the RDKB Board (which would be reduced to 12 directors if the Village of Warfield was no longer a municipality) to represent all of Area B (and not solely the Warfield community), the community would have both less representation, and limited influence over local services, budgets and decisions.

Services

As part of an unincorporated area, the Warfield community could continue to receive many of the same services it currently receives as part of the Village. However, instead of the services being provided by the municipality, they would be provided through the RDKB. As an example, RDKB services would be created to provide services such as the water and sewer system, Warfield pool and community hall.

Planning,[35] building inspection, bylaw enforcement, and parks maintenance would all be provided by the RDKB through existing electoral area services.

One significant difference between unincorporated and incorporated area concerns local roads which, in an unincorporated area, are provided, owned and maintained through the province by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit. The Ministry contracts with private companies to maintain the roads in large contract areas, based on relatively basic or "rural" standards. As an unincorporated area, residents would pay the "provincial rural tax" which is a property tax intended to help recover some of the cost of road maintenance. Provincial rural road maintenance standards and snow plowing are not likely to compare to the Village's high level of responsiveness and service that was referenced in many of the *Municipal Sustainability Study* survey responses, or to the service level provided by the City of Trail. The provincial rural area road standards represent a basic level best suited to low traffic volumes and rural land uses.

As is currently the case with the Village of Warfield (and all BC municipalities with population below 5,000 people), policing in electoral areas is also funded by the province. If unincorporated, residents of Warfield would continue to pay a minor "police tax" to help share the cost of the policing service. As an unincorporated area, there would be very limited ability to influence the size (i.e., authorized strength) or focus of the local police service.

Costs

As referenced previously, while some costs would transfer to the province, the cost for key infrastructure services such as water would continue to be borne by those who benefit from the service. The Warfield community would, therefore, continue to be required to pay for water and sewer services that they receive and benefit from. Instead of taxes going toward the Village of Warfield, taxes would contribute toward the administration and services provided through the RDKB. Unincorporated areas are often associated with lower taxes, but only in cases in which the areas receive fewer services than more urban, incorporated areas, and in cases in which the areas do not have expensive infrastructure services such as water or sewer. Where communities have water and sewer infrastructure, the tax differences are less pronounced, and the distinctions are more about the level of political representation, the associated lack of local control over decision-making, and the low road maintenance standards.

[35] Approval of subdivisions would be done by the province through the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.

CHAPTER 8
ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The *Municipal Sustainability Study* set out to engage the Warfield community on the *Study* and its findings on municipal sustainability, and on the potential restructure options to consider. Engagement was intended not only to communicate to residents, but also obtain input on preferences on local governance and services, and to gauge the appetite for reviewing alternate structures.

The *Study's* engagement program consisted of:

- the use of a *Study* Committee, comprised of two Council members and seven community members appointed by Council to oversee the work of the consultants, to provide local input and guide the process

- social media notices in advance of each Committee meeting to remind residents of the *Phase I Study* and its purposes, and to link residents to the Committee materials available for review and download on the Village's website

- the preparation of press releases on the *Study*, issued following key Committee meetings, and in advance of the Town Hall meetings

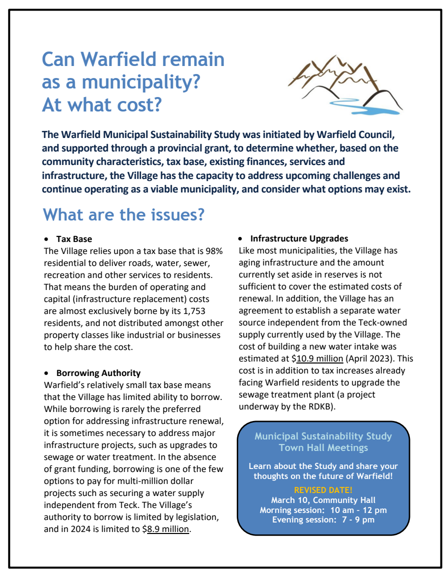
- the preparation and public distribution of a mailout (Appendix V) to share information on the *Study* and its findings on sustainability to Warfield residents, including a hard (paper) survey (also available online)

- a survey that could be completed online or in hard copy (dropped off or submitted to the Village), of which 210 were completed

- two community Town Hall meetings, advertised in the mailout and through social media, attended by an estimated 140 people (combined)

- use of the Village's website to communicate with residents and provide information and updates on the *Study*, the Committee meetings, the three reports provided to the Committee at each stage of the *Study*, a copy of the mailout, and a copy and recording of the Town Hall presentation. The website also provided a link to the online survey.

Figure 8.1: Community Mailout



Can Warfield remain as a municipality? At what cost?

The Warfield Municipal Sustainability Study was initiated by Warfield Council, and supported through a provincial grant, to determine whether, based on the community characteristics, tax base, existing finances, services and infrastructure, the Village has the capacity to address upcoming challenges and continue operating as a viable municipality, and consider what options may exist.

What are the issues?

- **Tax Base**
The Village relies upon a tax base that is 98% residential to deliver roads, water, sewer, recreation and other services to residents. That means the burden of operating and capital (infrastructure replacement) costs are almost exclusively borne by its 1,753 residents, and not distributed amongst other property classes like industrial or businesses to help share the cost.

- **Borrowing Authority**
Warfield's relatively small tax base means that the Village has limited ability to borrow. While borrowing is rarely the preferred option for addressing infrastructure renewal, it is sometimes necessary to address major infrastructure projects, such as upgrades to sewage or water treatment. In the absence of grant funding, borrowing is one of the few options to pay for multi-million dollar projects such as securing a water supply independent from Teck. The Village's authority to borrow is limited by legislation, and in 2024 is limited to $8.9 million.

- **Infrastructure Upgrades**
Like most municipalities, the Village has aging infrastructure and the amount currently set aside in reserves is not sufficient to cover the estimated costs of renewal. In addition, the Village has an agreement to establish a separate water source independent from the Teck-owned supply currently used by the Village. The cost of building a new water intake was estimated at $10.9 million (April 2023). This cost is in addition to tax increases already facing Warfield residents to upgrade the sewage treatment plant (a project underway by the RDKB).

Municipal Sustainability Study
Town Hall Meetings

Learn about the Study and share your thoughts on the future of Warfield!

REVISED DATE!
March 10, Community Hall
Morning session: 10 am - 12 pm
Evening session: 7 - 9 pm

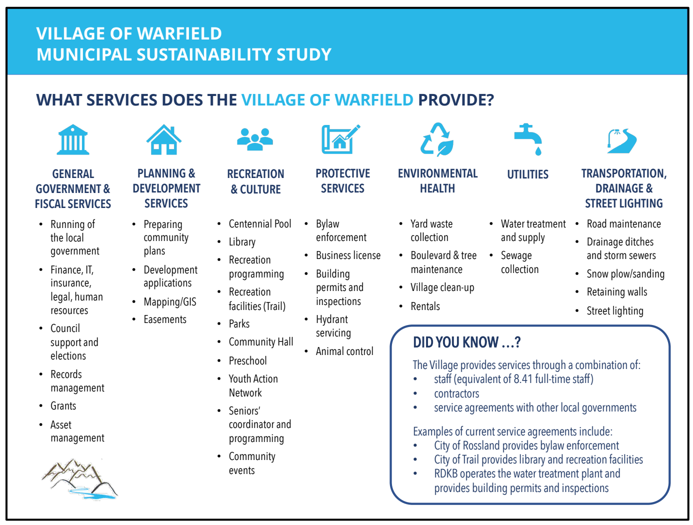
Town Hall Meetings

Two Town Hall meetings were held on March 10.[36] These meetings were primarily attended by residents, but it was noted that representatives from other municipal councils and RKDB Board also attended, including elected officials from the City of Trail, Village of Fruitvale and Electoral Area B. A link was provided for people to view the meeting online, and a recording of the evening meeting was posted online, along with a copy of the slides (Figure 8.2 and Appendix VI) used in the presentation as well as the handout on Warfield and RDKB services available at the meetings (Figure 8.3 and Appendix VII).

Meetings were held at 10 am and 7 pm. Both meetings included a presentation on findings followed by a question-and-answer session. Approximately 40 people had questions or spoke after the presentations, with others engaging one-on-one with the consultants following the meeting. The following summary captures some of the questions asked and comments shared:

Figure 8.2: Town Hall Slides

Figure 8.3: Town Hall Handout



VILLAGE OF WARFIELD
MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

WHAT SERVICES DOES THE VILLAGE OF WARFIELD PROVIDE?

GENERAL GOVERNMENT & FISCAL SERVICES
- Running of the local government
- Finance, IT, insurance, legal, human resources
- Council support and elections
- Records management
- Grants
- Asset management

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
- Preparing community plans
- Development applications
- Mapping/GIS
- Easements

RECREATION & CULTURE
- Centennial Pool
- Library
- Recreation programming
- Recreation facilities (Trail)
- Parks
- Community Hall
- Preschool
- Youth Action Network
- Seniors' coordinator and programming
- Community events

PROTECTIVE SERVICES
- Bylaw enforcement
- Business license
- Building permits and inspections
- Hydrant servicing
- Animal control

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
- Yard waste collection
- Boulevard & tree maintenance
- Village clean-up
- Rentals

UTILITIES
- Water treatment and supply
- Sewage collection

TRANSPORTATION, DRAINAGE & STREET LIGHTING
- Road maintenance
- Drainage ditches and storm sewers
- Snow plow/sanding
- Retaining walls
- Street lighting

DID YOU KNOW ...?

The Village provides services through a combination of:
- staff (equivalent of 8.41 full-time staff)
- contractors
- service agreements with other local governments

Examples of current service agreements include:
- City of Rossland provides bylaw enforcement
- City of Trail provides library and recreation facilities
- RDKB operates the water treatment plant and provides building permits and inspections

- What would police costs be if we amalgamated?
- Would Warfield residents be the only ones paying for water intake even under an amalgamation scenario?

[36] Note that the Town Hall meetings were initially scheduled for February 24, but were rescheduled to March 10 due to weather and travel constraints

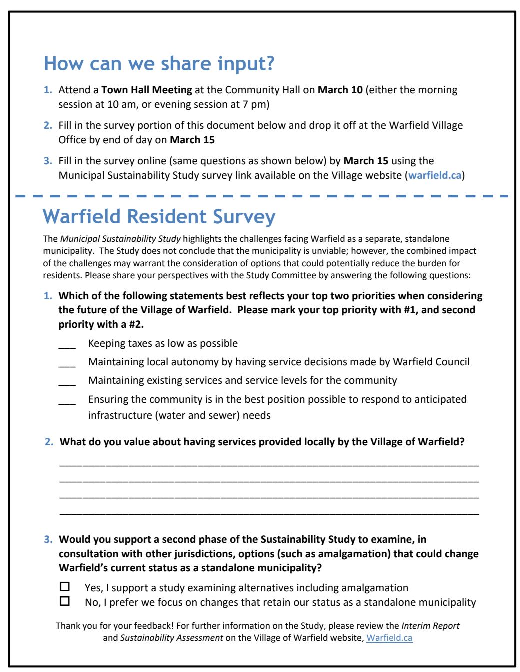
- Can we talk to Teck for a new deal or timeline for a water intake to allow us to build more reserves? Can we appease them without building a water intake?
- Has Trail been asked if they want to participate?
- Could we explore a larger district municipality that would include more than just Trail
- What would happen to unionized Village workers in the event of an amalgamation?
- Would the homeowner grant remain the same?
- How would our services such as roads maintenance change?
- Which option is better?
- Amalgamation has been examined several times in the past, and the last time Council said no.
- We need to look at the Valley as a whole, instead of each individual community. What can we do as a Valley?
- How will doing more studies help? How do we support action? What can I do?
- Who would pay for another study?
- We have a lot to learn before we can make any decisions, but time is of the essence.
- How long would a process to amalgamate take?

Survey

A survey was part of the mailout that was sent to all residents in Warfield in February (Figure 8.4). The survey was available both in hard (paper) copy, and could be returned to the Village office, or filled out online. The survey was open from February 5 to March 15. A total of 210 responses were received from the survey, representing 12% of the Village's (2021) total (all ages) population.

Figures 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 on the following pages show the results of the questions regarding priorities and support for a study examining other structural options. The full results of the survey, including the open-ended responses, are included in Appendix VIII.

Figure 8.4: Survey



How can we share input?

1. Attend a **Town Hall Meeting** at the Community Hall on **March 10** (either the morning session at 10 am, or evening session at 7 pm)
2. Fill in the survey portion of this document below and drop it off at the Warfield Village Office by end of day on **March 15**
3. Fill in the survey online (same questions as shown below) by **March 15** using the Municipal Sustainability Study survey link available on the Village website (warfield.ca)

Warfield Resident Survey

The *Municipal Sustainability Study* highlights the challenges facing Warfield as a separate, standalone municipality. The Study does not conclude that the municipality is unviable; however, the combined impact of the challenges may warrant the consideration of options that could potentially reduce the burden for residents. Please share your perspectives with the Study Committee by answering the following questions:

1. **Which of the following statements best reflects your top two priorities when considering the future of the Village of Warfield. Please mark your top priority with #1, and second priority with a #2.**
   ___ Keeping taxes as low as possible
   ___ Maintaining local autonomy by having service decisions made by Warfield Council
   ___ Maintaining existing services and service levels for the community
   ___ Ensuring the community is in the best position possible to respond to anticipated infrastructure (water and sewer) needs
2. **What do you value about having services provided locally by the Village of Warfield?**
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
3. **Would you support a second phase of the Sustainability Study to examine, in consultation with other jurisdictions, options (such as amalgamation) that could change Warfield's current status as a standalone municipality?**
   ☐ Yes, I support a study examining alternatives including amalgamation
   ☐ No, I prefer we focus on changes that retain our status as a standalone municipality

Thank you for your feedback! For further information on the Study, please review the *Interim Report* and *Sustainability Assessment* on the Village of Warfield website, Warfield.ca

Figure 8.5: Survey Response (top priority)

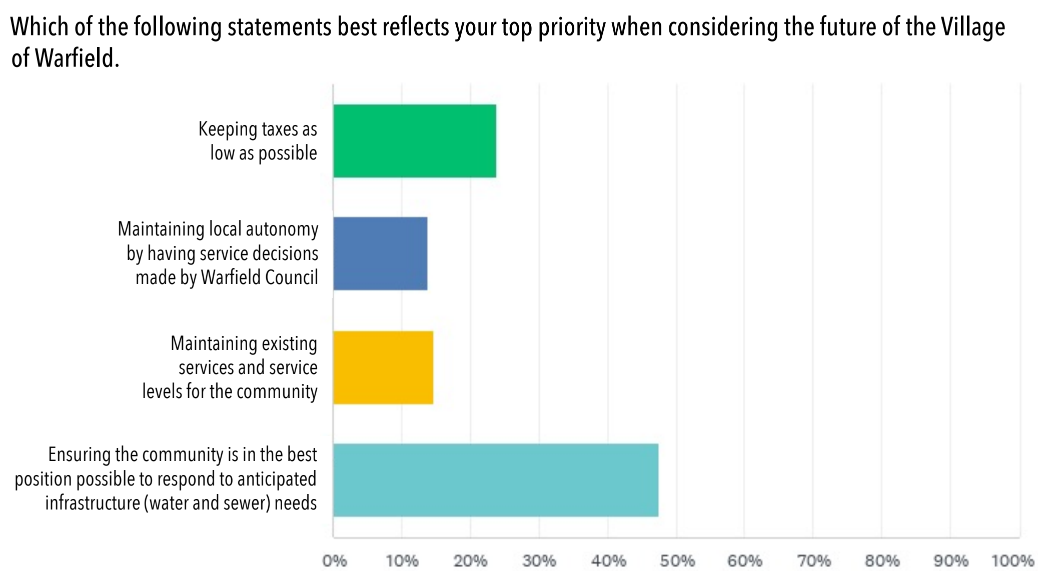


Figure 8.6: Survey Response (second highest priority)

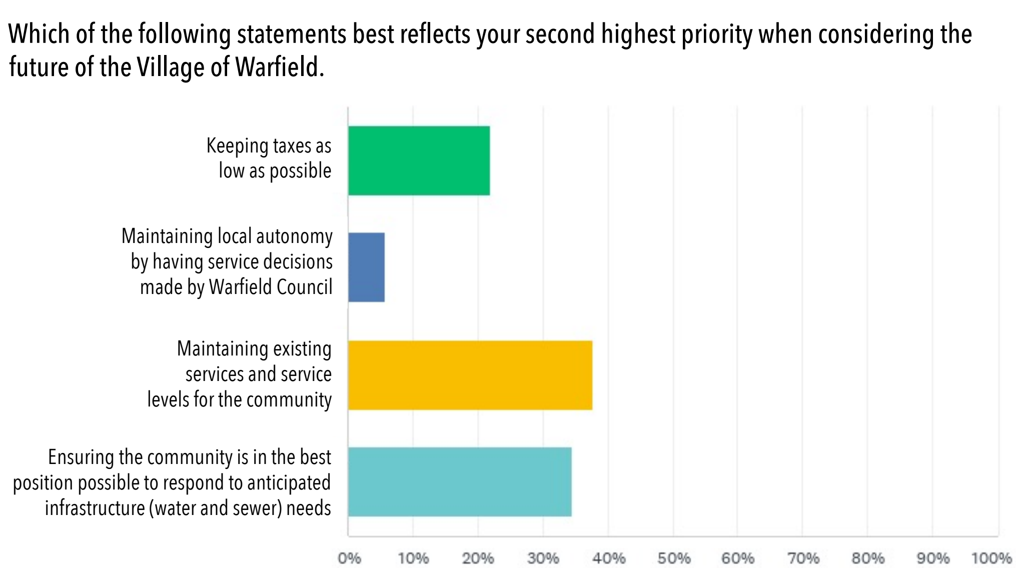
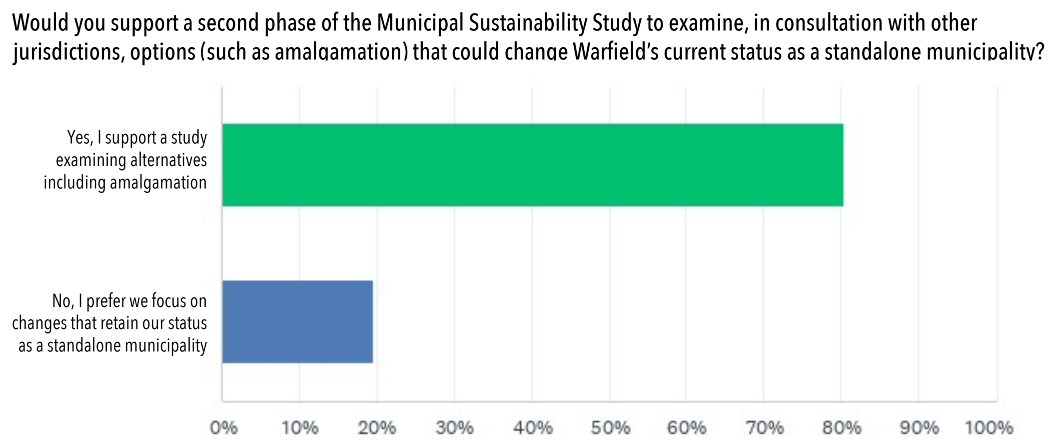


Figure 8.7: Survey Response (next phase)



A summary of some of the themes and responses from the survey, and some observations of the results, is presented as follows:

- The survey asked questions about residents' priorities as a way to encourage residents to think about the relative importance of taxes, local control and authority, existing services and service levels, and the need to respond to infrastructure needs. It was anticipated that those who place a high value and priority on local control might be more likely to want to remain as a municipality. Of the 41 (20%) of residents who indicated that they would rather focus on changes that retain the status as a standalone municipality (final survey question), 59% indicated that maintaining local autonomy was their top priority (of the four options); the other three options each received 15% or less. Those same residents overwhelmingly selected "maintain existing service levels" as their second priority.

- Residents that responded to the survey indicating a preference to focus on remaining as a standalone municipality provided the following themes in response to question asking residents what they value about having services provided locally by the Village:[37]

  - Being the top priority — having local residents and needs come first
  - Local people making local decisions
  - Accountability
  - Responsiveness
  - Focus on our services — roads, snow removal, parks, pool
  - First rate service and staff that could suffer in another municipality

[37] All responses to Question 3 of the survey are provided in Appendix VII

- Sense of pride and local culture
- Minimal bureaucracy

Residents also noted some concerns with potential structural changes, including worries about taking the “back seat” to the needs of other neighbourhoods or communities if part of a larger municipality or jurisdiction; or having people outside the community make decisions on how to spend money.

- Of the 168 respondents[38] who wish to see a subsequent study examining different structural options (final question), the majority (56%, 95 responses) listed “Ensuring the community is in the best position possible to respond to anticipated infrastructure (water and sewer) needs” as their top priority, with 26% (44 responses) indicating “keeping taxes as low as possible” as their top priority. Only 3% of these respondents listed local autonomy as a top priority, and 4% listed it as a second priority. The second priority of this group of respondents was fairly evenly distributed between the other three options (lowest taxes, maintaining services and service levels and ensuring the community is best able to respond to infrastructure needs). It was anticipated that those who place a higher priority on taxes as well as on being able to respond to infrastructure needs may be more interested in seeing the potential impacts of other governance structures, particularly given the ability of larger municipalities to have the ability to borrow sufficient funds to respond to infrastructure upgrade requirements.

- Of these 168 respondents, many had comments in common with those who preferred a focus on maintaining the Village’s municipal status:

  - Snow removal, road maintenance, yard waste, pool, parks
  - Community connections, friendly
  - Accountability
  - Responsive to local needs
  - Response time —efficient, timely, friendly

  Some noted that even though they were supportive of doing the next phase, their current preference was to remain as a standalone municipality. Others noted they like the local control, but felt that because of the affordability and concerns with sustainability, other options should be evaluated.

- Other themes expressed in response to the open-ended question included:

  - It is time to consider amalgamation
  - Need to make it affordable for future generations
  - Inefficient to have so many small separate municipalities

[38] One survey respondent did not complete question 4.

- Indifference to who provides the services
  - Unclear of value of the services
  - Services are the same as in other communities
  - Service levels have declined — thus, better service levels are no longer a reason to remain separate
  - Not practical to remain separate — too small a community and so close to other communities
  - Value the most economical feasible path forward, whatever it is
  - Less concerned about who provides the service and more concerned about the effectiveness and economic efficiency

- Many residents took the time to express appreciation and gratitude to the Village's staff and service, their friendliness, approachability and responsiveness. Many positive comments were shared regarding not only the staff but the broader community.

CHAPTER 9
RECOMMENDATION

As noted, the three reports produced over the course of the *Study* have been consolidated into one *Municipal Sustainability Study Report* together with the Committee's recommendation. The Committee reviewed the third and final component report at its meeting on March 31, and discussed the findings, options presented and the preferred path forward. There was consensus that despite the number of governance options identified and reviewed, including pursuing an option involving multiple local governments (i.e., amalgamation of three or more municipalities in the region), the Village should focus on the key issues and select one option that best addresses the Village's immediate sustainability concerns. It was noted that if some form of restructuring did occur, it may provide an impetus for future reviews and consideration of governance restructuring opportunities by other local jurisdictions.

The Committee made the following recommendation, unanimously supported:

> *THAT the Village of Warfield Sustainability Committee recommend to the Village of Warfield Council that Council seek the support of the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the City of Trail to proceed with a Phase II governance restructuring study that would consider the impacts and implications associated with the two local governments amalgamating.*

The recommendation, together with this final report, is scheduled to be presented to Village Council on May 12, 2025. Council, in turn, is expected to make a recommendation to the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs on a Phase II study.

APPENDIX I WARFIELD STAFFING AND CONTRACT SUMMARY

APPENDIX I – WARFIELD STAFFING AND CONTRACTING SUMMARY

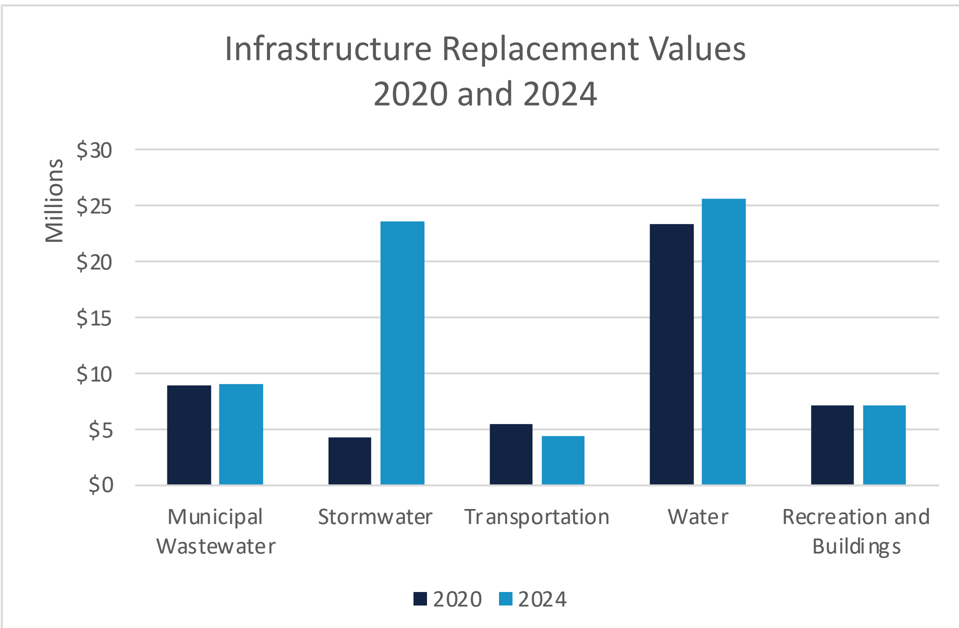
Service / Department	2024 FTE	Included in FTE	Contracts & Agreements
Recreation & Culture	2.49	• PW time (0.5) • Pool manager and guarding/cashier staff (1.07) • Preschool supervisor and assistant (0.67) • 1 summer student (0.25)	• Senior's coordinator (shared with Rossland and Trail) • Warfield Youth coordinator • Agreement with Trail for recreation and library services
Protective Services	0.11	• PW staff time (hydrant maintenance) (0.11)	• Building inspection (RDKB) • Bylaw enforcement (Rossland) • Contract assistance (hydrant maintenance) as required
Planning & Development	0.00		• WSP planning contract • Agreement with RDKB for shared decision-making in fringe areas
Transportation	2.71	• PW staff time (2.46) • 1 summer student (0.25)	• PW consultant • Contract assistance as required
Environmental Health	0.15	• PW staff time (0.15)	• Yard waste collection contract (GFL) • Public tree maintenance contract
General Government & Fiscal Services	2.23	• CAO (0.65) • accounting & operational support (0.8) • payroll & administration (0.7) • PW staff admin (0.08)	• Corporate Officer • Contractors/consultants for projects (asset management, strategic planning, etc. as required) • IT contractor (DHC)
Water	0.37	• PW staff time (0.37)	• Treatment plant operation (RDKB) • Water supply (Teck) • Consultants as required
Sewer	0.35	• PW staff time (0.35)	• Sewage treatment (RDKB)
TOTAL	8.41		

APPENDIX II 2024 ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

APPENDIX II – 2024 ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

During the course of the *Study* the Village's asset management information was updated from 2020 values to 2024. The updated values reflected changes to the default replacement costs to account for inflation and more accurately represent costs for all asset types.

The information presented in the Interim Report (Stage 1 report) as well as the calculations of some indicators within the Sustainability Assessment (Stage 2 report), were based on the earlier 2020 data. The updated asset management figures were referenced in the Village Town Hall events and slide show (Appendix V). The changes are highlighted in the figure below.



The most significant impact was in the stormwater infrastructure category. A stormwater assessment was completed in 2024 that helped create a more complete inventory of the network. The significant increase therefore reflects a more complete picture of the Village's stormwater infrastructure. A total of $9 million of the stormwater infrastructure was identified as representing extreme or high risk for replacement, whereas none of the previously valued stormwater assets were listed as being in either the extreme or high-risk categories.

The final report remains consistent with the information shared with the Committee (2020 values). Although the indicators have not been recalculated based on the updated information, it is important to acknowledge that the sustainable funding levels, as well as the accumulated infrastructure funding gap referenced in the report would both be underestimated based on the updated asset management data. The updated asset management information therefore emphasizes the Village's sustainability challenges and reinforces the conclusion that the Village needs to investigate available alternatives.

APPENDIX III WARFIELD 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

APPENDIX III WARFIELD 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

1. Revenue

REVENUE	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Sale of Services		
Garbage Fees	$41,300	$108,048
Pool/Concession	$57,250	$55,417
Community Hall	$23,000	$20,256
Special Events	$3,500	$1,515
Preschool	$37,500	$33,594
Other Revenue Own Sources		
Licenses/Permits	$12,200	$12,222
Fines	$150	$100
Rental	$124,950	$108,277
Franchise	$23,550	$23,566
Interest	$37,500	$43,048
Penatlies and Interest	$14,900	$17,311
Misc	$3,250	$5,463
Grants		
Small Communities	$463,000	$452,000
Conditional Grant (CBT)*	$50,000	$1,280,557
Taxes		
Property Tax	$1,128,950	$992,741
Works & Services Parcel Tax	$164,350	$243,350
1% Utility Tax	$23,750	$21,918
Transfer from Surplus	$201,900	$342,560
Total Revenue	$2,411,000	$3,761,943

** 2023 grants included one-time Growing Communities Fund grant provided to all BC local governments (Warfield received allocation of $1,193,000). Warfield also received $269,804 in Community Works (Gas Tax) Funds, but these are not shown as operating revenues*

2. Expenses

EXPENSES	2024 Budget	2023 Actual
Recreation & Culture		
Recreation	$169,500	$162,350
Youth Group Program	$40,000	$31,413
Preschool	$43,200	$38,795
Pool Maintenance	$85,700	$66,248
Pool Operations	$100,000	$109,069
Community Hall	$38,800	$35,500
Parks	$56,300	$53,021
Beautification	$0	$538
Special Events	$7,500	$2,674
Food Advisory	$3,200	$4,540
Protective Services		
Bylaw Enforcement	$17,500	$12,147
Hydrants	$45,000	$15,744
Animal Control	$2,200	$0
Building Inspection	$38,350	$44,082
Planning & Development (Environmental Development)		
Development Services	$40,250	$26,271
Easements	$6,000	$2,530
Transportation		
PW Facilities	$97,350	$92,567
PW Administration	$116,100	$121,975
Transportation	$308,550	$461,619
Street Lighting & Signage	$52,150	$50,869
Equipment	$96,650	$112,245
Environmental Health		
Garbage Collection	$43,500	$84,178
Village Clean-Up	$4,900	$5,868
Third Party Rentals	$600	$0
Trees & Boulevards	$73,500	$69,549
General Government & Fiscal Services		
Legislative	$59,250	$54,779
Administration/Labour	$397,400	$335,679
Office/Computer	$102,600	$84,284
Audit/Legal	$60,700	$112,038
Insurance	$76,500	$77,347
Elections	$0	$0
Other	$73,600	$76,473
Bank Service	$3,950	$3,429
Rentals & Leases	$77,750	$90,889
Transfer to Capital	$72,450	$131,500
Total Expenses	$2,411,000	$2,438,710

APPENDIX IV SAMPLE 2024 PROPERTY TAX NOTICE

APPENDIX IV 2024 SAMPLE TAX NOTICE

Your property tax notice includes a combination of Village services, regional district services, but also Provincial services, and services provided by other agencies. The following provides a 2024 tax bill for a residential property in Warfield valued at $429,717.

1. Village of Warfield Taxes

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Municipal Property Tax	3.4330	$1,475.22
Sewer Parcel Tax	$570/parcel	$570.00
Water Parcel Tax	$120/parcel	$120.00
Works & Services Parcel Tax	$310/parcel	$310.00
Subtotal for Village taxes		**$2,475.22**

2. RDKB Services Provided to Warfield

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Emergency Services		
Emergency Perparedness Program	0.0392	$16.82
911 Emergency Communications	0.0311	$13.36
Fire Protection Regionalized East End	0.6730	$289.19
Police Based Victims' Assistance	0.0140	$6.02
Planning & Development		
Planning & Development	0.0204	$8.76
East End Economic Development	0.0617	$26.50
Culture, Arts & Recreation		
Culture, Arts & Recreation	0.0403	$17.32
Environmental Services		
Regionalized Solid Waste Management	0.1734	$74.51
Community Services		
Cemeteries - East End	0.0892	$38.32
East End Transit	0.2355	$101.18
Administration		
General Government Administration	0.1013	$43.53
Feasibility Studies (Regional)	0.0000	$0.00
RDKB Adjustments	(0.0002)	($0.08)
Subtotal for RDKB taxes	**1.4787**	**$635.44**

Denotes Region-wide Service

3. Provincial and Agency Property Taxes

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Police Tax	0.2972	$127.71
School Tax	1.7434	$749.17
Regional Hospital District	0.1578	$67.79
Municipal Finance Authority	0.0002	$0.09
BC Assessment Authority	0.0347	$14.91
Subtotal for Provincial and Agency taxes	**2.2333**	**$959.67**

TOTAL TAX BILL	**$4,070.33**

4. User Fees (Not included on Tax Notice)

Water User Fee*	$549.3/parcel	$549.30
Yard Waste Collection Fee*	$53.75/parcel	$53.75
RDKB Garbage Collection Fee per bag **	$3/bag or can	$156.00
Subtotal for User Fees		**$759.05**

** User fees would not normally be included on a property tax bill, but are shown here. Discounted rates ($511 and $50) are available if paid in full on or before the last business day in February.*

*** Garbage Fee assumes one bag/can of garbage every week for the year (52 cans).*

APPENDIX V COMMUNITY MAILOUT

Can Warfield remain as a municipality? At what cost?

The Warfield Municipal Sustainability Study was initiated by Warfield Council, and supported through a provincial grant, to determine whether, based on the community characteristics, tax base, existing finances, services and infrastructure, the Village has the capacity to address upcoming challenges and continue operating as a viable municipality, and consider what options may exist.

What are the issues?

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- **Borrowing Authority**

Warfield's relatively small tax base means that the Village has limited ability to borrow. While borrowing is rarely the preferred option for addressing infrastructure renewal, it is sometimes necessary to address major infrastructure projects, such as upgrades to sewage or water treatment. In the absence of grant funding, borrowing is one of the few options to pay for multi-million dollar projects such as securing a water supply independent from Teck. The Village's authority to borrow is limited by legislation, and in 2024 is limited to $8.9 million.

- **Infrastructure Upgrades**

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Municipal Sustainability Study Town Hall Meetings

Learn about the Study and share your thoughts on the future of Warfield!

REVISED DATE!
March 10, Community Hall
Morning session: 10 am - 12 pm
Evening session: 7 - 9 pm

What are the issues? (continued)

- **Reserves**

In the past few years a shift was made and the Village began placing funds in reserve accounts to save for anticipated capital costs. Funding reserves helps the community prepare for upcoming projects and minimize the need to borrow. Ideally reserves are built over many years to gather sufficient funds to respond to replacement needs. However, the Village has a significant gap between what is needed and what has been saved thus far, and some assets are at the end of their lifespan. Although many municipalities face this same challenge, as a smaller municipality with low reserve totals and a limited tax base and borrowing capacity, the Village has fewer options for preparing and responding to these looming costs.

- **Development Potential**

New development increases a municipality’s tax base. The Village of Warfield has some lands identified for future residential development within Emerald Ridge. When Emerald Ridge is built out, the new development will help to expand the Village’s tax base. However, there are significant infrastructure upgrades that need to occur before those lands can be adequately serviced, marketed, sold and fully developed. As one of the smallest municipalities in BC, the Village does not have a substantial inventory of vacant lands, and even fewer parcels suitable for development. Redevelopment, renovations or building additional units (secondary suites, accessory suites) offers some potential to add to Warfield’s tax base.

What are the local government options?

The issues referenced above, together with operational challenges such as attracting and retaining staff, do not necessarily mean Warfield cannot continue as a municipality. Warfield’s challenges can continue to be tackled through tax increases and potentially, changes to services and service levels. Boundary expansions to bolster the tax base could also be explored. Alternatively, Warfield could consider a change to its status as an autonomous, separate municipality. The spectrum of local government structures include:

Remain as a municipality

Amalgamate with another municipality*

Unincorporated community in Regional District*

** Any exploration of amalgamation or alternate structures in a subsequent Study would require consent and involvement of other jurisdictions. Perspectives of other local governments have not been canvased as part of this Study.*

	Remain a standalone municipality	Amalgamate	Part of Electoral Area in Regional District
Features	• Decisions made for Warfield residents by locally-elected representatives (Warfield Council) • Servicing decisions made to respond to local needs	• Warfield residents would share some service costs across the larger amalgamated tax base. A larger municipality has the capacity to borrow more funds to help address the infrastructure needs of Warfield.	• As an unincorporated area, Warfield would receive the same services, but decisions for those services would be made by the RD Board with one director from the electoral area. Road maintenance would be provided by the province
Key Issues	• Inability to pay (or borrow) for looming infrastructure needs • Limited tax base and diverse tax base to spread burden of costs • Limited options to further reduce operational costs • Limited opportunities to expand tax base	• As part of a larger municipality, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels, with decisions made by RD Board of Directors • Road maintenance would be determined by the province, without local input
Governance	• Warfield residents elect Warfield Council members	• As part of an expanded municipality, all residents, including Warfield residents, would elect Council • Potential for a dedicated Warfield council member during a transition period	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents (together with other electoral area residents) would elect one electoral area director to participate on the RD Board of Directors
Anticipated Cost Impacts *(would be confirmed by a future study)*	• Taxes will rise to meet the community's infrastructure and service needs • Boundary expansions could be explored to augment tax base • All options to reduce service levels and costs would be explored	• Likely lower taxes than a standalone municipality due to the broader and more diverse tax base for shared services • Infrastructure that services only Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield residents/users	• Likely lower taxes than standalone municipality primarily due to the province assuming responsibility for roads (even when provincial rural tax is factored in) • Infrastructure services delivered only to Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield users

What happens next?

Town Hall meetings held on **March 10.** Survey open until **March 15**.

Consultants compile community feedback and share it with the Study Committee as part of final report.

Study Committee advises Warfield Council whether it recommends a second study to explore other structural options. Council decides whether to pursue a second study.

How can we share input?

1. Attend a **Town Hall Meeting** at the Community Hall on **March 10** (either the morning session at 10 am, or evening session at 7 pm)
2. Fill in the survey portion of this document below and drop it off at the Warfield Village Office by end of day on **March 15**
3. Fill in the survey online (same questions as shown below) by **March 15** using the Municipal Sustainability Study survey link available on the Village website (**warfield.ca**)

Warfield Resident Survey

The *Municipal Sustainability Study* highlights the challenges facing Warfield as a separate, standalone municipality. The Study does not conclude that the municipality is unviable; however, the combined impact of the challenges may warrant the consideration of options that could potentially reduce the burden for residents. Please share your perspectives with the Study Committee by answering the following questions:

1. **Which of the following statements best reflects your top two priorities when considering the future of the Village of Warfield. Please mark your top priority with #1, and second priority with a #2.**

   ___ Keeping taxes as low as possible

   ___ Maintaining local autonomy by having service decisions made by Warfield Council

   ___ Maintaining existing services and service levels for the community

   ___ Ensuring the community is in the best position possible to respond to anticipated infrastructure (water and sewer) needs

2. **What do you value about having services provided locally by the Village of Warfield?**

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

3. **Would you support a second phase of the Sustainability Study to examine, in consultation with other jurisdictions, options (such as amalgamation) that could change Warfield's current status as a standalone municipality?**

   ☐ Yes, I support a study examining alternatives including amalgamation

   ☐ No, I prefer we focus on changes that retain our status as a standalone municipality

Thank you for your feedback! For further information on the Study, please review the *Interim Report* and *Sustainability Assessment* on the Village of Warfield website, Warfield.ca

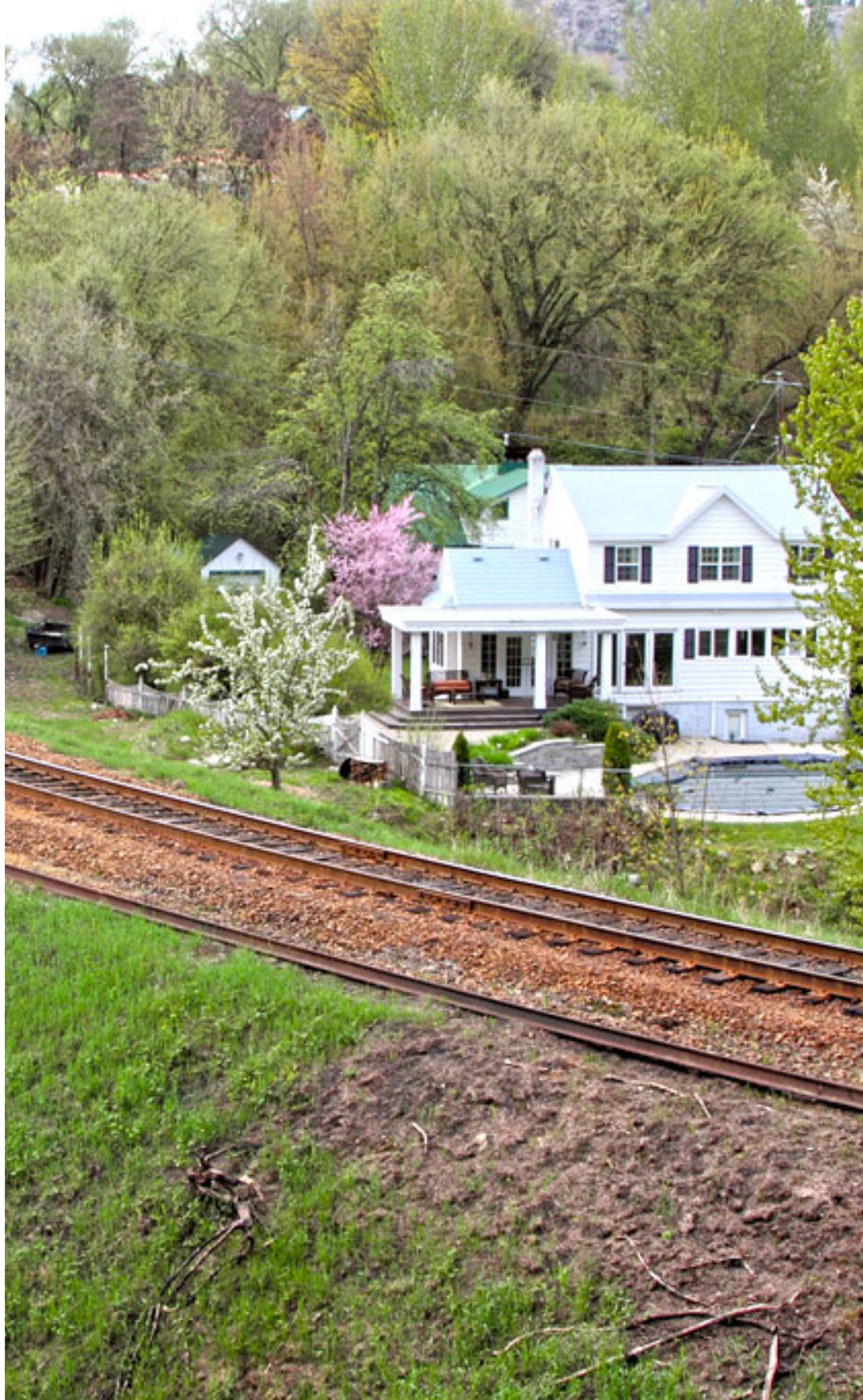
APPENDIX VI TOWN HALL SLIDES

MUNICIPALITY SUSTAINABILITY STUDY
TOWN HALL MEETINGS

March 10, 2025

WELCOME

- Presentation, followed by questions from the community
- Discussions
- Survey

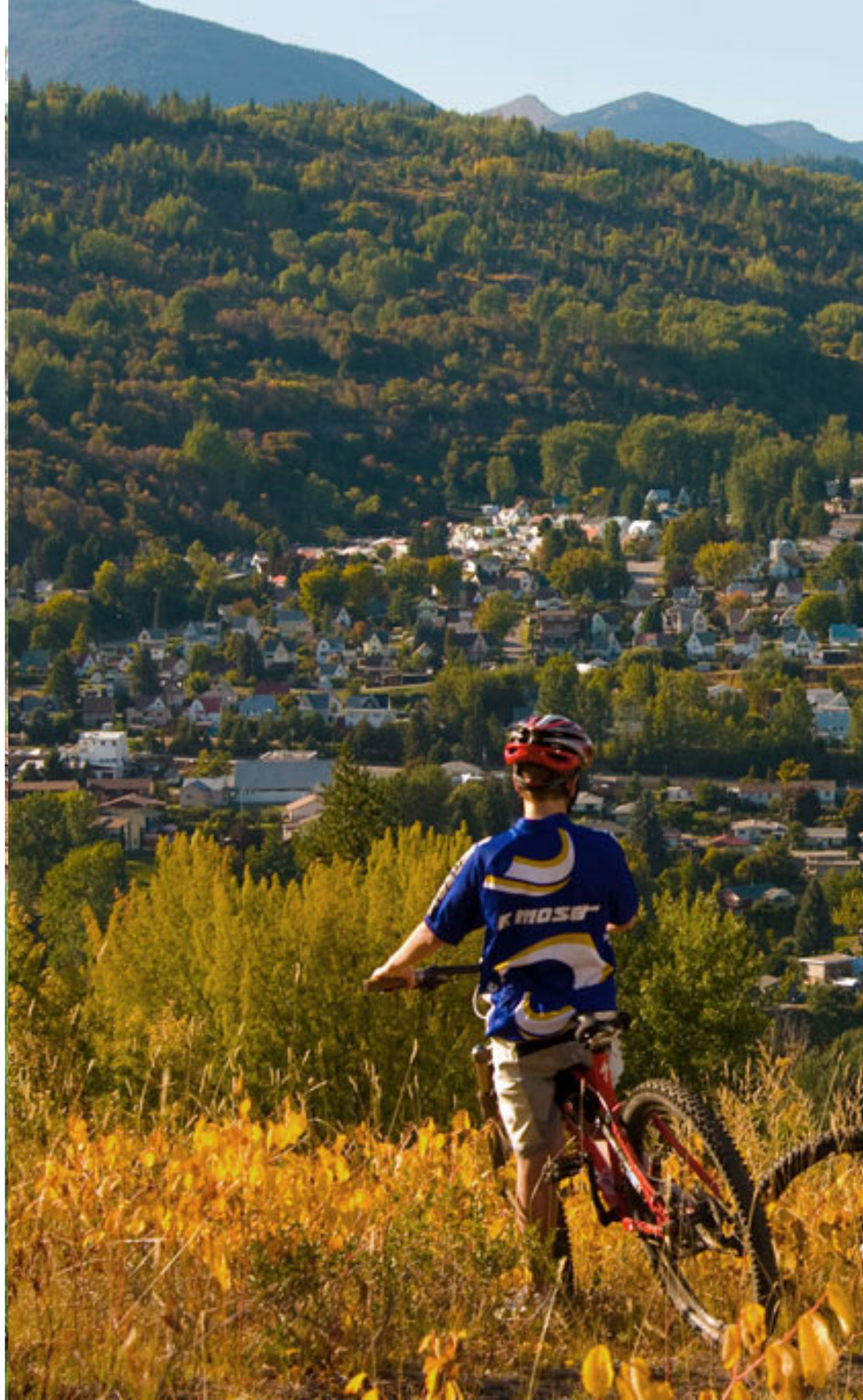


OVERVIEW

- Study Purpose
- Interim Report
- Sustainability Assessment
- Options
- Feedback
- Next Steps

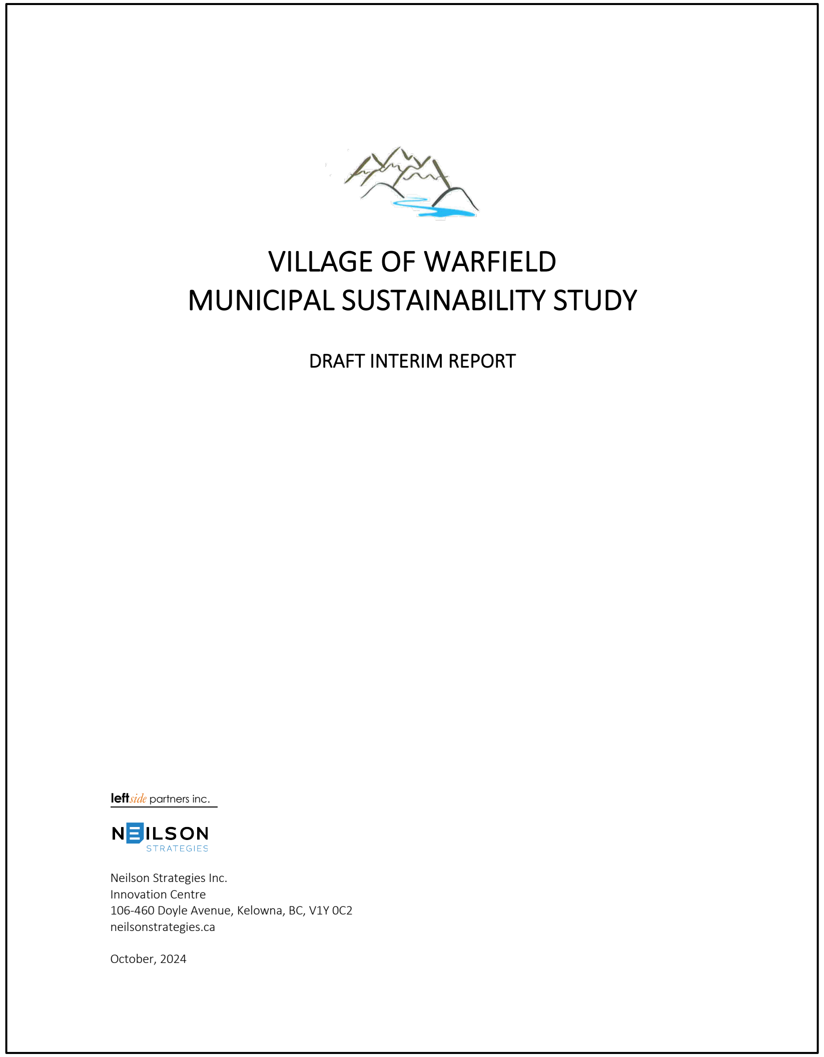
PURPOSE & PROCESS

- Document services, finances, governance, development
- Assess sustainability as standalone, autonomous municipality
- Address changes to consider within the current structure, and to the structure
- Engage the community



INTERIM REPORT

- Village Overview & Services
- RDKB Overview & Services
- Provincial Services
- Sample Property Tax Notice



VILLAGE OF WARFIELD
MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

DRAFT INTERIM REPORT

leftside partners inc.

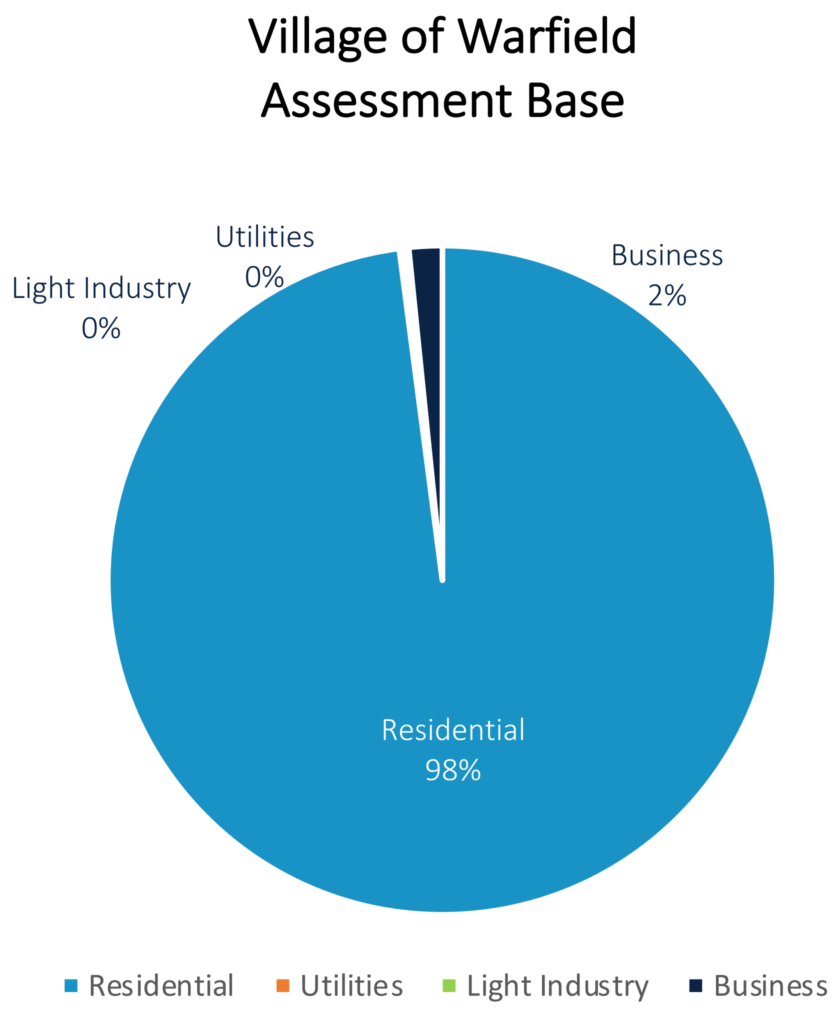
NEILSON STRATEGIES

Neilson Strategies Inc.
Innovation Centre
106-460 Doyle Avenue, Kelowna, BC, V1Y 0C2
neilsonstrategies.ca

October, 2024

VILLAGE CONTEXT

- Population of 1,753 (2021)
- 98% Residential Tax Base
- 5-person locally-elected Council



VILLAGE SERVICES

- General government and fiscal services
- Planning and development
- Environmental health
- Water and sewer utilities
- Recreation and culture
- Transportation, drainage and street lighting
- Protective services

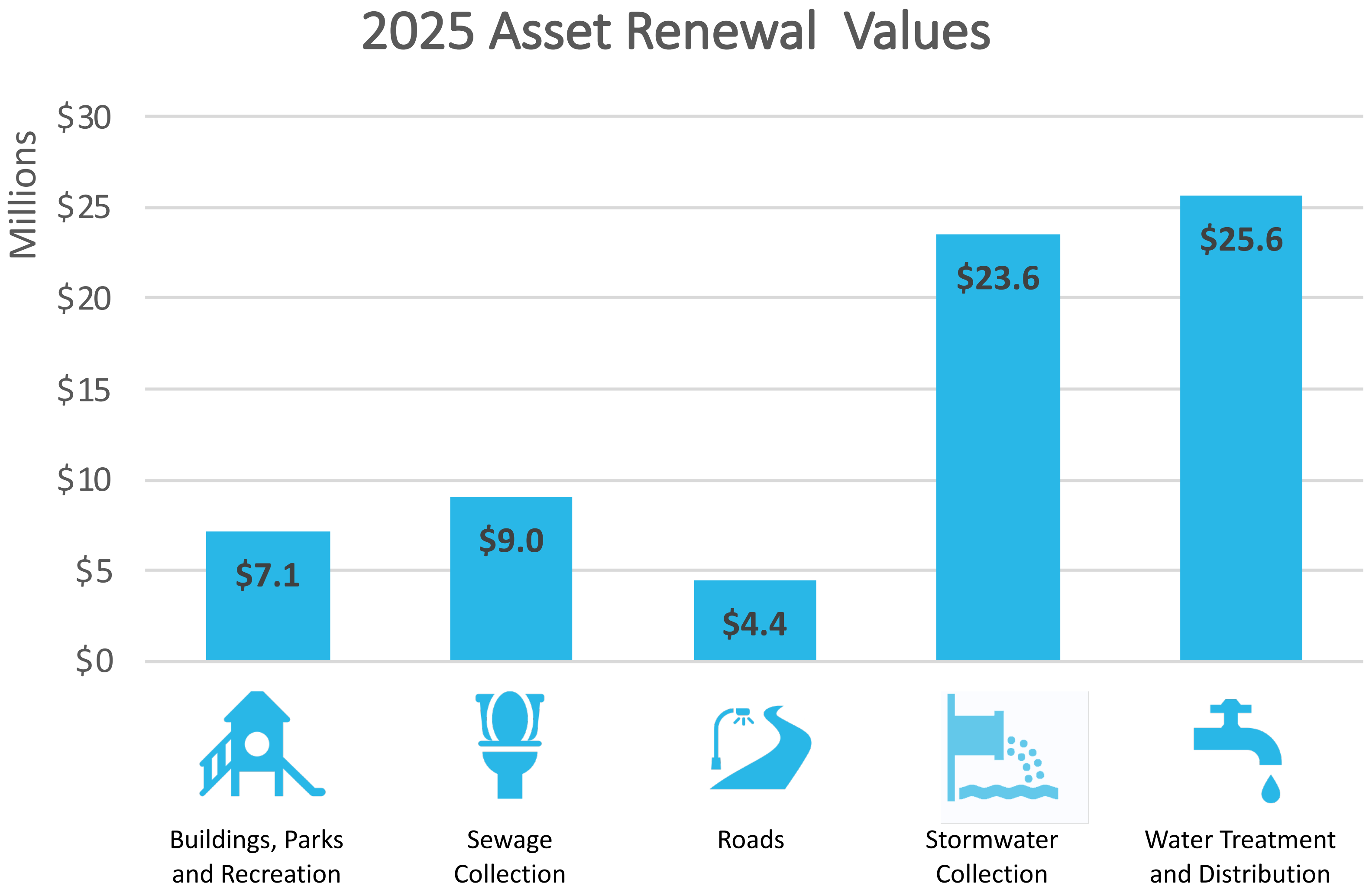
VILLAGE STAFF 8.41

2.23	CAO, accounting, payroll, public works administration
0	Contract planning firm
0.15	Public works
0.72	Public works (sewer & water)
2.49	Pool staff, preschool, public works maintenance, summer student
2.71	Public works staff (road maintenance)
0.11	Public works staff (hydrant maintenance)

VILLAGE CONTRACTS

- Other municipalities
  - Rossland – bylaw enforcement, management of pool
  - Trail – recreation, library
- RDKB
  - Operation of water treatment facility
  - Building inspection and permitting
- Others
  - Corporate officer
  - Youth coordinator
  - IT consultant
  - Shared senior’s coordinator

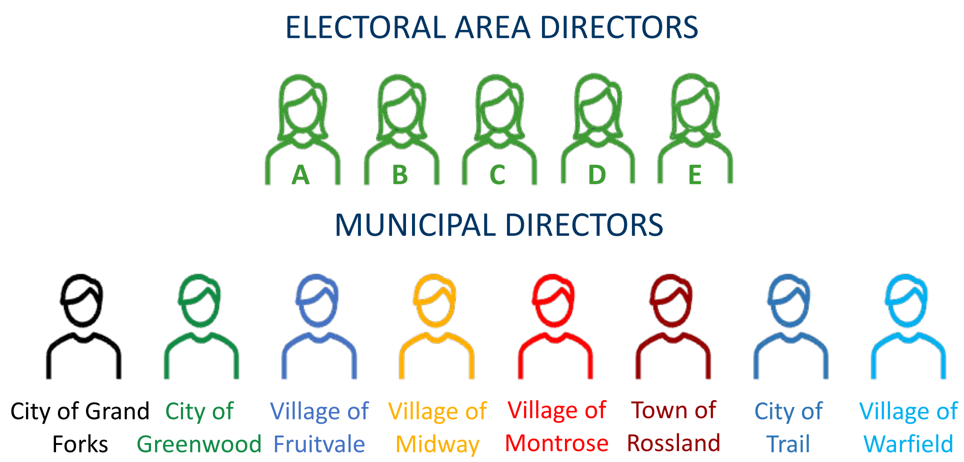
VILLAGE ASSETS

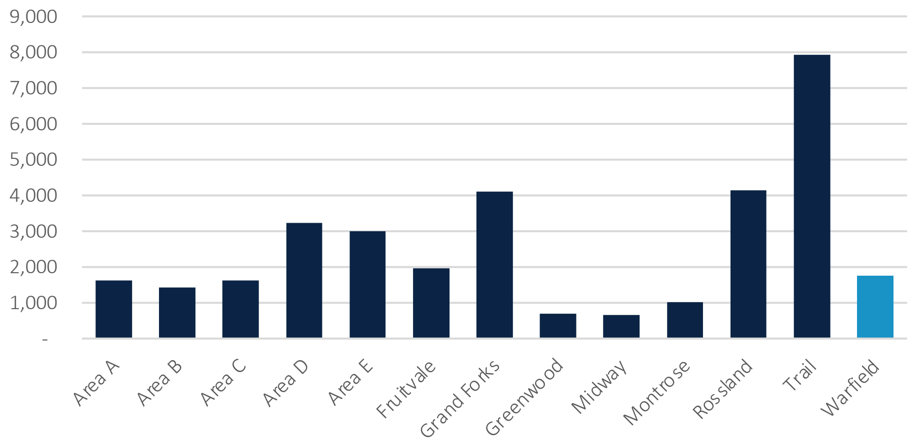


** Replacement values are based on 65% capital costs, 15% contingency, 10% design, 10% inspection and removal*

REGIONAL CONTEXT

- 8 Municipalities
- 5 Electoral areas
- 13-member Board of Directors





REGIONAL SERVICES TO WARFIELD

Regional District of
Kootenay Boundary

- General government and fiscal services
- Planning and economic development
- Solid Waste
- Sewage treatment
- Recreation and culture
- Fire and emergency services
- Transit and cemetery services

PROVINCIAL SERVICES TO WARFIELD

- Highway 3B maintenance
- Police services
- Health services
- Ambulance

SAMPLE TAX BILL (2024)

1. Village of Warfield Taxes

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Municipal Property Tax	3.4330	$1,475.22
Sewer Parcel Tax	$570/parcel	$570.00
Water Parcel Tax	$120/parcel	$120.00
Works & Services Parcel Tax	$310/parcel	$310.00
Subtotal for Village taxes		**$2,475.22**

2. RDKB Services Provided to Warfield

Denotes Region-wide Service

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Emergency Services		
Emergency Perparedness Program	0.0392	$16.82
911 Emergency Communications	0.0311	$13.36
Fire Protection Regionalized East End	0.6730	$289.19
Police Based Victims' Assistance	0.0140	$6.02
Planning & Development		
Planning & Development	0.0204	$8.76
East End Economic Development	0.0617	$26.50
Culture, Arts & Recreation		
Culture, Arts & Recreation	0.0403	$17.32
Environmental Services		
Regionalized Solid Waste Management	0.1734	$74.51
Community Services		
Cemeteries - East End	0.0892	$38.32
East End Transit	0.2355	$101.18
Administration		
General Government Administration	0.1013	$43.53
Feasibility Studies (Regional)	0.0000	$0.00
RDKB Adjustments	(0.0002)	($0.08)
Subtotal for RDKB taxes	**1.4787**	**$635.44**

SAMPLE TAX BILL (2024)

3. Provincial and Agency Property Taxes

	Tax Rate	Total Tax on $429,717 Residential
Police Tax	0.2972	$127.71
School Tax	1.7434	$749.17
Regional Hospital District	0.1578	$67.79
Municipal Finance Authority	0.0002	$0.09
BC Assessment Authority	0.0347	$14.91
Subtotal for Provincial and Agency taxes	2.2333	$959.67

TOTAL TAX BILL	**$4,070.33**

4. User Fees (Not included on Tax Notice)

Water User Fee*	$549.3/parcel	$549.30
Yard Waste Collection Fee*	$53.75/parcel	$53.75
RDKB Garbage Collection Fee per bag **	$3/bag or can	$156.00
Subtotal for User Fees		**$759.05**

** User fees would not normally be included on a property tax bill, but are shown here. Discounted rates ($511 and $50) are available if paid in full on or before the last business day in February.*

*** Garbage Fee assumes one bag/can of garbage every week for the year (52 cans).*

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT - INDICATORS

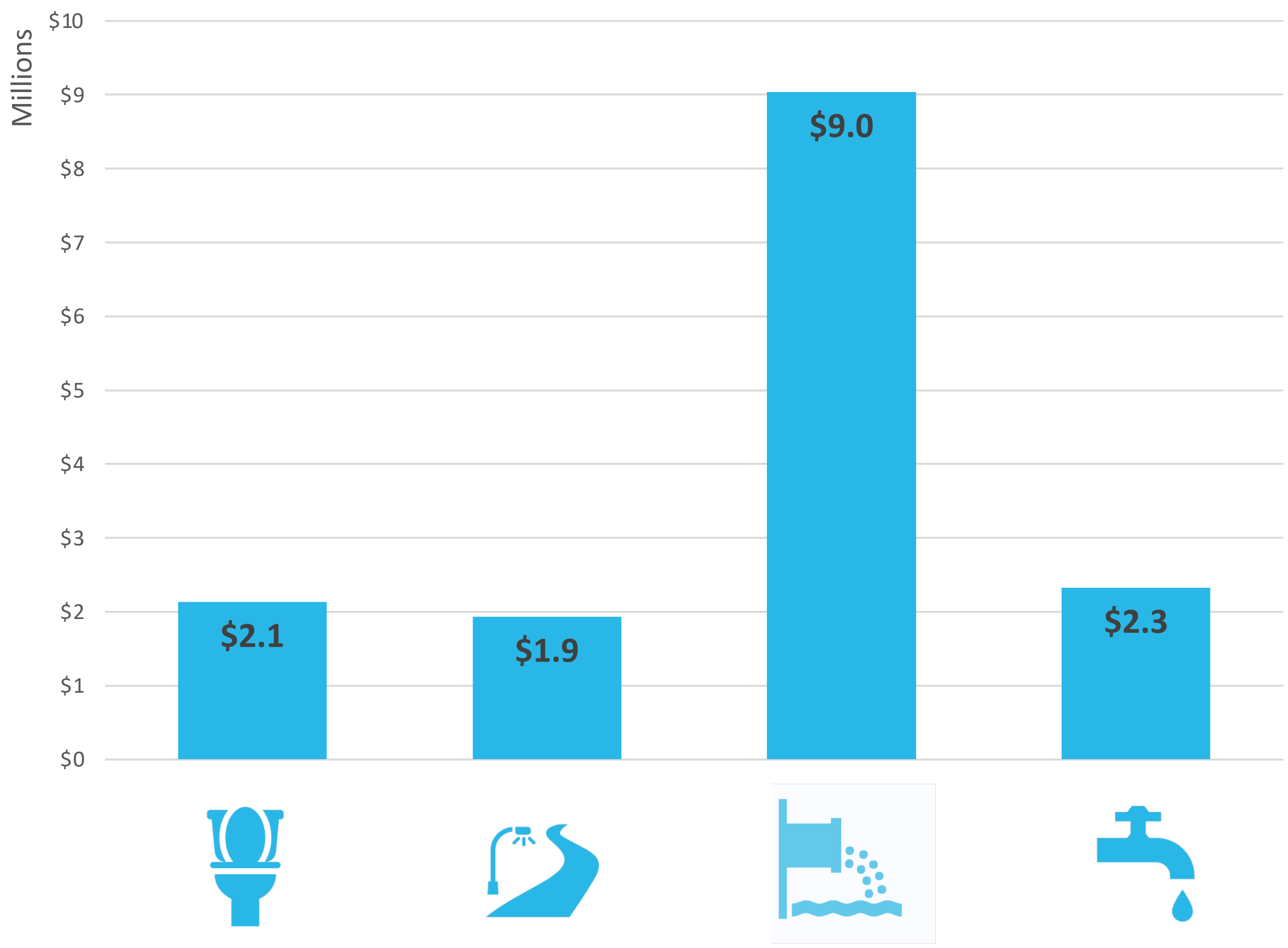
- Property Assessment Base
- Residential Property Tax Burden
- Population, Demographics and Growth
- Operating Expenses
- Capital Projects, Asset Management and Reserves
- Borrowing Capacity
- Incorporation Criteria

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT - CHALLENGES

- Tax base
- Reserves
- Borrowing authority
- Development potential
- Infrastructure upgrades

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT - CHALLENGES

Extreme and High Risk Asset Replacement Costs



SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT - CHALLENGES

- Current reserves (end of 2023) $4.5 million
- $10.9 million preliminary cost estimate on water intake
- Using the full $8.9 borrowing capacity would result in $752 increase on the average tax bill

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Aging infrastructure that needs upgrading
- Reserves growing now; not earlier
- Emerald Ridge potential is encouraging, but not imminent
- Lean operation; savings would be in form of service level reductions
- The need for new water supply is key determinant

OPTIONS

Remain as a municipality

Amalgamate with another municipality*

Unincorporated community in Regional District*

** Exploration of alternate structures in a subsequent Study would require consent and involvement of other jurisdictions. Perspectives of other local governments have not been canvassed as part of this Study.*

OPTIONS

	Remain as a municipality	Amalgamate with another municipality*	Unincorporated community in Regional District*
Features	• Decisions made for Warfield residents by locally-elected representatives (Warfield Council) • Servicing decisions made to respond to local needs	• Warfield residents would share some service costs across the larger amalgamated tax base. A larger municipality has the capacity to borrow more funds to help address the infrastructure needs of Warfield.	• As an unincorporated area, Warfield would receive the same services, but decisions for those services would be made by the RD Board with one director from the electoral area. Road maintenance would be provided by the province
Governance	• Warfield residents elect 5 Warfield Council members	• As part of an expanded municipality, all residents, including Warfield residents, would elect Council • Potential for a dedicated Warfield council member during a transition period	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents (together with other electoral area residents) would elect 1 electoral area director to participate on the Board of Directors

OPTIONS

	Remain as a municipality	Amalgamate with another municipality*	Unincorporated community in Regional District*
Anticipated Costs	• Taxes will rise to meet the community's infrastructure and service needs • Boundary expansions could be explored to augment tax base • All options to reduce service levels and costs would be explored	• Likely lower taxes than a standalone municipality due to the broader and more diverse tax base for shared services • Infrastructure that services only Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield residents/users	• Likely lower taxes than standalone municipality primarily due to the province assuming responsibility for roads (even when provincial rural tax is factored in) • Infrastructure services delivered only to Warfield would continue to be paid for solely by Warfield users
Key Issues	• Inability to pay (or borrow) for infrastructure needs • Limited tax base and diverse tax base to spread burden of costs • Limited options to further reduce operational costs • Limited opportunities to expand tax base	• As part of a larger municipality, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels	• As part of an electoral area, Warfield residents would exercise less influence or local control over services and service levels, with decisions made by RD Board of Directors • Road maintenance would be determined by the province, without local input

FEEDBACK

- Town Hall questions and discussions
- Survey – closes on March 15

NEXT STEPS

- Survey closes March 15
- Committee Meeting regarding options
- Final report to Committee
- Committee recommendation to Council

Questions?

Thank you for participating!

MUNICIPALITY SUSTAINABILITY STUDY
TOWN HALL MEETINGS

March 10, 2025

APPENDIX VII TOWN HALL HANDOUT

WHAT SERVICES DOES THE VILLAGE OF WARFIELD PROVIDE?

GENERAL GOVERNMENT & FISCAL SERVICES

- Running of the local government
- Finance, IT, insurance, legal, human resources
- Council support and elections
- Records management
- Grants
- Asset management

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- Preparing community plans
- Development applications
- Mapping/GIS
- Easements

RECREATION & CULTURE

- Centennial Pool
- Library
- Recreation programming
- Recreation facilities (Trail)
- Parks
- Community Hall
- Preschool
- Youth Action Network
- Seniors' coordinator and programming
- Community events

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

- Bylaw enforcement
- Business license
- Building permits and inspections
- Hydrant servicing
- Animal control

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- Yard waste collection
- Boulevard & tree maintenance
- Village clean-up
- Rentals

UTILITIES

- Water treatment and supply
- Sewage collection

TRANSPORTATION, DRAINAGE & STREET LIGHTING

- Road maintenance
- Drainage ditches and storm sewers
- Snow plow/sanding
- Retaining walls
- Street lighting

DID YOU KNOW …?

The Village provides services through a combination of:

- staff (equivalent of 8.41 full-time staff)
- contractors
- service agreements with other local governments

Examples of current service agreements include:

- City of Rossland provides bylaw enforcement
- City of Trail provides library and recreation facilities
- RDKB operates the water treatment plant and provides building permits and inspections

VILLAGE OF WARFIELD
MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

WHAT SERVICES DOES THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF KOOTENAY BOUNDARY PROVIDE TO WARFIELD RESIDENTS?

REGIONAL ADMIN & GENERAL GOVERNMENT

- Running of the local government
- Finance, IT, insurance, legal, human resources
- Board support and elections
- Records management
- Feasibility studies

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Fringe area planning
- Mapping/GIS
- Floodplain management
- Housing Needs Reports
- Economic development (east end sub-regional service)

CULTURE, ARTS & RECREATION

- Grant funding to local arts, cultural and recreational service organizations

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Regional fire protection
- Emergency preparedness program
- 911
- Police-based victims' assistance

SOLID WASTE

- Garbage and organics curbside collection
- Landfill operations
- Solid waste management

UTILITIES

- Sewage treatment

TRANSIT & CEMETERY

- Transit (east end)
- Cemetery (east end)

Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

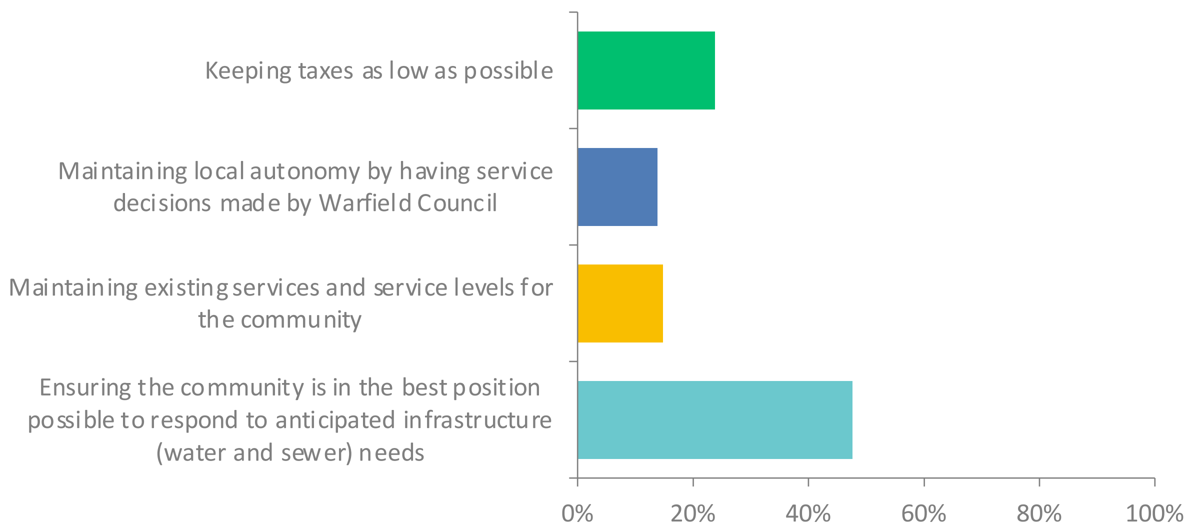
APPENDIX VIII SURVEY RESULTS

Warfield Sustainability Survey Results

Date opened: February 4, 2025
Date closed: February 16, 2025
Online: 146
Paper: 64
Total: 210

Q1: Which of the following statements best reflects your top priority when considering the future of the Village of Warfield.

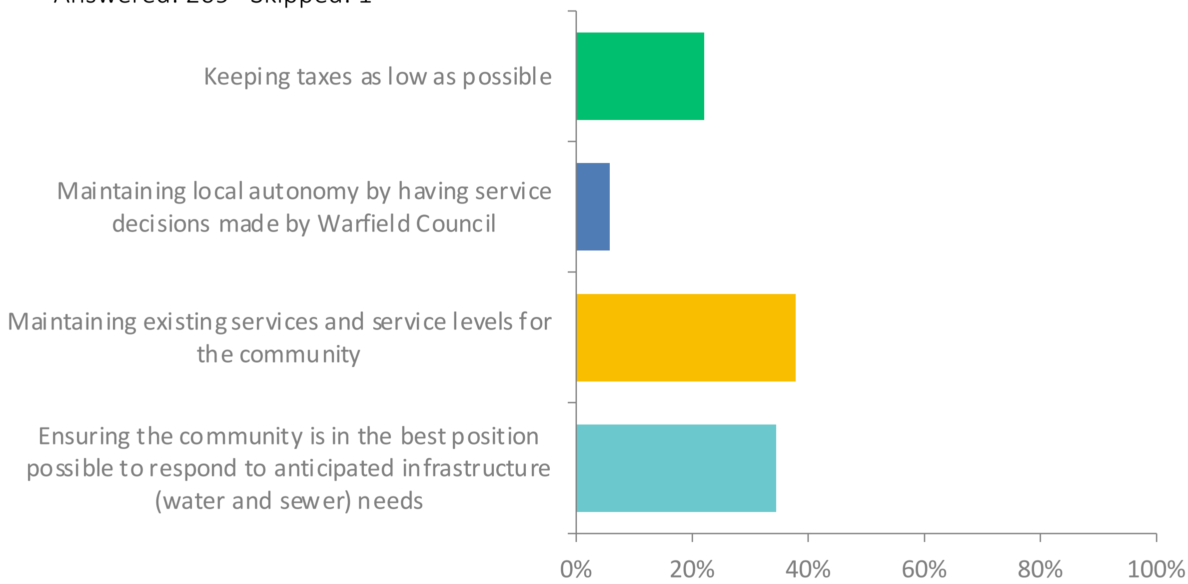
- Answered: 210 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	#
Keeping taxes as low as possible	23.81%	50
Maintaining local autonomy by having service decisions made by Warfield Council	13.81%	29
Maintaining existing services and service levels for the community	14.76%	31
Ensuring the community is in the best position possible to respond to anticipated infrastructure (water and sewer) needs	47.62%	100
TOTAL		210

Q2: Which of the following statements best reflects your second highest priority when considering the future of the Village of Warfield.

- Answered: 209 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	#
Keeping taxes as low as possible	22.01%	46
Maintaining local autonomy by having service decisions made by Warfield Council	5.74%	12
Maintaining existing services and service levels for the community	37.80%	79
Ensuring the community is in the best position possible to respond to anticipated infrastructure (water and sewer) needs	34.45%	72
TOTAL		209

Warfield Sustainability Survey Results

Q3: What do you value about having services provided locally by the Village of Warfield?

- Answered: 167 Skipped: 43

** Note: PC denotes Paper Copy entered by consultants. 10 of the "comments" included below are therefore notations referencing the corresponding paper copy, and have been removed from the total*

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Road maintenance is well cared for. Yard waste every two weeks in summer is useful. PC64 by IN	3/19/2025 10:49 AM
2	everything PC63 by IN	3/19/2025 10:48 AM
3	This is a big issue in our minds. Warfield provides far superior snow removal and green waste pick up than Trail (or other communities). Makes sense to join Trail otherwise, Not RDRB preferably. PC62 by IN	3/19/2025 10:47 AM
4	Reliability - I can count on my street being plowed in a timely manner. Village workers know the trouble spots. Communication - Village office and council are the vital links to ensure concerns of Warfield residents are addressed. PC61 by IN	3/19/2025 10:46 AM
5	snow removal early response from village work crew on problems that arise PC60 by IN	3/19/2025 10:44 AM
6	As it is, Warfield is not stustainable - great to have services provided locally, but in a few years we will not be able to afford the existing service levels. We need to make this affordable for future generations. PC59 by IN (This person selected all as a priority for question 1.)	3/19/2025 10:43 AM
7	PC58 by IN	3/19/2025 10:41 AM
8	PC57 by IN	3/19/2025 10:40 AM
9	They care for our community. Thank you for all that you do, even if we need to amalgamate. PC56 by IN	3/19/2025 10:40 AM
10	Short response time when services are required, e.g, snow removal, etc. PC55 by IN	3/19/2025 10:38 AM
11	(This person did not select an answer for question 4 but I had to select one in order to record this survey response.) PC54 by IN	3/19/2025 10:38 AM
12	The village works crew under the NEW direction is actually performing valuable work. Timely. Gaining knowledge every day in the successful maintenance of village assets. PC53 by IN	3/19/2025 10:36 AM
13	PC52 by IN	3/19/2025 10:35 AM
14	Road maintenance, however, last 2 winters it has declined in a community that houses mostly retirees; maintaining, repairing infrastructure; water is #1 issue, however an additional $750 in tax increase for water is concerning to many residents particularly young families with large mortgages and retirees. Solution that would benefit both is a new pump house directing flow to Warfield but going to Teck? PC51 by IN (there are more comments on the card next to question 1 and 3).	3/19/2025 10:35 AM
15	Maintaining roads - winter and summer PC50 by IN	3/19/2025 10:30 AM
16	High quality of services with ease of access for residents. We should to the study but my preference is to be a separate community. PC49 by IN	3/19/2025 10:30 AM
17	I appreciate our Warfield crew. I think they do a good job. I particularly appreciate the snow plowing which I think is excellent compared to other municipalities. PC48 by IN	3/19/2025 10:29 AM
18	Our services are provided and maintained by employees of Warfield. I feel if we amalgamate we will loose our community services and will not matter based on how the Trail Council operates the Trail location. Very concerned and worried. PC47 by IN	3/19/2025 10:27 AM
19	While we appreciate the standard services we get right now, they are only what we would expect for the high taxes we pay. There are no extra perks. The days of George Aitken are	3/19/2025 10:26 AM

	gone. Our taxes are already too high and will only go up. It's time to (hopefully) amalgamate with Trail. PC46 by IN	
20	A sense of community and connections with neighbours and the Village.	3/16/2025 8:58 AM
21	Our streets and parks are top priority. My fear if we join another town our streets and parks will take a back seat to them	3/15/2025 8:52 AM
22	We know what we need	3/14/2025 7:29 PM
23	efficient and quick to respond	3/14/2025 6:30 AM
24	Local input. Supporting local	3/13/2025 9:04 PM
25	I like the autonomy.	3/13/2025 8:56 PM
26	More in touch with our local needs	3/13/2025 6:09 PM
27	The warfield pool is wonderful! And so are all the local parks.	3/13/2025 4:31 PM
28	That we vote for who represents us and that we don't get lumped into surrounding communities silly decisions about how to spend their tax dollars	3/13/2025 4:06 PM
29	Service and speed	3/13/2025 3:06 PM
30	- control - response to citizen issues - local knowledge of existing staff and workers	3/13/2025 9:27 AM
31	Priority decision making & cost control management	3/13/2025 8:03 AM
32	Residents are able to hold the providers of such services to a higher level of accountability.	3/13/2025 6:08 AM
33	Consistent and friendly	3/12/2025 10:32 PM
34	The public works people do a great job of keeping the trails in good shape. I like that we have local people making local decisions.	3/12/2025 10:31 PM
35	snow removal is the best I've ever seen.	3/12/2025 9:26 PM
36	Village is responsive to local need.	3/12/2025 10:17 AM
37	Snow Removal, Garden Waste pickup, local pool	3/12/2025 1:55 AM
38	Timely snow removal during winter, dependable services throughout the year.	3/11/2025 6:43 PM
39	Timely and effective services.	3/11/2025 3:00 PM
40	The village works does timely and efficient job of snow removal and spring cleanup and respond quickly to any problems.	3/11/2025 2:51 PM
41	They do an excellent work	3/11/2025 1:54 PM
42	We are the top priority for services and do not have to be included with anyone else!	3/11/2025 11:45 AM
43	Prompt snow removal sevices	3/11/2025 11:44 AM
44	Understanding of local needs that may get ignored if we didn't have our own government	3/11/2025 11:30 AM
45	I see no choice here, we must amalgamate with Trail or RD. Previous councils have overspent and had little to NO foresight. Time to let reality take over from the ego of (previous) council.	3/11/2025 11:03 AM
46	local input to community decisions PC44 by IN	3/11/2025 10:05 AM
47	PC43 by IN	3/11/2025 10:04 AM
48	snow removal efficient PC42 by IN	3/11/2025 10:04 AM
49	not much PC41 by IN	3/11/2025 10:04 AM
50	not much without improvement PC40 by IN	3/11/2025 10:03 AM
51	snow removal, pool Don't think staying as a municipality is viable. PC39 by IN	3/11/2025 10:01 AM
52	snow removal response to infrastructure issues PC38 by IN	3/11/2025 10:00 AM
53	- a single voice is louder in a smaller crowd - the chance to have a real citizen influence in the	3/11/2025 10:00 AM

	future of our community PC37 by IN	
54	PC36 by IN	3/11/2025 9:58 AM
55	PC35 by IN	3/11/2025 9:58 AM
56	We don't really care if the services we have are provided by the Village of Warfield or Trail, which we assume would be who Warfield would amalgamate with. We are only 4.5 km apart. It only makes sense to amalgamate! (We felt the same when living in Rossland, all these small villages should be one.) PC34 by IN	3/11/2025 9:57 AM
57	snow removal PC33 by IN	3/11/2025 9:54 AM
58	We the people of Warfield will always be the first priority. PC32 by IN	3/11/2025 9:53 AM
59	The Village of Warfield is in the best position to look after its own affairs.	3/11/2025 9:51 AM
60	Snow removal. Reasonable taxes for seniors on fixed income (in the past), now too expensive - "Gone are the good old days!!" PC31 by IN	3/11/2025 9:50 AM
61	All services provided by the office staff and works crew are first rate. The level of these services will surly decline if Warfield became a mere subdivision. PC30 by IN	3/11/2025 9:49 AM
62	excellent snow plowing service PC29 by IN	3/11/2025 9:47 AM
63	pool, school, parks, trails PC28 by IN	3/11/2025 9:45 AM
64	Having autonomy. However, it is overruled by tax affordability	3/11/2025 9:22 AM
65	I trust that our Mayor and Councillors as fellow residents and neighbours truly have our best interests at heart, and are doing their best to ensure that our needs are met while keeping costs as reasonable and manageable as possible.	3/11/2025 8:35 AM
66	Locally focused decision-making, an understanding of the community culture, direct and timely attention to local needs	3/11/2025 7:57 AM
67	this gives the village total control of when things get done and has a voice in how they are done.	3/11/2025 7:24 AM
68	I do not value having services provided locally, it is inefficient.	3/10/2025 9:27 PM
69	AMALGAMATION!!	3/10/2025 6:49 PM
70	There is always some one on hand when there needs to have something done.	3/10/2025 6:39 PM
71	Any city workers or regional workers could do the job	3/10/2025 6:12 PM
72	Not really bothered	3/10/2025 6:04 PM
73	When you need something g done it’s quick to get someone to help	3/10/2025 5:56 PM
74	If its cheaper and smarter to join Trail or regional district im for that	3/10/2025 5:46 PM
75	I prefer to stay as Warfield. Have we asked Rossland for water? They have the best water in the Kootenay’s. They can easily twin the sewer line down the wagon trail and provide warfield with water.	3/10/2025 4:52 PM
76	Dependability	3/10/2025 3:52 PM
77	Our services are provided by our own workers accountable to us . The priority is our Village not somewhere else	3/10/2025 12:37 PM
78	We should move forward with finding the best possible decision for the future of the the village.	3/10/2025 12:32 PM
79	We will always be a priority to our elected council and how our village is maintained. We won’t have that being part of another municipality or regional district.	3/10/2025 12:32 PM
80	Not much	3/10/2025 11:19 AM
81	I value the fast and reliable support in times of need and the familiar faces (personalized service)	3/10/2025 10:02 AM
82	Residents have the most control on how the Village is managed.	3/10/2025 9:06 AM

83	Services used to be the reason to stay independent but not any more. We are ready to amalgamate. The pool I guess. Used to be snow plowing.	3/8/2025 11:57 AM
84	The really excellent plowing in the winter season.	3/7/2025 8:25 AM
85	Services are good and small community is well cared for.	3/6/2025 8:18 PM
86	The timely delivery of snow removal as well as the ability to have a member of council, or a village worker visit my property to share/help solve a property issue or concern. In the past polite , helpful office personnel has also been a much valued part of this Village.	3/6/2025 8:24 AM
87	What services? This decline in services is why we want to amalgamate.	3/6/2025 7:45 AM
88	Being able to go to/call the Village office when there is a question or concern.	3/5/2025 5:45 PM
89	What services are you referring to? Half the village gets plowed and other half does not but pay the same taxes. Four staff drive around looking for fires? floods? Services are no longer the same so less value.	3/5/2025 4:35 PM
90	The good service currently provided	3/5/2025 3:28 PM
91	I do not value the services provided by the village of warfield, and would rather dissolve and be unincorporated. I oppose amalgamation with Trail.	3/5/2025 3:21 PM
92	We need to join Trail. Too small a village, council, etc. Time to move on. PC27 by IN	3/5/2025 10:29 AM
93	Nothing, could be managed by Trail council or regional district at least as well, definitely prefer to amalgamate with Trail. I love the small town feel but to be honest it is just not practical to manage services for only 1700 residents separately. Kelly B. Kroeker (wrote her phone # and address on the paper form) PC26 by IN	3/5/2025 10:28 AM
94	PC25 by IN	3/5/2025 10:26 AM
95	PC24 by IN	3/5/2025 10:26 AM
96	We value the services provided but to be honest it doesn't matter who it is provided by as long as we have the services. We would be more than happy with amalgamation with the City of Trail (assuming if would be with the City of Trail). PC23 by IN	3/5/2025 10:25 AM
97	KEEP THE TAXES DOWN. NO MORE TAXATION. PC22 by IN	3/5/2025 10:23 AM
98	-Dependable services. - We have great services. Let's keep them. I've lived in village for 64 yrs and it's the "Best Place Ever!!" Thank you to all the hard working employees of the village. PC21 by IN	3/5/2025 10:23 AM
99	I am actually ok with joining Trail. The "spirit of the village" no longer seems … (?). PC20 by IN	3/5/2025 10:20 AM
100	I don’t see many advantages	3/5/2025 10:15 AM
101	No comment	3/5/2025 10:13 AM
102	We our residents have direct control over our future. We need government bonds for …. (?) financing to upgrade financing (30 years). PC19 by IN	3/5/2025 10:09 AM
103	Quick response to problems with water and sewer issues. Good roads during winter conditions. Small work crew. PC18 by IN	3/5/2025 10:06 AM
104	We have very good service. PC17 by IN	3/5/2025 10:05 AM
105	I believe that staff members, workplace members and all those working for the village should be permanent resident taxpayers with credentials. What is their previous experience in government business? There has to be accountability. Good staff means good government. We have a great community and we should do what we can to retain it. We need reliable monetary figures to enables us to decide the issue of standalone or amalgamation. Prior to our next election the present mayor and council should be asked if they support standalone or amalgamation. Their replies should be published in the local media. Thanks. PC16 by IN	3/5/2025 10:05 AM
106	PC15 by IN	3/5/2025 10:00 AM
107	They are getting paid anyway, why not use them. I think this would be cheaper than outsourcing. PC14 by IN	3/5/2025 9:59 AM

108	Garbage pickup and yard waste pick up is a huge value service. The pool for the kids in the summer is another big service and hiring summer students. PC 13 by IN	3/5/2025 9:58 AM
109	- Quick response to issues, including plowing after snow storms. - Maintaining swimming pool in the community. - Small staff who take price in their jobs. PC12 by IN	3/5/2025 9:57 AM
110	After getting rid of Trail's deadbeats leaning on shovel handles the Warfield works crew was a breath of fresh air. And there was a great sense pf pride among all of the citizenry. Youngsters can sense those kinds of things. --- Do not depend on Cominco subsidy to Trail as the smelter may find itself without ore to process after 2031 (Geologist). PC11 by IN	3/5/2025 9:56 AM
111	Nothing. Warfield should be amalgamated with Trail. PC10 by IN	3/5/2025 9:52 AM
112	- Warfield has quick services supplied as a lower area to service (?) - yard waste pickup allows yards to be neater and discourages people from dumping on banks etc. PC9 by IN	3/5/2025 9:51 AM
113	We value the prompt response and small community feel. We chose to live in this village for this reason. PC8 by IN	3/5/2025 9:48 AM
114	more control over our pool PC7 by IN	3/5/2025 9:48 AM
115	PC 6 by IN	3/5/2025 9:47 AM
116	Service dept would be more responsive to residents of Warfield PC5 by IN	3/5/2025 9:47 AM
117	- Quick response - work done well and with a pleasant attitude PC4 by IN	3/5/2025 9:45 AM
118	Quick road clearing response on our hills after snow. PC2 by IN	3/5/2025 9:44 AM
119	Knowing that if I have a question or concern, it will be dealt with in a courteous and efficient manner by the office staff. The works crew are also approachable and willing to accommodate the needs of residents. The village employees make an effort to know the residents, making Warfield a very welcoming community. PC3 by IN	3/5/2025 9:43 AM
120	quick road clearing response on our hills after snow	3/5/2025 9:41 AM
121	Not much anymore. More staff, better equipment and slower response and less snow plowing, which is not a good indicator for our village. so, The pool is our best service, for two months of the year.	3/4/2025 6:40 PM
122	Nothing. Taxes are up and service levels are down.	3/4/2025 9:03 AM
123	Warfield Services are about the same as other municipalities with the exception of garden waste pickup. PC1 by IN	3/4/2025 8:48 AM
124	I like that the warfield pool can higher local kids. I would not like Warfield to take on a huge debt for water treatment without first pursuing conversations about amalgamation.	3/1/2025 9:54 PM
125	The personal touch and familiarity of the Village staff is a plus; however, I would not hesitate to encourage the Village to look at amalgamation with Trail, or other options, to find economies of scale.	3/1/2025 11:13 AM
126	The services are top notch when it comes to infrastructure and winter road maintenance. The village responds to issues in a very timely manner.	2/28/2025 9:11 AM
127	Quick access to work crew	2/27/2025 3:45 PM
128	response is quick for any emergency/request-.e.g. water break; snow plowing is quick etc...	2/27/2025 6:25 AM
129	Very high in value. Already like how it is right now.	2/25/2025 9:35 PM
130	I appreciate the village workers especially snow plowing.	2/24/2025 5:14 PM
131	Keeps bureaucracy to a minimal and manageable level vs a larger, wider sprawling municipality (if amalgamated) where the fighting to take precedent before other local areas would be catastrophic in getting things accomplished in a timely manner manner	2/24/2025 2:35 PM
132	Always a top priority	2/24/2025 2:26 PM
133	Good service	2/24/2025 7:40 AM
134	Keeping the streets open and clean in winter. Also securing a water supply. Maintaining	2/21/2025 2:47 PM

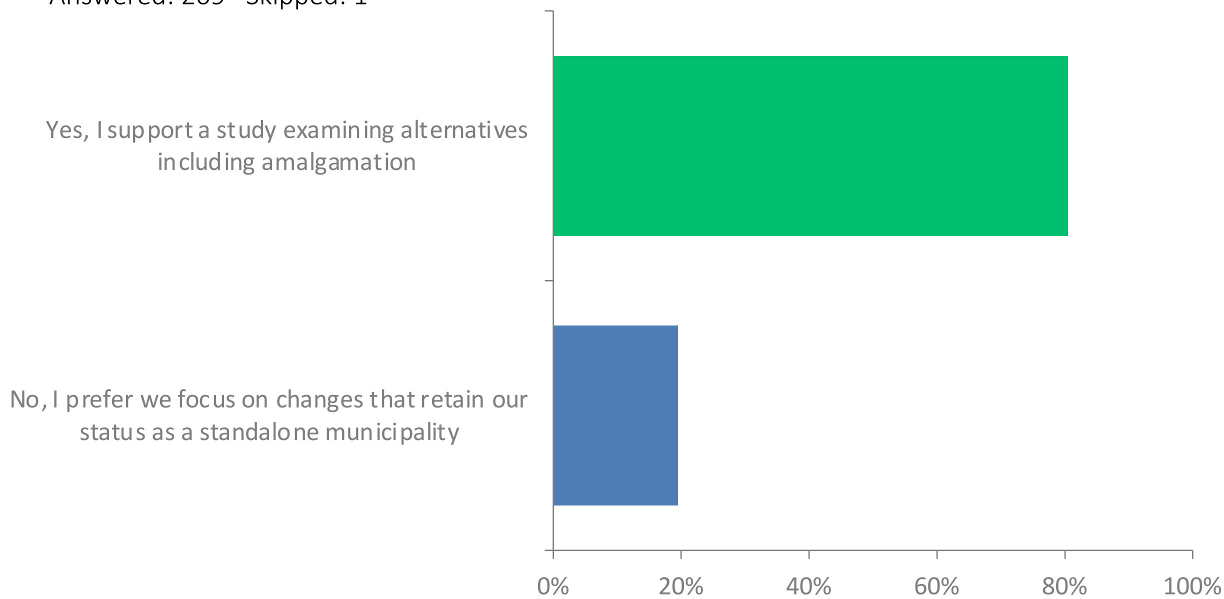
	garbage and recycling pick ups. Finally, keeping the parks and community hall open.	
135	Taxes are lower and service better than City of Trail	2/21/2025 10:06 AM
136	Less concerned about who provides the service and more concerned about the effectiveness and economic efficiency. Our mailing addresses already state 'Trail' … let's get on with amalgamation.	2/20/2025 12:34 PM
137	Responsiveness, human touch, understanding local needs	2/20/2025 10:58 AM
138	We feel that amalgamation with Trail would maintain the work's service that we have at present. Warfield would become a subregion of Trail same as Sunningdale. The addition of works crew trades, would help in cost savings. At present , many of our needs are sourced contracts.	2/20/2025 7:55 AM
139	Snow removal, parks,	2/20/2025 7:10 AM
140	Responsive to local need Prompt service	2/19/2025 9:07 PM
141	I value the village connection – it feels like a community where people care about each other, and where issues are heard and are solvable.	2/19/2025 10:33 AM
142	Public works	2/18/2025 7:14 PM
143	Would hope for timely action when infrastructure needs help, but not seeing that currently, except for snow removal which is good for our little village	2/17/2025 9:23 AM
144	Response time is always excellent. Snow plowing in the village is timely and well done.	2/16/2025 12:23 PM
145	attention to the community needs. Outdoor pool	2/16/2025 12:42 AM
146	Response times, works yard is close by, intimate knowledge of infrastructure.	2/15/2025 1:55 PM
147	snow removal is usually quick.	2/15/2025 7:59 AM
148	I value that our crew plow my street. That is all I can value. Maybe you should of asked the question differently. Like what do you like best living in the village, or how do you feel about amalgamation with another community. Everyone that wanted to stay a village have either died or live behind the mall leaving us to clean up this mess. We should of joined in 2015.	2/13/2025 7:48 AM
149	Not much.	2/12/2025 9:20 AM
150	There is no value . If we amalgamate the Village and City of Trail would have a larger tax base. Being a bigger population we would have better funding available . We can tie into water supply right where Annabel and Trail meet. Trail water plant is only running at half of the capacity it can run at..unlimited supply for us . No more little boys club Get on with this amalgamation.. We would still be call Warfield just like there is Glennmerry, East Trail , West Trail Etc .	2/11/2025 3:51 PM
151	Snow removal is amazing, village staff do a really great job!	2/10/2025 1:24 PM
152	Not sure due to not previously having any other options.	2/9/2025 3:44 PM
153	Our works crew feel a sense of ownership and take pride in their work	2/9/2025 11:53 AM
154	Prompt service.	2/9/2025 10:41 AM
155	Not much, I think we will be fine if we amalgamate	2/9/2025 9:10 AM
156	Autonomy, input/feedback from residents more impactful, maintains community identity and culture	2/8/2025 8:35 PM
157	The assumption is that it is more personal, and it more than likely is.	2/7/2025 3:00 PM
158	I would hope the services would be provide more efficiently and quickly by the Village rather than an amalgamate or Regional District.	2/7/2025 1:04 PM
159	Knowledge and commitment to our community, facilities like the hall, parks, and pool are valued and maintained. Concerned about losing promptness of services if amalgamated with Trail or under RDKB. There could be tax payer savings by eliminating duplicate personnel (CAO, Office admin, etc.) while maintaining works crews.	2/7/2025 11:09 AM
160	Reliability	2/6/2025 9:03 PM

Warfield Sustainability Survey Results

161	Having streets plowed,Water, sewer	2/6/2025 7:00 PM
162	The snow removal services are excellent	2/6/2025 5:34 PM
163	Our public works	2/6/2025 5:28 PM
164	They do a good job- on par with the City of Trial	2/6/2025 3:40 PM
165	Accountability	2/6/2025 1:19 PM
166	Efficient response to local needs	2/6/2025 12:31 PM
167	Big Apple in small barrel. The plowimg is awful in Trail except for Muriel heights where they over plow and sand	2/6/2025 12:09 PM
168	I value our access to a local pool. I value the access we have to Trail based recreation and services as well and am grateful for Warfield’s investment in that.	2/6/2025 11:59 AM
169	Road maintenance	2/6/2025 11:56 AM
170	Priorities will be determined locally, not by a distant administration.	2/6/2025 10:35 AM
171	Doesn't make a difference whether we are a stand alone or amalgamated. Best is to keep taxes low and have good infrastructure	2/6/2025 10:25 AM
172	I’m support whatever is the logical or most economically feasible path forward for our community. If that is becoming a part of Trail, then it is a no brainer. It’s not personal, just business and what truly make Warfield great is the people. So let’s get us to a place where we are a viable option to amalgamate and move ahead . Maybe you can dedicate an entire update and speak to how much preparation and studies have already taken place and educating the community on what almagation looks like ? Majority of the residents are completely unaware of the money spent and information collected regarding the subject.	2/6/2025 7:54 AM
173	The public works know most of the long term residents. Unfortunately the cost of this unique service is not sustainable,without a major residential tax increase.	2/5/2025 7:05 PM
174	I like the road clearing and maintenance but I would be okay if the water/sewer was not provided locally.	2/5/2025 5:51 PM
175	I don’t. I appreciate the work village employees do and find them very approachable, however I worked in Trail for years and found the same level of commitment there. Pretending we are a viable community is ridiculous. We are essentially a neighbourhood in the City of Trail, without the benefits of having a say (vote) on important issues.	2/5/2025 5:35 PM
176	Having lived in other Greater Trail communities I have seen the level of services and response to inquiries as provided by other municipalities. Warfield services and the personnel who provide them are first rate. I appreciate that financial realities are spurring this investigation and I am emphatic in my support. Services are expensive and I would pay higher taxes willingly in both the short and longer term to maintain the Village as an independent entity.	2/5/2025 5:25 PM
177	Plowing	2/5/2025 12:20 PM

Q4: Would you support a second phase of the Municipal Sustainability Study to examine, in consultation with other jurisdictions, options (such as amalgamation) that could change Warfield's current status as a standalone municipality?

- Answered: 209 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	#
Yes, I support a study examining alternatives including amalgamation	80.38%	168
No, I prefer we focus on changes that retain our status as a standalone municipality	19.62%	41
TOTAL		209