RDOS Area "D" Service & Boundary Configuration Study
Fact Sheet
October 2021

LIBRARY SERVICES

➢ What service is provided?

Although not delivered directly by the Regional District, the RDOS participates on a library board, contributes toward the upkeep of local branches, and collects taxes that are forwarded to the regional library board.

Library service is provided to Electoral Area "D" by the Okanagan Regional Library (ORL). ORL is a large library system of 29 branches, a service area that stretches from Osoyoos to Golden, and a service population of more than 400,000. The RDOS is one of four regional districts whose electoral areas receive service from ORL. Nineteen municipalities and one First Nation also participate in the system.

Area "D" is served primarily by ORL's Okanagan Falls branch, located in Okanagan Falls (see Figure 1). The Okanagan Falls branch is open 4 days a week for a total of 25 hours. ORL Library cards are free to those who live in, or own property within Area "D".

Many residents in Area "D" also make use of the Penticton Public Library, which is a municipal library, and not part of the ORL system. While Area "D" residents cannot obtain a Penticton Library Card for free (an annual card is $75 for non-residents), because they contribute taxes to the public library system, residents can obtain a free BC OneCard which provides borrowing privileges at any BC public library. At Penticton Library, RDOS residents may borrow up to 15 items at a time, as well as renew materials, place holds, etc. with a OneCard. Materials can be returned to Penticton Library or one of the ORL Library branches.

In addition to the selection of fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, newspapers, and reference materials available at the local branches, the ORL library card gives access to:

- programs for children and adults;
- free Internet access at computer workstations as well as wireless access;
- DVDs, CDs, audiobooks and eBooks;
- Services for members who are print disabled, living in remote areas or seeking materials in other languages; and,
- BC public libraries via the BC OneCard.

➢ Who makes decisions?

ORL is a stand-alone corporation established under the authority of the *Library Act.* ORL's governing body is its Board of Trustees comprised of representatives of the system's member jurisdictions. As per the legislation, each of the 19 participating municipalities appoints a council member as a trustee to the ORL Board. In addition, each of the 4 participating regional districts appoints one electoral area director as a trustee to represent the regional district's electoral areas as a group.[1] The Board consists of 24 trustees, including one trustee appointed by Westbank First Nation.

ORL's Board of Trustees makes all major decisions related to the service. The entire Board votes on all matters. Most decisions, such as policy, are made using a corporate voting model, in which each Board member receives one vote. Decisions related to the budgets and expenditure of monies, however, are made using a weighted vote system that awards votes to members in proportion to the

[1] The Director for Electoral Area "E" represents the RDOS's electoral areas at present.

population size of their respective jurisdictions. With an unincorporated population participating in the service of 19,790, RDOS receives 19 weighted votes (the total for the board is 407).

The Board is supported in its decision-making by staff, as well as by three permanent standing committees: the Policy & Planning Committee, the Personnel Committee and the Finance Committee.

It is important to understand that the boards of participating regional districts, and the councils of participating municipalities, have no formal involvement in ORL governance other than through their appointed representatives on the ORL Board. ORL is an independent corporation, separate from the municipal and regional district corporations that participate in the system.

The only direct involvement RDOS has in the library service is through approval for branch furnishings, fixtures or equipment on an as-needed basis. Support for the fixtures or equipment for the individual Okanagan Falls branch comes from the Area "D" Rural Projects budget. As with any expenditures made from this budget, decisions are made by the Electoral Area Director. The budget amount itself is set and approved by the entire Board.

➢ Who delivers the service?

ORL staff are responsible for the delivery of all aspects of the library service, including:

- front-line branch services (e.g., check-out, reference, children's programs, etc.)
- branch support services (e.g., transporting collections between branches)
- head office functions (e.g., administration, planning, HR, finance, information systems)

Staff in most branches are assisted in some aspects of the service by community volunteers. In particular, the Okanagan Falls branch, on its website, acknowledges the Lions Club and the Royal Canadian Legion #227 are also involved in a program with the library that funds books for toddlers.

➢ What is spent by RDOS on the service?

Figure 2 shows the total 2021 budgeted cost for delivering the ORL library service to the RDOS at $886,759. This represents the cost of delivering library services to the participating electoral areas (Areas A, B, C, D, E, F, G and I), and does not include the municipalities, which are billed directly by the ORL. While the majority of the budget amount shown below represents the requisition from ORL, there is also a small administration cost component for the RDOS.

The amount in Figure 1 represents the total cost of the service, and not the portion that Area "D" residences pay for through user fees or taxes.

Figure 1
Cost of Services
2021

Service Component	Cost[1]
ORL Library	$886,759
Total	**$886,759**

1 Cost estimates are from adopted 2021 budget figures

The RDOS does not keep reserve accounts for the Okanagan Falls library branch. Any fixtures or equipment are funded for through the Area "D" "rural projects" budget as requested.

➢ How are the costs recovered?

Property taxes represent the primary source of funding for the service. Each year, the ORL determines the total amount it requires from its members. The total requirement is then allocated among the participating jurisdictions based on a combination of converted assessment (50%) and population (50%). Cost sharing on the basis of property assessments reflects a community's ability to pay, and cost sharing on the basis of population reflects a community's usage (or potential usage) of the library. The RDOS then apportions that cost amongst all property owners on the basis of property assessments (land and improvements).

In addition to the property tax contributions identified in Figure 2, as noted earlier, each jurisdiction is responsible for providing the branch furnishings, fixtures and equipment within its boundaries. In RDOS, the Area "D" rural projects budget is used to fund these improvements. The rural projects budget is funded through taxes levied on land and improvements within Area "D." There are no library expenditures specifically identified in the rural projects budget for the next 5 years.

Financial statements for the ORL for the year ending December 31, 2020, indicate that the Okanagan Falls branch had a budget of $120,304 and actual expenses of $118,092, which was virtually identical to the previous year (2019). However, Area "D" residents pay a share of the broader ORL costs, and the requisition is not dependent on the local branch costs alone.

The total tax requisition for the ORL service area within RDOS in 2021 was $885,611 as shown in Figure 2. Residents in Area D contributed close to $200,000.

➢ What is the cost to a typical residence?

The cost of the RDOS library services is recovered from Area "D" taxpayers on the basis of property assessments. A residence assessed at $450,000 in Area "D" paid approximately $66.61 in taxes in 2021 for library services, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Cost Impact on Typical Residence
2021

Service	Tax Req.[1]	Res. Rate	Owing[2]
ORL Library Services	$885,611	0.1480	$66.61
Total			**$66.61**

1 Tax requisition amount excludes 5.25% Surveyor of Taxes fee

2 Impact is calculated on a home assessed at $450,000

➢ What impact would incorporation have on these services?

If a portion of Area D, including Okanagan Falls, were to be incorporated as a municipality, it could choose to continue having Okanagan Regional Library operate its local library branch, or they could choose to withdraw from the ORL and establish its own municipal library under the *Library Act* (similar to that provided by the City of Penticton).

If the new municipality remained with the ORL, the ORL Board of Trustees would continue to make decisions for the library service. The new municipal council would appoint a trustee to the board — the total number of trustees would therefore increase from 24 to 25. The number of weighted votes the municipality would have depend upon its population. The weighted vote for RDOS would be reduced based on the reduced population in the participating unincorporated areas.

Municipalities are billed by the ORL directly for the service. The estimated ORL requisition for the new municipality would depend upon the population and assessment base of the incorporated area.