

Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

What is the Incorporation Study?

Okanagan Falls is currently an unincorporated community of 2,760 people within the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen’s (RDOS) Electoral Area “D.”

Incorporation is the process through which an unincorporated area becomes recognized as a municipality (village, town, city, or district) that is governed by its own mayor and council.

This Incorporation Study examines how incorporating as a municipality would affect Okanagan Falls’ local services, taxation and governance.

Incorporation Study Timeline

Initiate incorporation study

- Province of BC approves/ funds the Study
- RDOS selects Study consultants
- RDOS establishes community committee to oversee process

Community conversations

- Community events and written communications to share information about incorporation and answer questions

Next steps

- If a referendum is recommended, Province of BC initiates a vote
- Electors in the Incorporation Study Area vote whether to incorporate

FALL 2022 -
SUMMER 2023
COMPLETE

FALL 2023 -
SPRING 2024
COMPLETE

SUMMER -
FALL 2024
CURRENT PHASE

END OF 2024

SPRING 2025

Analysis to determine incorporation impacts

- Consultants assess service, governance, and tax impacts
- Committee ensures community interests are considered

Final report on incorporation

- Consultants submit report to Committee and RDOS Board
- Committee recommends whether to proceed with referendum
- RDOS accepts or rejects recommendation



Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

Who is involved in the Incorporation Study?



Province of B.C.

Oversees, supports and funds the Incorporation Study. Conducts First Nations consultation. Prepares a provincial offer of assistance as part of the analysis. Minister of Municipal Affairs makes decision to hold referendum on incorporation, if the RDOS Board requests a referendum.



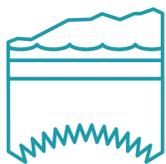
Community Committee

10 residents of Okanagan Falls (within the Study Area) who guide the work of the technical consultants and engage the community. Members remain neutral on the question of incorporation and ensure that the technical analysis is thorough and unbiased. Members distribute information to the community. At the end of the Study, members recommend to the RDOS Board whether an incorporation referendum (vote) should proceed.



Electors in the Study Area

Learn about the impacts of incorporation through articles, events, website, printed materials, social media, and talking to friends, neighbours, and community Committee members. Ask questions and engage in discussions. If a referendum (vote) proceeds, electors in the Study Area vote on whether to incorporate.



Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Hires technical consultants and establishes the community Committee to lead the Study. Supports the technical research by sharing information about RDOS services. At the end of the Study, the RDOS Board receives the community Committee's recommendation and determines whether to request the Minister to order a referendum (vote). If a referendum occurs, RDOS would conduct the process.



Technical Consultants

Research and analyze implications of incorporation related to services, decision-making, and costs. Prepare an estimated budget and calculate estimated tax impacts. Discuss research with the community Committee and work with the Committee to share information to Study Area residents.

Who decides if there will be a referendum?

In late 2024, the Incorporation Study Committee will recommend to the RDOS Board whether or not to pursue a referendum (community vote) on incorporation.

The RDOS Board will then decide whether it wishes to request a referendum of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, which must approve all local government referendums in BC.

If the Ministry supports a referendum, the earliest potential date for the vote would be spring 2025.



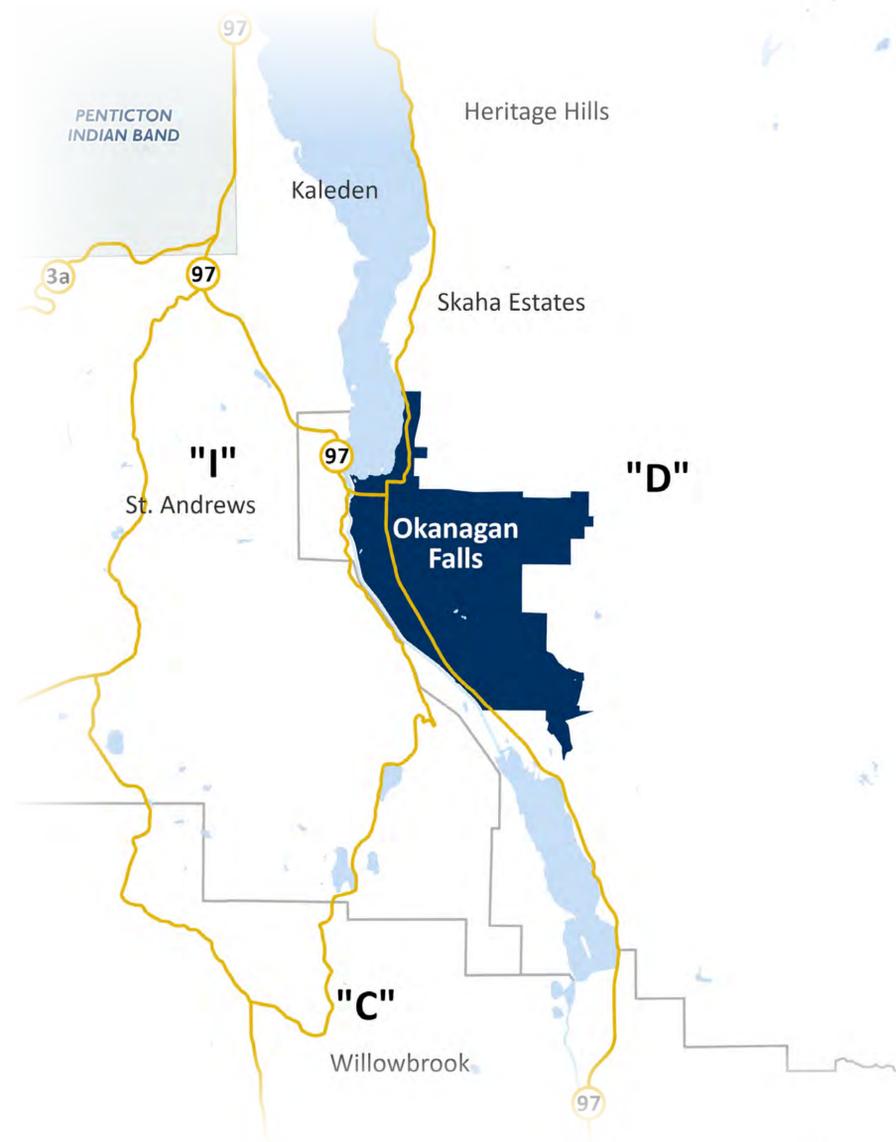
Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

Governance Option #1: Okanagan Falls Municipality

If Okanagan Falls were to incorporate into a new municipality, the community would be governed by a new Council made up of four (4) Councillors and one (1) Mayor. The Council would be the locally-elected body responsible for making decisions on local services like roads, water, sewer, parks, recreation, bylaw enforcement, and planning.

This option may appeal to you if you:

- Want service levels, priorities, and decisions made by a locally-elected Council
- Want greater control over the community's finances (including the ability to create reserve funds for future needs and priorities)
- Do not wish to rely on the Province for local road maintenance
- Want greater access to grant programs (that could be granted directly to a municipality, rather than to a regional district to decide how to distribute)
- Want access to provincial financial incentives that are given to communities that incorporate
- Are comfortable paying slightly higher local property taxes in exchange for greater local control over services and decisions



Governance Option #2: Remain Part of RDOS Electoral Area "D"

If Okanagan Falls remains part of RDOS Electoral Area "D," the entire Area "D" community would continue to elect one (1) electoral area director to the RDOS Board of Directors. The 20-person Board (9 electoral area directors and 11 municipal directors) would continue to make decisions about services and priorities in Okanagan Falls.

If there is not enough interest in incorporation to hold a community vote, or if a vote is held and incorporation is not supported, Okanagan Falls will automatically remain as part of Electoral Area "D."

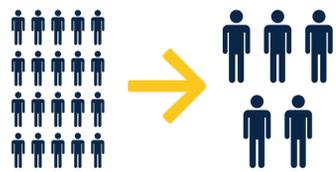
This option may appeal to you if you:

- Are satisfied to leave local service delivery, priority setting, and decisions with RDOS' 20 directors, with one (1) electoral area director representing Area "D" (including Okanagan Falls)
- Are content to continue to pay and rely on the Province for local road maintenance
- Are satisfied with the range and level of local services provided to the community (including planning and development approvals, utilities, parks and recreation, bylaw enforcement, building inspection and economic development)
- Are satisfied to have RDOS to continue to have responsibility over local financial management, including reserve funds and property taxes
- Seek the lowest-cost local property taxes
- Believe that, in the years ahead, Okanagan Falls can be well-governed and appropriately serviced as part of Electoral Area "D" in the RDOS

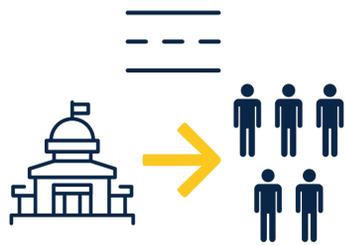


Local Services in Okanagan Falls

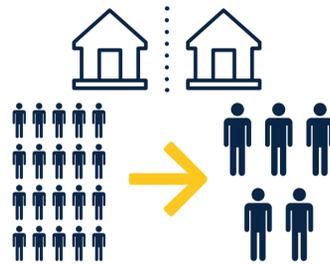
How would incorporation affect local services in Okanagan Falls?



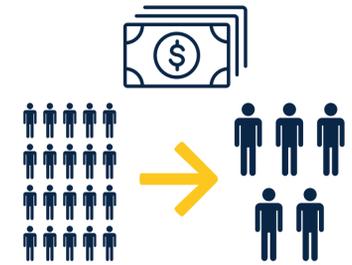
Decisions about local services would be made by a local Council, rather than by the 20-person RDOS Board.



The Okanagan Falls municipality would have authority over local roads, rather than the Provincial government.



The Okanagan Falls municipality would have authority over subdivision approvals, rather than the Provincial government.



The Okanagan Falls Council would make spending decisions within a flexible municipal budget.

Here are the local services currently provided to Area D residents:

(*note: services with an asterisk(*) would likely continue to be delivered by RDOS after incorporation)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library services (provided by ORL in both scenarios) Mosquito control* Invasive species* Environmental conservation* Nuisance Starling* Okanagan – Kootenay Sterile Insect Release program Planning and subdivision Regional growth strategy* Building inspection Subdivision servicing Animal control* Bylaw enforcement Business licencing Okanagan Falls fire protection Emergency planning* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 Call System* Victim services Regional transit* Area “D” transit* Regional economic development* Garbage* Waste management* Illegal dumping* Regional parks & trails* Okanagan Falls parks and recreation Okanagan Falls cemetery Okanagan Basin Water Board Septic Waste Receiving/Dumping Okanagan Falls street lights Region-wide General government* Electoral Area administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural projects Grants-in-Aid Roads (Provincial) Policing (Provincial) Local area services (delivered to specific areas only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → OK Falls Water → Sun Valley Water → Rolling Hills (service provided by Rolling Hills Improvement District) → Okanagan Falls Sewer |
|--|--|--|

POPULATION 2,760

Okanagan Falls Incorporation study area has a higher population than 63 municipalities in BC (39% of municipalities)

* 2021 Census data



49.3%

50.7%



Provincial average 43.1



Provincial median 42.8

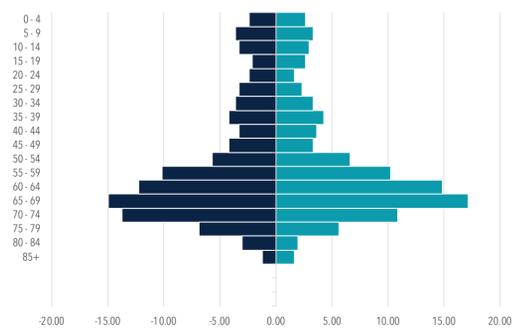
Municipalities with similar population to the Study Area



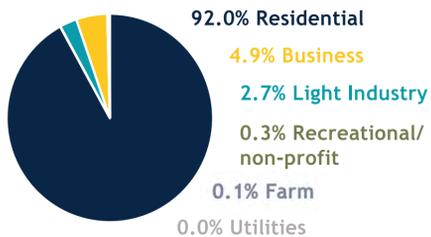
Population Growth (Ok Falls designated place)



Okanagan Falls Population Pyramid (2021 Census - OK Falls Designated Place)



ASSESSMENT



Okanagan Falls Incorporation study area has a higher 2023 assessment than 62 BC municipalities and a higher combined business and industry assessment than 56 BC municipalities

Municipalities with similar 2023 assessment to the Study Area



2023 Assessment - Total Hospital Purposes Value



Business & Light Industry properties



Farm Class properties



2024 Average Residential Assessed Value

(residential assessment ÷ # dwellings)

INCOME LEVELS



2020 Average Income*

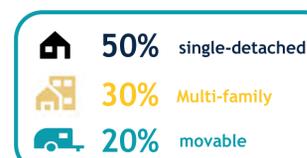


2020 Median Income*

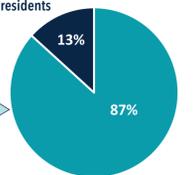


1,564 DWELLINGS

Average household size



Vacant or occupied by temporary residents



Occupied by "usual" residents



Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

Tax Comparison - Okanagan Falls Single Family Residential (\$500,000)

SERVICE/TAX CATEGORY	OPTION 1: INCORPORATION			OPTION 2: RDOS ELECTORAL AREA "D"		
	Tax Rate	Assessment	TOTAL OWING	Tax Rate	Assessment	TOTAL OWING
SCHOOL, HOSPITAL, BC ASSESSMENT & MFA						
School Tax	1.5521	\$500,000	\$ 776.05	1.5521	\$500,000	\$ 776.05
Hospital District Tax	0.1836	\$500,000	\$ 91.81	0.1836	\$500,000	\$ 91.81
BC Assessment	0.0347	\$500,000	\$ 17.35	0.0347	\$500,000	\$ 17.35
Municipal Finance Authority	0.0002	\$500,000	\$ 0.10	0.0002	\$500,000	\$ 0.10
SUBTOTAL			\$ 885.31			\$ 885.31
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES						
Municipal Tax	2.3979	\$500,000	\$ 1,198.94	n/a	n/a	n/a
RDOS & Okanagan Regional Library Taxes	0.3563	\$500,000	\$ 178.14	1.6710	\$500,000	\$ 835.49
Parcel Tax + Improvement/Land Only Taxes			\$ 23.09			\$ 53.09
USER FEES						
Recycling & Garbage Collection			\$ 135.00			\$ 135.00
Water - OK Falls			\$755.12			\$ 755.12
Sewer - OK Falls			\$ 1,018.00			\$ 1,018.00
LOCAL GOVERNMENT TAX + USER FEE SUBTOTAL			\$ 3,308.30			\$ 2,796.70
PROVINCIAL TAXES						
Provincial Rural Tax	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.3600	\$500,000	\$ 180.00
Police Tax	0.1062	\$ 500,000	\$ 53.10	0.0962	\$500,000	\$ 48.10
Surveyor of Taxes	n/a	n/a	n/a			\$ 46.65
PROVINCIAL SUBTOTAL			\$ 53.10			\$ 274.75
TOTAL			\$ 4,246.71			\$ 3,956.76
HOME OWNER GRANT	REGULAR (\$770)		\$ 3,476.71	REGULAR (\$770)		\$ 3,186.76
HOME OWNER GRANT	ADDITIONAL GRANT (\$1,045)		\$ 3,201.71	ADDITIONAL GRANT (\$1,045)		\$ 2,911.76
TOTAL IMPACT: Option 1 total (Incorporation) MINUS Option 2 total (RDOS) = \$289.94						
COST IMPACT OF INCORPORATION \$289.94						

Check out the tax impact calculator to estimate the impact on your residential property: rdosregionalconnections.ca/okanagan-falls-incorporation-study



Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

Electors within the Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study Area have many ways to get information



Study website

View Study findings and try out the tax impact calculator to estimate cost impacts of incorporation on your residential property:
rdosregionalconnections.ca/okanagan-falls-incorporation-study



Mailouts

Delivered to addresses within the Study Area in **July** and **October 2024**.



Booth at Music in the Park

Visit our booth at Centennial Park on **July 1, July 14, August 11, and August 25**.



Open houses

Locations to be confirmed.

- **Saturday, August 17, 2-4:30pm**
- **Wednesday, September 11, 6-8:30pm**



Discussion panel

Hear from other jurisdictions that have recently considered incorporation. Location to be confirmed.

- **Tuesday, October 8, 6-8:00pm**



Small-group meetings

Presentations to community associations and other interested groups. To request a presentation for your group, email Rick at: rewinder2@yahoo.com.



Information binders

Hard copies of all Study materials are available to review at the Okanagan Falls Library and the RDOS Community Services Office (1109 Willow Street).

Events will be advertised in *Skaha Matters* and the project website – please check these places to confirm event dates, times, and locations.

Scan the QR code to post a question on the Incorporation Study webpage and have a member of the project team respond





Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study

Share your questions or comments about incorporation

What do you want the Study Committee & RDOS to know?

