



April 2016: Parcel Tax FAQ

How much is the parcel tax and what is it for?

The parcel tax is in the amount of \$150 per parcel and will be used for the storm water management service, a service which includes undertaking studies in relation to, and constructing, improving, operating and maintaining, storm water management works and systems throughout the City.

What is considered a parcel?

A parcel is a designated area of land that does not include a highway. In most cases, a subdivision plan completed by a British Columbia Land Surveyor defines a parcel's boundaries and is registered in a land title office.

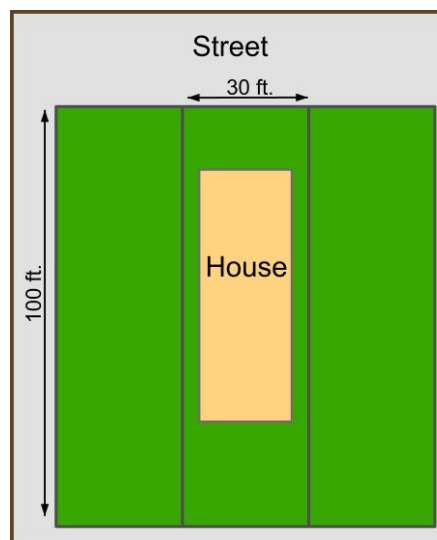
Are some properties comprised of more than one parcel?

Yes. The majority of properties that are comprised of more than one parcel are located in Castlegar's north end. This was the location of the original town site, an area defined by subdivision PLAN 650, which was completed in the year 1897. The typical size of these parcels is 30 ft. by 100 ft., and it is common for a property to be comprised of more than one parcel.

What is the benefit of having more than one parcel?

The typical parcel size of PLAN 650 is 30 ft. by 100ft., considerably narrower than the minimum parcel width required now, almost 120 years later. However, even though the minimum parcel width in 2016 is greater than 30 ft., those parcels created in 1897 are "grandfathered", and the property owner may be able to sell one or more of the parcels for another dwelling to be built upon.

An example of this is the property depicted below. This property is comprised of 3 parcels, each 30 ft. in width, and is located in the City's R-2 zone (Single and Duplex Residential). They are significantly narrower than the minimum width required for newly created parcels in this zone. However, since they are "grandfathered", both of the vacant parcels can someday be sold and a home built upon them.



Can I consolidate my parcels?

Yes, it is relatively inexpensive to consolidate parcels and, if you wish to do so, a notary or lawyer will be able to arrange this for you.

If I were to consolidate my parcels would it affect my parcel tax?

Yes, the parcel tax is charged on a per parcel basis. Therefore, if you were to consolidate more than one parcel into a single parcel, the parcel tax would only be charged on the resulting parcel.

But, if I consolidate my parcels to reduce my parcel taxes, can I subdivide my property to re-establish the lot lines in the future and sell one or more of the parcels?

In many cases, no. The minimum lot widths have changed since 1897 and, once the non-conforming 30 ft. wide parcels (using the example on page 1) are consolidated into a single parcel, any subsequent subdivision must meet the current minimum lot size requirements.

It is also important to consider that, even if your property has sufficient area to subdivide at a later date to re-establish the lot lines, it could cost up to \$10,000 or more (Development Cost Charges, surveying, etc.).

So, should I consolidate my parcels into a single parcel in order to receive a single \$150 parcel tax charge?

There are a number of things to take into account when considering consolidating your parcels. Does your home straddle your interior property line(s) or is it on a single parcel? How old is your home – may you someday wish to start from scratch and build homes on each parcel (or sell your property to a developer who would see value in having that option)?

Every property is different and each property owner has their own considerations. We encourage you to contact the City of Castlegar’s Development Services staff for more information.

**For more information, please contact the City of Castlegar’s
Development Services Department:**

- Stop by Castlegar City Hall at 460 Columbia Avenue, or call 250-365-7227 and ask for Development Services
- Email devserv@castlegar.ca