



Community Update - Townhall Summary

Seton Portage & Tsal'ah Fire Protection Service

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) would like to thank Tsal'ah First Nation, community partners, fire department volunteers, and community members who attended and participated in the June 20, 2026, townhall regarding the Seton Portage & Tsal'ah Fire Protection Service in Area B of the SLRD.

The townhall was intended to support open dialogue and provide an opportunity for residents to better understand the current fire protection service, future planning, and the partnership supporting fire protection in the community.

The townhall provided an opportunity to share information on the current fire protection service, planned facility improvements, FireSmart initiatives, future funding needs, and the Fire Service Resiliency Program, while providing residents with an opportunity to ask questions, share perspectives, and discuss priorities for the future of the service.

The townhall, facilitated by Tim Pley of Tim Pley & Associates, included updates from SLRD staff on:

- Fire service
- Fire hall maintenance and expansion
- The SLRD budget and the Alternative Approval Process (AAP)
- FireSmart

[View the presentation for this townhall event](#)

Key Discussion Themes

Residents shared questions, feedback, and perspectives during the townhall on a variety of topics, including:

- Water supply
- Governance and partnerships
- Communication and community engagement
- Fire hall and emergency services
- Community wildfire protection
- Funding and taxation

The following provides a high-level summary of the key discussion topics and themes raised during the townhall.

Water Supply

Residents raised concerns regarding water supply tanks and firefighting water availability. Some residents also raised concerns regarding the appearance of the tanks and whether they remain necessary.

Staff advised that the tanks have been refilled and confirmed that the SLRD is exploring options to improve long-term water supply reliability, including the potential installation of a dry hydrant.

Governance and Partnerships

Discussion highlighted the partnership between Tsal'ah and the SLRD and the importance of continued collaboration to protect community assets and provide sustainable fire protection services.

In regard to questions about authority and jurisdiction between the SLRD and Tsal'ah, the SLRD advised that the current agreement with Tsal'ah will be reviewed as part of the broader Fire Service Resiliency Program and the service agreement will be updated accordingly.

It was also noted that Tsal'ah will provide operational fire service reporting to the SLRD, and opportunities to provide public updates will be identified.

Communication and Community Engagement

Residents identified opportunities to improve communication and outreach to the community regarding fire services, projects, and community initiatives.

The SLRD acknowledged the importance of using a variety of communication methods to reach both resident and non-resident property owners and committed to continuing to improve engagement, including exploring the use of Canada Post Mailboxes.

The SLRD shared current communication methods, including the SLRD website, newsletters, and digital channels.

Residents are encouraged to sign up for SLRD newsletters and SLRD Alert, the organization's emergency notification system.

- [Sign up for SLRD updates](#)
- [Sign up for SLRD Alert \(emergency notifications\)](#)

Fire Hall and Emergency Services

Questions were raised about:

- Fire hall maintenance and expansion
- Hazardous materials assessment results
- Replacement of aging equipment (including a pump estimated at approximately 30 years old)
- Building permits, code requirements, and rationale for demolition/redevelopment of existing structures
- Use of existing outbuilding to house apparatus



Staff provided information on the need to bring existing facilities into compliance with current building code requirements and explained that future improvements are intended to enhance safety, functionality, and long-term sustainability of the facility.

Future improvements may include:

- Improved apparatus and equipment storage
- Washroom facilities
- Ventilation improvements
- Other enhancements to support emergency operations

These improvements would support both volunteer firefighters and BC Emergency Health Services personnel operating from the facility. Improvements are dependent on available funding, which may include Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and/or taxation.

Staff also highlighted the significant investments Tsal'alh First Nation has made to strengthen the fire protection service.

These investments include new fire apparatus, firefighter training, personal protective equipment, firefighting equipment, and other service improvements.

These contributions have enhanced emergency response capability and demonstrate Tsal'alh's ongoing commitment to community safety and a sustainable fire protection service that benefits both Tsal'alh and Seton Portage residents.

Community Wildfire Protection

Residents expressed interest in:

- Community wildfire protection planning
- Fuel management and vegetation treatment
- FireSmart initiatives
- Emergency preparedness and evacuation planning

Staff discussed the importance of continued FireSmart participation and community wildfire mitigation efforts to reduce risk around homes and throughout the community.

Residents also requested additional information regarding future mitigation priorities and timelines.

The SLRD Wildfire Mitigation team is a group of formally trained wildfire mitigation and firefighting professionals, dedicated to empowering all residents to create and maintain resilient homes and communities. Please reach out to them with your questions or to book an assessment.

They can be contacted at:

Email: FireSmart@SLRD.bc.ca

Phone: 604-384-7323

Funding and Taxation

Residents raised concerns regarding increasing costs and taxation.

SLRD staff provided an overview of the budget process and the reason additional financial authority is being requested to support future fire service operating and capital needs.

Staff also emphasized that the fire protection service is supported through a combination of local taxation, grants, volunteer contributions, and significant investments from Tsal'alh First Nation.

Through investments in new fire apparatus, training, equipment, and facilities, Tsal'alh has enhanced the level of fire protection available to the community and strengthened the long-term sustainability of the service.

The partnership between Tsal'alh First Nation, the SLRD, and volunteer firefighters provides significant value to the community and supports a level of service that would be challenging to achieve through local taxation alone.

Staff heard the concerns raised by the community, and staff commit to reviewing and considering all the feedback received related to the proposed change in the requisition maximum. Staff are taking this feedback into consideration while building next steps. To make sure community feedback can be considered in the next steps, staff are delaying any recommendations regarding increases to the maximum tax requisition by one year.

Community Feedback and Continued Engagement

The SLRD appreciates the time residents took to attend the townhall and share their questions, concerns, and ideas regarding the future of the Seton Portage & Tsal'alh Fire Protection Service. The feedback received was valuable and will help inform ongoing discussions, planning, and service improvements.

The SLRD welcomes continued dialogue with residents and encourages community members to reach out with questions or additional feedback. Staff are available to discuss fire service matters, emergency preparedness, wildfire mitigation, service budgets, and other related topics.

Residents are welcome to contact:

Mark Phillips
General Manager, Protective and Emergency Services
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
Email: mphillips@SLRD.bc.ca
Phone: 604-698-6442



Bill Stoner
Fire Services Manager
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
Email: bstoner@SLRD.bc.ca
Phone: 604-938-3546

Next Steps

The SLRD will continue to:

- Review service agreements and governance arrangements.
- Continue FireSmart programming and wildfire mitigation initiatives.
- Review water supply arrangements and seek long-term improvements
- Improve communication and engagement with residents, including reporting to the public on the status of the fire service.
- Review and consider all the feedback received related to the Budget, and communicate next steps in the Alternative Approval Process.

The SLRD remains committed to working collaboratively with Tsal'alh First Nation, volunteer firefighters, and residents to provide a safe, sustainable, and resilient fire protection service.

The SLRD recognizes that strong community partnerships and community support are essential to the continued success of the fire protection service and appreciates the ongoing commitment and contributions of Tsal'alh First Nation, volunteer firefighters, and all community members.

We encourage all residents to visit the SLRD website regularly for updates and to sign up to receive email newsletters. To receive emergency alerts by phone, email, or text, sign up for the SLRD Alert. Learn about the Seton Fire Service on the SLRD website. Find out about the SLRD FireSmart program and upcoming events in your area.