



SUMMER 2014

# Community Report

west vancouver

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

*This report is an update on the progress the District of West Vancouver has made in addressing the priorities set by Council: to provide a new public safety building; to re-energize the Ambleside commercial district; and to examine housing and neighbourhood character, municipal services and finances, and the environment, parks and upper lands.*

*In the May tax notice, residents were advised of the 2014 2.9% tax increase following two years of no increase in municipal tax rates. We are approaching the management of public assets, money and services in a businesslike way and making difficult decisions on how to allocate scarce resources. The District is facing a number of long-term challenges around replacing our infrastructure (buildings, roads, sewer and water lines) as well as paying our share of Metro Vancouver major capital projects such as the proposed Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant and the proposed garbage incinerator. It is important that we develop funding sources other than property taxes and ensure that we maximize the value from the dollars we now receive.*

*The 2013 sale of the 1300 block of Marine Drive was an important step forward. Not only did we realize \$35 million from the sale but also over \$11 million in community amenity funds; these will be used to pay for projects which will benefit current and future residents. Planning is continuing for a new public safety building located beside the municipal hall. We are taking a second look at this project to ensure the final design is the most effective for the community. Council and District staff are meeting regularly with the local Business Associations to help in promoting local retailers. There are exciting promotions being put on throughout the community. I hope that our residents shop locally and support the businesses that contribute to our community.*

*One of our citizen-led working groups has done great work looking at the important issue of invasive plants in the community. We need all residents to be aware of the harm done by many of these plants. Another working group is studying the future of our upper lands as what happens in this large area is critical to our future. We have just dedicated a large new park above the highway, Whyte Lake Park. This a prime recreation area and is now preserved for current and future citizens. We continue to engage the community through citizen-led working groups, an invaluable resource and representation of community expertise.*

*Serving as your Mayor has been a tremendous privilege. I appreciate the support I have had from our dedicated and hard-working municipal staff, as well as from the other members of our municipal Council.*

**Mayor Michael Smith**



# YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

Our professional staff are dedicated to providing you with excellent services at all times, in person, by phone or online. We are working to help make the District of West Vancouver one of the best places in the world to live and work. Every day, this is what you get for your 2014 tax dollars:

**SECURITY** West Vancouver Police, West Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services and North Shore Emergency Management Office protect residents and property, keeping our community safe.

**RECREATION** People gather to learn, play, and keep fit at the West Vancouver Community Centre, Aquatic Centre, Ice Arena, Gleneagles Community Centre, Ambleside Youth Centre and Seniors' Activity Centre. We offer thousands of programs and services for people of all ages and abilities. And don't forget the Ambleside Par 3 and the Gleneagles Golf Course.

**PARKS & TRAILS** We protect and maintain over 150 kilometres of urban and wilderness trails, public beaches and washrooms, and close to 150 parks offering ecological treasures, playgrounds, picnic facilities, sport fields, tennis courts and our famous Seawalk.

**TRANSPORTATION** Our transportation network balances the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, while integrating values of access and inclusion. In the winter, we salt and plough roads so you and your family stay mobile and safe. For over 100 years, we've operated the Blue Bus transit system, which receives the highest customer satisfaction ratings in the region.

**WATER & SEWERS** Some of the best drinking water in the world is delivered to your taps through an infrastructure that includes a complex network of mains, pump stations and treatment areas. Sewage is conveyed and treated in compliance with senior government regulatory standards.



Your Tax Dollars at Work ...continued from previous page

**GARBAGE & RECYCLING**

We pick up household waste at your curb, and work with all members of the community to shift the majority of our waste from landfills to recycling programs.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

We're developing tools such as the Climate Action Plan, Foreshore Protection Plan and Environmental Development Permits to make our community greener and more energy-efficient, while restoring creeks and beaches to their natural condition.

**KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING**

West Vancouver Memorial Library offers you books, movies and music, free WiFi, research and homework help, programming for teens and children, community meeting spaces, lectures and much, much more.

**CULTURE**

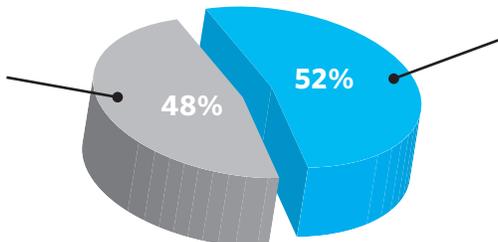
Residents celebrate visual arts, history, heritage and culture through the work of the Ferry Building Gallery and the West Vancouver Museum. We partner with Kay Meek Centre, Silk Purse and multiple arts alliances in West Vancouver.

**FESTIVALS**

Community Day, Canada Day and the Harmony Arts Festival are celebrations enjoyed by thousands, bringing people of all ages together for fun, games, music, parades, cinema, food, drink and West Vancouver's unique community spirit.

**Breakdown of your 2014 Taxes**

<b>Collected on behalf of other taxing authorities 48%</b>
School Board 34%
Metro Vancouver 2%
TransLink 10%
BC Assessment Authority 2%



<b>Municipal Property Tax 52%</b>
Engineering & Transportation 3%
Library Services 3%
Parks & Community Services 5%
General Government 11%
Police Services 10%
Fire & Rescue 11%
Capital, Debt & Transfers 9%

# Council's Five Priorities

In addition to providing ongoing services and programs, the District focuses on Council's five priorities. We are moving them forward as follows:

## **PRIORITY: AMBLESIDE ACTIVATION**

Creating a vibrant Ambleside commercial area is a focus for the District. In 2014:

- the District is working in partnership with the Ambleside Business Association and the Chamber of Commerce on strategies to make Ambleside a more vibrant commercial area
- proposed upgrades to the Ferry Building Gallery are moving through the concept, design and public consultation phase, with the objective of finalizing them this year
- staff finalized new agreements with food truck operators to increase casual dining options along the waterfront
- expansion of park space along the waterfront adjacent to Millennium Park was completed in July
- the District leveraged private donations so that the John Lawson Park picnic shelter was renovated in July
- private development projects are being reviewed for 1300 Block of Marine Drive, Shoppers Drug Mart and the site of the former Veterinary Clinic at Clyde Avenue and 15th Street.



## **PRIORITY: HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER**

Developing policies to help manage change in West Vancouver neighbourhoods continues to be a focus as staff explore and implement ideas and preferences expressed by the community. In 2014:

- staff will bring recommendations to Council and next steps related to the siting, form and character of new single-family replacement houses
- the District has amended the Official Community Plan to add new housing policies related to coach houses, and to establish a Development Permit Area with form and character guidelines for this new housing type
- the District has amended the Zoning Bylaw to add regulations for detached secondary suites
- additions will be made to the District heritage register, and the District is working with three property owners to ensure the long-term protection of their heritage properties.



## **PRIORITY: MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND FINANCES**

The District of West Vancouver is in a stable financial position, but the long-term fiscal situation is challenging. We are controlling expenditures and exploring non-traditional revenue sources, but it is vital that we strategize now for long-term fiscal sustainability. In 2014:

- we will undertake a long-term fiscal sustainability review and plan
- we will be completing an inventory and strategy for municipally-owned lands
- we have completed a long-term plan for facilities infrastructure renewal, which includes determining which facilities will be replaced, maintained or removed from the facilities inventory, and using this information to create a summary of the financial implications of each decision
- Council has approved terms of reference for a new Finance Committee that includes community members, with the first meeting anticipated this fall.



**Council's Five Priorities** ...continued from previous page

**PRIORITY: ENVIRONMENT, PARKS AND UPPER LANDS**

The District has worked to implement Council's need to develop policies and guidelines that will clearly direct future projects and activities in our parks and in the Upper Lands. In 2014:



- the Invasive Species Working Group has brought key community recommendations and strategies forward on many pressing environmental and land use issues, and the Upper Lands Working Group will do the same early next year
- Council agreed in June to create and dedicate Whyte Lake and Whyte Lake Trail as a park; it is the largest in West Vancouver
- the District's tree protection policies will be reviewed and updated
- a cross-departmental team is working with the Office of Sustainability to create a Corporate & Community Energy and Emissions Plan
- key pieces of the Foreshore Protection Plan were completed and more will be finished this summer, including the restoration of the McDonald Creek estuary in partnership with community groups
- the District applied for and was granted intervenor status for the proposed Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project, and is participating in the National Energy Board hearing process with a view to protecting the interests of West Vancouver as they relate to the project.

**PRIORITY: PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

The public safety building is a necessary investment in critical infrastructure in West Vancouver. In 2013, the project was advanced with significant internal and external stakeholder consultation. Staff engaged the community in decisions related to the public realm, as well as some elements of design.



The next steps will be to confirm the funding model, for which community input will be sought, and to finalize design with all potential users in mind. The public safety building will be one of the most significant capital projects ever undertaken by the District. Staff are considering how all District residents are best served at the municipal hall site, and what design elements may be needed in the new building to allow District departments and staff to deliver the best customer service possible, in the most efficient manner.



Your District of West Vancouver Council:  
Craig Cameron, Nora Gambioli, Michael Lewis, Trish Panz, Mayor Michael Smith, Mary-Ann Booth, Bill Soprovich

# Our Vision

**West Vancouver  
will inspire  
excellence**

and lead by example.

**Collaborative  
government and  
a spirit of personal  
civic commitment**

will power the innovations that

**shape our shared future.**

The strength of this

relationship will secure our treasured

**quality of life**

and will be the measure of our

**success as a  
community.**

## FACTS ABOUT OUR NEWLY-DEDICATED WHYTE LAKE PARK

- at 124 hectares, it's the largest park in West Vancouver (*Lighthouse Park is 75 hectares*)
- the six-kilometre round trip hike is considered to be a moderate degree of difficulty
- the park connects with both Nelson Canyon Park and Cypress Provincial Park
- Whyte Lake Trail is accessed from Westport Road, just south of the Upper Levels Highway at Nelson Canyon
- the park contains both old growth and second growth forest, wetlands and creeks
- a variety of large and small mammals inhabit the park: black-tailed deer, beavers, coyotes, douglas squirrels, chipmunks and even the occasional black bear
- bird life includes ravens, grey jays, chickadees, warblers, woodpeckers, grouse, hawks and owls
- tree species include douglas fir, western red cedar, western hemlock, bigleaf maple and alder
- the park is home to many fragile and sensitive species such as: spotted towhee, northwestern salamander, red-legged frog, myrica gale and Indian pipe, so please stay on the trails at all times and keep dogs on-leash.

## HARMONY ARTS FESTIVAL

The 2014 Harmony Arts Festival, presented by Odlum Brown Limited, kicks off at 2 p.m. on Friday, August 1 and runs until Sunday, August 10.

This year's event is better than ever and has something to please everyone, from kids to seniors. You can view the art, sample food, shop the art markets, watch a movie, or simply spend a lazy afternoon in the sun catching some live music on our stunning waterfront. So bring your appetite, sunscreen, shopping bags and dancing shoes down to the festival. See you there! Visit [harmonyarts.ca](http://harmonyarts.ca) to learn more.

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