

A photograph of the Peachland Fire & Rescue Service Station 21. The building has a red sign that reads "Peachland Fire & Rescue Service" and "STATION 21 4401 3rd STREET". There are two red garage doors visible. A hanging basket with purple flowers is in the upper left corner.

District of Peachland

Protective Services Building Referendum FAQs

Updated September 2022

PROJECT BACKGROUND

► What is the project?

This fall, eligible Peachland voters will be asked to vote in a referendum on whether to support the borrowing of funds to relocate and construct a new Protective Services Building for the community. The new facility will house Peachland Fire and Rescue Service and may include other community safety services to serve Peachland and beyond.

► What is the referendum (public assent voting) for?

The referendum is to approve the borrowing of funds associated with the project, not to approve the project itself. The referendum process will be open to all eligible voters in the District of Peachland.

► When is the referendum?

The referendum will be held at the same time as the civic election, with opportunities to vote by mail in advance or at your local polling station. Election day is October 15, 2022 from 8:00AM – 8:00PM. Visit www.peachland.ca/elections for more information on voter eligibility, advance polls, voting locations and more.

► What is the role of Peachland Fire and Rescue Service?

Peachland Fire and Rescue Service protects the community by responding to fires, motor vehicle accidents, medical emergencies, public assistance calls, marine and water rescues, and hazmat calls, in addition to fire and life safety public education at schools and public events.

► Why do we need a new Protective Services Building?

Projected growth of Peachland's population and a greater demand for emergency services means that there is a growing need to develop the supports required to protect our people and our assets. Station 21 can no longer support Peachland Fire and Rescue Service as it is limited by space, aging infrastructure and location. Constraints of the existing fire hall impact Peachland Fire and Rescue Service's efficiency and emergency response times, which directly impact community safety. A Fire Department Master Plan (2021) and a Community Fire Hall Advisory Select Committee (ASC) determined that Peachland Fire and Rescue Service critically requires a new facility to meet functional safety and operational requirements.



▶ **What is the Community Fire Hall Advisory Select Committee?**

The Community Fire Hall Advisory Select Committee (ASC) consists of 13 representatives, including community members approved by Mayor and Council who are residents or property owners in the District of Peachland or District of Peachland Fire Protection Areas, two elected officials and the District fire chief. The purpose of the ASC is to make recommendations to Council regarding the provision of a Protective Services Building that will service the current and future population of Peachland and meet all legislative/regulatory requirements and industry standards.

▶ **What are the benefits to residents?**

A new Protective Services Building offers several benefits that will enhance safety in our community, including:

- Improving emergency response times due to a more central location and immediate access to the highway (main emergency response route)
- Ensuring that Peachland Fire and Rescue Service can continue to expand staff and equipment to meet the community's increasing needs
- Improving equipment and meeting industry standards for fire hall facilities
- Building new multi-use meeting and training rooms accessible to the community

▶ **What happens if the referendum is defeated?**

If the referendum is not passed, Peachland will be left with inadequate emergency response services as Station 21 does not have the capacity to meet the future demands of the community. The existing fire hall may require significant investment in order to meet current health, safety and fire code requirements. Delaying the construction of a new Protective Services Building also means that the total cost of the project will increase as construction costs continue to escalate with inflation.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES BUILDING

▶ **Why can't the existing Peachland Fire Hall be renovated to meet the needs of the other Protective Services?**

The current Peachland Fire & Rescue location is limited in size and does not allow room for Peachland's emergency response services to expand. Relocating to a larger location will allow for staff and equipment to continue to grow and meet the long-term needs of the community. A more central, localized station between Peachland's three main neighbourhoods will also improve response times and access to Highway 97.

▶ **How big will the building be?**

Initial plans for the proposed Protective Services Building have 20,000 square feet dedicated to serving the community.



▶ **Will the new Protective Services Building share space with other community services?**

The Protective Services Building is dedicated to services related to community safety. It will be home to Peachland Fire & Rescue Service, Community Policing, a small RCMP office and may include other community safety services like BC Ambulance. The Protective Services Loan Authorization Bylaw No. 2364 is specific to the construction of a Protective Services Building, and the borrowing amount cannot be used to construct other projects.

▶ **Will the new Protective Services Building be able to meet the future demands and population growth?**

Yes, the increased size of the building will allow for staff and equipment to continue to expand to serve Peachland's projected population growth for many years.

▶ **What areas will this Protective Services Building serve?**

The Protective Services building will service the entire Peachland community and beyond.

▶ **How long will it take to construct the building?**

Construction timelines will be determined once the building design is finalized, which will proceed only if the referendum passes. This will depend on availability of materials, contractors, and other resources. Timelines will be communicated to residents on the project website as soon as they're available.

SITE LOCATION

▶ **Why was this site chosen for the proposed Protective Services Building?**

A thorough analysis of site options and considerations was conducted by the ASC. The property located at the corner of San Clemente Avenue and 13th Street met the ASC's specified criteria, which included:

- Accessibility for Fire Fighters, ambulances, and police vehicles
- Quick and direct access to Highway 97
- Safety (away from children's parks)
- Ability to accommodate upgraded Fire utility (trucks)
- Affordable for Peachland residents
- Ability to accommodate growth

▶ **Will there be parking?**

Yes, there will be on-site and off-site parking designated for staff.



▶ **Will there be fire lights to stop traffic for fire trucks to back in on 13th?**

No, there will be enough of an apron at the front of the building for trucks to turn without affecting traffic on 13th Street.

▶ **With the new location, will emergency-related sounds be any different than what I currently experience if I live in the neighbourhood?**

No. Sirens and emergency-related sounds in the Gateway Area around 13th Street will be similar to what residents currently experience along Highway 97.

▶ **What will happen to the existing Peachland Fire Department building?**

Currently, plans for the existing Peachland Fire Department location have not been determined yet.

COSTS & FUNDING

▶ **How much will it cost to build the Protective Services Building?**

The estimated cost to build the proposed Protective Services Building is roughly \$20 million. The District is seeking to borrow up to \$17.5 million from the Municipal Finance Authority, if approved through the referendum. The remainder of funding will be sourced through grant opportunities.

▶ **Are there grants available?**

Yes, several grants are available, and will be pursued should the project move forward. Some of the grants available are offered through: Canada Building Fund, Community Works.

▶ **How much will I pay to support this project?**

The District is proposing to repay this \$17.5 million investment through:

- annual parcel tax
- \$1 million asset management reserve contribution (reduces parcel tax)
- \$1 million capital reserve contribution (reduces parcel tax)
- lease revenue (reduces parcel tax)

On September 6, 2022, Council passed a resolution that will fix the maximum net parcel tax increase as a result of the Protective Services Building project to \$125. This will provide Peachland residents the confidence that as a result of this project, the net increase will not exceed the approved amount.

Currently, residents pay an annual parcel tax to support District projects. At this time, this amounts to ~\$782 for each property. Between 2023 to 2026, the Protective Services Building levy will phase in and existing levies will phase out. As a result, the overall net increase to each property is \$125 per year, for a total parcel tax of ~\$907.



**To help minimize the impact to taxpayers, the Protective Services Building Parcel Tax will be phased in, resulting an addition of \$50 in 2024, \$175 in 2025 and \$175 in 2026. The District is also considering phasing it in by increasing parcel tax by \$31.25 per year for four years, starting in 2023. The District will be seeking community input on the favoured approach at Info Session #2 on September 24.*

► **What does the \$20 million go towards?**

The project costs will go towards land acquisition and site servicing, capital costs, debt servicing and contingency. Construction cost have been estimated at \$15,755,000 (includes \$2,734,364 price escalation contingencies) and soft costs have been estimated at \$4,873,864 (includes \$901,455 contingency).

► **How did you come up with this budget?**

In July 2022, a third-party costing consultant (Altus Group) conducted a Class D estimate that provided anticipated construction costs. The cost estimate was based on conceptual drawings for the Protective Services Building completed by local firm, Sahuri + Associates Architecture, Inc. This level of detail is required to obtain cost estimates for the project.

► **Why is the District choosing to build now if building costs are so high?**

Based on inflationary cost estimates, building costs will only continue to rise in the future due to supply chain challenges and labour shortages (due to the global pandemic, natural disasters and international tensions). As the need for emergency response services continues to increase, Peachland's current fire hall facility will be unable to handle the demand, leaving the community vulnerable. It's important to construct a new facility now to ensure that Peachland is equipped with the necessary emergency services operations to meet future demand.

► **Why is money being spent on a new Protective Services Building and not a sewer extension?**

Both community sewer and a Protective Services Building are listed as the top priorities as outlined in Council's Strategic Plan. Funding for a new Protective Services Building, however, comes from a different funding stream than sewer infrastructure.

PUBLIC INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT

► **Where can I go to make sure I have the most up to date information about the project and the referendum?**

The most up to date information can be found on the District's website at www.peachland.ca/firehall. Project updates and information will be posted as available, including more information about the Referendum Question and How to Vote. Information about the referendum process is available through the Local Government Act and can be found on the province's website ([Assent Voting \(Referendum\) for Local Government](#)).



▶ **Will there be an open house / info session?**

A public Info Session was held on Thursday, June 16th, 2022 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Peachland Fire Department (4401 3rd St) for community members to learn more about the project and ask questions to the project team.

There will be a second Info Session held on Saturday, September 24th, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Peachland Fire Department (4401 3rd St).

▶ **Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

Please contact Dennis Craig, District of Peachland Fire Chief, at 250-767-2841 or dcraig@peachland.ca.

