

**2023 Budget Information Meeting (virtual)**  
**Thursday, January 26, 2022, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**10 members of the public in attendance**  
**23 District of West Vancouver staff in attendance**

Q: Has the West Van municipality explored any innovative ways for increasing the revenue besides simply increasing the property tax to lay the burden onto the residents?

A: The District of West Vancouver (“District”) continues to look for new sources of revenue. We are quite restricted in what we are allowed to establish revenues for. Fees and Charges is a main source of revenue. We cannot establish fees for just anything, only for services that we are allowed to offer. Many services, and many sources of taxation available to the senior levels of government are restricted to them. We cannot tax alcohol, tobacco and so on. Council has directed staff to look at pay parking in the parks and staff will provide a report to council later this year. Pay parking is common across the Lower Mainland and in the neighbouring North Shore municipalities. If we think there is a possible source of revenue and if we see that another municipality has started a new program and deriving revenue, we will look at it.

Q: In terms of sources of income, is there any discussion on introducing parking fees in West Van general or in our parks? Could this be staggered with higher fees for fossil fuel vehicles versus electric vehicles?

A: Council has directed staff to look at setting up pay parking in three destination parks. That could be an initial stage. If council supports going ahead with that, we will put a program in place, then look at the revenue results, how the program was received, how difficult it was to manage, and any other results. Once we have provided council with this feedback, then council may wish to consider pay parking elsewhere. The next stage could be to look at other parks besides the three destination parks. There would have to be extensive consultation with the public and the business community before any type of street pay parking could be considered. There are municipalities which do charge for street parking such as the City of Vancouver, but this would be a big step from where we are now.

It is an interesting idea that there might be a differential charge for electric vehicles versus gas vehicles, certainly the District is working on a greenhouse gas (GHG) emission strategy to lower those emissions both in the corporation of the District and the community. We are looking at all innovative ideas so we will take your comment into consideration.

Q: How much revenue is projected for parking that is on the table now?

A: We do not have those numbers yet. It depends on what type of fee structure is put into place. There are several different possibilities being discussed, and it also depends on how much it would cost to run the program. All the information we have will be included in the report for council in the spring.

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Q: With new municipal electric vehicles, is there an opportunity to generate electricity locally, for example, solar and wind energy?

A: This is an innovative idea. We have not looked at that yet. Local generation of electricity is being discussed provincially with BC Hydro. There is a windmill on Grouse Mountain which does not operate often, part of the reason being that the local generation of electricity is quite problematic. It is all regulated provincially. We can continue to discuss with the community to see if this type of opportunity could be realized.

Q: How would boosting tourism (ski resorts, restaurants, recreation) in West Van help with the revenue?

A: It would help the business community to be healthy and vibrant but does not necessarily help the District's budget directly. However, council are very supportive of the business community. They have instituted the patio program and allowed consumption of alcohol in the parks, and all of this is to make the community more accessible and vibrant. Also, West Vancouver has a very good record with festivals and events which were unfortunately curtailed during COVID. We hope this summer to have an exciting program to bring visitors into the community.

Q: The big strategic question I would like to ask is that our biggest asset is our real-estate where we live, and the biggest increase you can make in revenue is more people. And we are clearly missing a lot of products for many people who live or work in the District. We must serve this need if we are to be sustainable. Have you looked at that? As an insolvency specialist for forty-five years, I can tell you this is a lot like companies that do not create the revenue to sustain themselves. I can appreciate that you have stretched those dollars tightly. There continues to be a deferred maintenance program. I am talking about the fees and contributions from developing tasteful projects to service the needs of people who live and work here now and in the future. We have heard about this problem all over Greater Vancouver but the big asset here is to create revenue from that. Is there any work that has been done on that as to what kind of revenue if you even were to meet the development objectives of the strategic plan which are falling far behind.

A: This is an issue, probably the top concern for the planning department. It has been well-identified that West Vancouver is not providing what we refer to as "missing middle housing." The opportunity to do so is something that council, the public and the planning department consider frequently. There are initiatives underway, such as the Ambleside Local Area Plan which is a major area for development. In the Horseshoe Bay Local Area Plan, recently completed, there are opportunities provided. One of the FTE requests (Senior Community Planner) is to support that. There is a major initiative put forward by British Pacific Properties at the Cypress Village site. There are hopeful signs that for the future there will be additional "tasteful, useful and supportive housing."

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Q: Is there a list of properties/assets that the District has sold recently, or intends to sell – to generate revenue – available to the public for viewing?

A: Within the last two years, the District long-term leased two parcels at 2195 Gordon Avenue, one to Kiwanis North Shore Housing Society and one to Darwin Properties; and recently entered into a sale and purchase agreement with Jim Pattison Industries Limited to sell the properties at 2523 and 2539 Rosebery. The District currently has one other property listed for sale at 2517 Rosebery Avenue. New properties for sale will be posted to the District website in order to keep the public informed. Further, the District is required to publish Notices of Disposition in the newspaper as part of the disposition process, and those Notices of Disposition will also be published on the District website.

Q: If West Vancouver did not have the Blue Bus and transit is completely under TransLink would there be an impact on these costs?

A: The Blue Bus is managed by TransLink; they set the schedules and the parameters under which the Blue Bus is operating. The District is operating the Blue Bus under a contract from TransLink. TransLink covers all of the costs related to the Blue Bus, in fact, controlling all of the costs. It does not impact our revenues or tax rate.

Q: Are we paying a premium for having the local Blue Bus?

A: That is difficult to say because the rest of the Lower Mainland system is under the TransLink umbrella and the Blue Bus is operated as a sub-contract. It is difficult to get comparable costs. I do not believe we are being asked to pay a premium for that and we hope that we are managing that system as efficiently as we can. It is difficult because we must follow the mandate given by TransLink.

Q: The District is like a charity. It is providing services to people like a not-for-profit. Many not-for-profits don't survive. What initiatives have been taken to appeal to people who own property in West Vancouver to donate it for good projects? There have been examples in the past, but to me, this is another big potential source of revenue. For instance, if someone is passionate about family life to solve the missing middle residential stuff, they may donate land for that purpose. It is a huge opportunity to look at or any charity to look at the key assets. You are in a rich District.

A: The District does everything they can to interest people who might be interested in donating things to the community, particularly land. There have been a few instances in the past where this has happened. We have worked with the West Vancouver Foundation, there are four municipally tied in funds at the Foundation for those who prefer to donate through a foundation. The mechanism is there. That could be looked at by the mayor and council to see what might be done to encourage residents to donate. In general, people feel that the District collects taxes from them and they do not necessarily see that they have to go above and beyond that.

Q: I have heard discussion about the District striking an Environmental Commission. Where would the funds come from for an initiative such as this?

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A: That is being actively discussed. One of the FTE asks (Deputy Corporate Officer – Commissions/Committees) would be to support that. West Vancouver has many committees but supporting each one of these committees is quite costly and time-consuming. Each one requires a dedicated resource to manage documentation, organization and so on. This FTE would be to support the proposed Environmental Commission included in up to four new proposed commissions or advisory committees and if that is supported by council, then that position would be to support these new committees.

Q: Is the proposed tax rate of 4.57% finalized or subject to further review based on feedback received to date?

A: It is subject to further review. The tax rate is based on staff analysis of what is required to move forward. During the budget consultation period we will gather all the feedback received and go back to council with a report on that. Council has an opportunity to go over the budget in detail and council makes the decision on the tax rate increase. This is the starting point; we will go through a process with council after they have reviewed all the feedback and decide what they feel is reasonable.

Closing remarks by Isabel Gordon, Director, Financial Services:

Thank you very much for coming. This is the most important part of the budget process that we go through. Public consultation on the budget is required in the *Community Charter*. West Vancouver does a more thorough job of public consultation than any other community I have worked for or seen done. This is a key part of what we do, we really appreciate all the comments that we receive. We will do our best to answer all the questions which will be posted to the budget webpage. You can submit additional questions through the budget webpage - <https://www.westvancouverite.ca/budget> - or by emailing [budget@westvancouver.ca](mailto:budget@westvancouver.ca).

The budget email and online engagement period will be available for questions until Friday February 3, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

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