



Village of
Sayward

Some Key Questions and Answers regarding Potential Dissolution of the Village of Sayward

In March 2026, Sayward Council directed the Village's staff and Financial consultant to prepare a financial analysis to provide clear detailed information about the potential implications of dissolving the Village of Sayward, including projections of property taxation impacts, service costs, and administrative charges under a regional district governance model and to provide that information to Sayward Council and Sayward's residents and property owners to support informed discussion and decision-making. A preliminary report regarding the implications of dissolving the Village of Sayward was presented to Council on May 12, 2026. A copy of the report, and associated documents can be found on the Village's website at: www.sayward.ca/news-events/news-archives/village-sayward-dissolution-preliminary-report-summary-and-presentation. The following is a brief summary of some key questions and answers from the preliminary report.

1. What does "municipal dissolution" mean?

Municipal dissolution means the Village of Sayward would no longer operate with its own Mayor and Council. Instead, local government services would be provided through the Strathcona Regional District, similar to many rural communities in British Columbia.

2. Does this report recommend dissolving the Village?

No.

The report does not recommend either proceeding with dissolution or remaining a municipality. The purpose of the report is to provide preliminary financial and governance information so residents and Council can better understand the potential impacts.

3. Why was the report prepared?

Council directed that a financial analysis be completed to help residents understand the possible financial, taxation, governance, and service impacts of dissolution. The report is intended to support informed discussion and public understanding.

4. Would services like recreation, parks, water, sewer, or garbage collection end if the Village dissolved?

The report assumes these services would continue under the Strathcona Regional District. Water, sewer, and solid waste services would continue to operate as local service areas funded by the users of those services. Recreation, parks, and other local services are also assumed to continue and would generally be funded through regional district tax requisitions.

If dissolution were ever pursued, each regional district service would need to be established through a service establishment bylaw. These bylaws would require approval from the public and the Province before the services could be formally created.

5. Would residential property taxes go down?

The report estimates that residential property taxes would likely increase under a dissolution model.

Although the report estimates that total overall taxation required to support services could decrease under the assumptions used in the study, the report also notes that future costs under a regional district model remain uncertain and could potentially increase depending on future decisions regarding administration, reserves, infrastructure, service levels, and regional district cost allocations. Regardless of the overall taxation amount, the report estimates that residential properties would pay a significantly larger share of taxes under the provincial taxation system used in electoral areas.

Under the current municipal system, residential properties make up approximately 44% of total municipal taxation. Under the regional district model, residential properties would make up approximately 77% of total taxation.

This change occurs because municipalities can set their own tax multiples for different property classes, while electoral areas must use provincially prescribed tax ratios set by the Province of British Columbia.

Based on the assumptions used in the report, the average residential property is estimated to experience at least an 11% increase in taxation. The report also notes that actual future taxation impacts could differ from the estimates presented in the report.

6. Would Sayward lose grant funding if it dissolved?

Yes, some funding would change.

Certain grants available only to municipalities, including but not limited to the Small Communities Grant (approximately \$330,000 annually), would no longer be available if Sayward dissolved. Other funding programs may also change or be redistributed through the regional district, with future funding and service allocation decisions determined by the Strathcona Regional District Board.

This means the amount of funding or services provided to the Sayward area could change over time depending on future regional district decisions and priorities.

7. Would residents still have local representation?

Yes, but local representation would change.

Instead of electing a Mayor and four Councillors who make decisions only for Sayward, residents would elect one Electoral Area Director to represent Sayward on the Strathcona Regional District Board.

Decisions about taxes, budgets, services, and local priorities would no longer be made by a local Village Council. Instead, those decisions would be made by the regional district Board, which includes representatives from several different communities and areas.

8. Would Sayward still exist as a community?

Yes. Sayward would continue to exist as a community. Residents would still live in Sayward, services would continue, and the community identity and name would remain. The change would be to the local government structure.

9. What would need to happen before dissolution could occur?

Several major steps would be required before dissolution could occur, including:

- Additional studies and financial analysis;
- Public consultation and community engagement;
- Consultation with affected First Nations;
- Approval by local electors through a formal voting process; and
- Approval by the Province of British Columbia.

Even if residents voted in favour of dissolution, the Province would make the final decision. The Province would need to be satisfied that there is a workable long-term plan for services, finances, governance, and infrastructure. Dissolution is typically a lengthy, multi-year process and no immediate changes would occur.

10. Has a decision already been made?

No decision has been made by Council or the Province regarding dissolution. The preliminary report is only one step in providing information to the public and helping residents understand what dissolution could mean for Sayward.

If you have additional questions about potential dissolution of the Village of Sayward, please feel free to contact the Municipal Office by email to village@saywardvalley.ca or telephone at: 250-282-5512.