

YOUR CITY YOUR CHOICES

Public Consultation on Vancouver's 2005 Budget

Report on Mayor's Meetings

March 2005

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Executive Summary

Mayor's Meetings on Vancouver's 2005 Budget

CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

At the direction of Vancouver City Council, the Mayor's Office engaged City residents in a community consultation program on Vancouver's 2005 budget. The consultation program consisted of 10 meetings with community organizations, and 7 meetings that were open to the public at community centers. Approximately 300 residents participated in these meetings.

In previous years, three forums were held in community centres or stakeholder meetings were held in the Mayor's office. In 2005 we chose to have community groups host the budget meetings. This approach had approximately the same number of participants as in previous years and allowed for a more in-depth discussion of issues.

Ten meetings were held with specific community groups within the City of Vancouver, including:

1. Business Improvement Associations
2. Seniors
3. Arts Community
4. Youth
5. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Community
6. Women
7. Organizations delivering Social Programs
8. Multicultural Community
9. Chinese Community
10. Vancouver Board of Trade

For each of these meetings, an organization that was part of the stakeholder group was contacted and asked if it would host a consultation meeting. Using lists provided by the Mayor's office, City Councilors and member organizations, a representative group was developed. Each person was phoned and asked to attend the meeting and, if they could not attend, to suggest an alternate.

Seven public meetings were held at community centres. The Chair of the Board for each community centre was contacted and asked to host a Mayor's meeting. These meetings were advertised in the newspaper flyer developed by City staff and each centre was asked to invite groups that used their centre and to advertise to their membership.

Community centre meetings included:

11. Hastings
12. Dunbar
13. West End
14. Kitsilano
15. Kensington
16. Mount Pleasant
17. Marpole

MEETING AGENDA

At each meeting a representative of the City Council acted as the chair of the meeting. A staff person from the City's budget department was present to provide information and answer questions, a representative of the Vancouver Police Department was present to answer questions on the VPD budget request, and a facilitator organized the meetings and recorded the meeting notes. A copy of the City's information flyer on the budget was handed out to each participant. As well, additional flyers were available to participants.

Meetings started with introductions, followed by a 30-minute presentation by City budget staff. The presentation summarized the pressures on the budget, the anticipated changes to City revenue and the budget choices available to residents. Residents were informed of the ways that they could participate in the consultation process (newspaper flyer, web, attitude survey, Mayor's meetings). Most of the meeting time was available for comments and a question/answer period. At the end of the discussion, participants were asked to complete and submit the feedback form attached to the newspaper insert.

NOTES TO MEETINGS:

Notes were taken at each of the meetings and are attached as Appendix I of this document. These notes are summarized below into key themes. Participants were asked to sign in and those who chose to do so are recorded in Appendix II of this document.

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) circulated an information sheet that outlines the VPD's request for funding. This is attached and the information is not repeated in the summary of each session.

KEY THEME SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION INPUT

1. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Participants discussed the *social infrastructure* of the City. By this they meant the web of social connections (created by our neighbourhoods, businesses, community and cultural programs) that sustains the livability of our City. Frequently, participants spoke of the interconnectedness of this web. Below are examples of how the social infrastructure provided through City and provincial funding interconnect.

“We need a forum on ... the social infrastructure of the City. It is disappearing very rapidly. For instance, a youth care worker in the schools was lost. The programs supported by this staff person disappeared. A change in one program can have an unanticipated consequence, because as a result, not only did we lose the programs, we lost the volunteers.” (Social Programs Meeting)

“Immigrants and refugees experience the most dramatic cuts. The decrease in services is tremendous. This makes it difficult for people to settle. The places I would send people for help no longer exist. Staff who had the language skills that allowed for the connection between immigrants and social services have been laid off because of budget cuts. Immigrants have to live in isolated basement apartments, crowded, and this leads to illness.” (Multicultural Meeting)

“Permits and Licensing in the City make it difficult to develop assisted living buildings. Assisted living falls between the cracks. The provincial government has not protected assisted living homes and seniors are not protected once they move into a home. There is no City inspection after people move in, and seniors are abused.” (Seniors Meeting)

Participants expressed concern about the impact of provincial cutbacks on the social infrastructure of Vancouver. In particular, they expressed concern that a cut in one area had unintended impacts on other areas.

Participants said that the City’s grants program was vital to sustaining the community organizations that create the City’s social infrastructure -- the web of interconnectedness. Participants said that the core funding provided by the City, no matter how small, was critical to their survival.

2. TAXATION

No Consensus on Tax Increase

Of the approximately 300 participants in the Mayor's meetings, 152 returned feedback forms. Others indicated that they had already filled it out on line or would do so.

The following is a statistical analysis of the results from the feedback forms as it relates to recommendations for a tax increase:

Tax Increase	Percentage Support
0%	5
2%	23
4%	28
6%	28
Other/blank	16

Participants did recognize that the City needs additional resources to address pressing problems. Few participants suggested that the City should not increase tax rates.

Commercial and Residential Tax Rates

The BIAs and the Vancouver Board of Trade recommended that the City take action on reducing the ratio of residential to commercial tax rates. Participants expressed a concern that the ratio in Vancouver was considerably higher than in other GVRD communities, and this difference significantly impacted on Vancouver's ability to attract new business. In addition, there were concerns that long-term businesses would leave Vancouver, and that residents would not have access to local community-based business that is vital to strong neighbourhoods.

"If you want a healthy City, then we need to consider the tax impacts on small business. Otherwise, the community will not have the commercial resources it needs. The business tax rates are not fair and discourage business in the City of Vancouver. The City should do a land-use/economic study of the City. The City is losing business in its core, and the City needs to address this." (BIAs Meeting)

"On the commercial tax rate, you should reduce (the current rate) of 5.47 to 5.35, and then work over the 20 years to bring it down further to the regional average." (Board of Trade Meeting)

3. VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST

Support for the VPD Budget Request

In each of the meetings, participants indicated support for additional police officers and the VPD request for additional civilian staff. There was no agreement on what the exact number of officers should be. Participants expected the independent review of the VPD budget request, currently underway, would clarify the actual number of officers required. In addition, some participants supported

additional civilian oversight of the VPD budget and suggested that the police might gain efficiencies to help reduce their need for additional City funding.

“I think we need more police officers. My building has been broken into so many times, and bicycles stolen, and I found a machete. I called 911 and they told me to go to the Collingwood CPC, miles away, carrying a machete. I don’t know how many more officers we need, but we need more. It seems futile to call 911, because there are not enough police officers to answer.” (Mount Pleasant Meeting)

“Canada is in the bottom tier of the OECD countries on crime and safety. Vancouver is the worst City in North America for crime. Out of the 18 cities studied, in their report, we are the worst. And this is the Vancouver CMA. ... Is it satisfactory to be the worst in Canada? The Council needs to consider this.” (Board of Trade Meeting)

More Police on the Street

Participants supporting the VPD request for additional police officers focused their comments on the need for additional officers in the community, either on foot or on bicycles. In addition, there was strong support for the Community Policing Centres (CPCs). Participants suggested that more of the VPD budget should go to CPCs.

“Community policing centres represent a great process. And I know it’s a tough job. We need funds for community policing. CPCs are a good investment because they are close to the ground and the police officers can spend time with citizens. I support the application of the VPD to the City.” (Hastings Meeting)

Participation in Policing Decisions

Participants expressed a desire to have an influence over how the Vancouver Police Department assigns its officers. Concern was expressed that the VPD would get more officers but that these officers might not be assigned to the CPCs or neighbourhoods.

“I am not sure how we influence the Vancouver Police Department decisions about where the CPCs should go. I support more money for CPCs, but want a say as to where they should go.” (Mount Pleasant Meeting)

Alternatives to Policing

Some participants highlighted the idea that if the City supported social, community and cultural services, the need for additional policing might be reduced.

“Back in January 2004, at the forum on safety and livability, people said they wanted more police. But I don’t think that’s what works. I think a percentage of the money the police are looking for should go to community services.” (Arts Meeting)

“Policing is important, but if we don’t provide community centres, then kids don’t have anything to do and will get into trouble. If we look after our citizens, then we don’t need more police.” (Dunbar Meeting)

4. GAMING REVENUE

Participants provided a number of suggestions on how to use new gaming revenue, such as reducing taxes or increasing policing resources. However, the most frequent suggestion was to use new gaming revenue to support Vancouver's social, community and cultural programs. Participants did not offer a consistent approach as to how the City should manage these new revenues.

Put New Gaming Revenue in General Revenue

For some participants, new gaming revenue should be put into the general revenue of the City. Participants expressed a concern about the stability of gaming revenue, and the impact that reductions in gaming revenue might have to programs dependent on this revenue stream.

"I don't want social programs to feel that they are funded by gaming revenue. Gaming revenue should not be targeted to social and cultural programs, but put into general revenue." (Kitsilano Meeting)

"I support not tying community and cultural services to gaming revenue. I understand the police are necessary, but \$14 million more for police, when the total budget for women is only \$250,000, is unacceptable. I have trouble with the police getting more and more of the pie while community groups get less and less. Community and cultural programs should be assigned a percentage of the budget, and a part of that should be assigned to women." (Women's Meeting)

For others, there was concern that setting aside gaming revenue as a particular source of funds might have unintended impacts, such as the reduction of existing funding from the BC Lottery Corporation.

"Be cautious in how you administer gaming revenue. The BC Lottery folks are constantly shifting the criteria on who can get money. The City must look at lottery policy and how it might affect City grants. If we get money from lotteries through the City, we may lose provincial grant money." (The implication here is that lottery funds should go to general revenue, rather than be isolated as a separate City funding source.) (Social Programs Meeting)

Keep Gaming Revenue Separate

Other participants want the City to direct new gaming revenue directly to community, social and cultural programs and to set it aside for this purpose.

"Tax increases should go into public safety. Slots revenue should go to community and social services, library and arts. Keep lottery money separate from general revenue. ... I agree with this. Homelessness, low-cost housing, arts and culture should receive gaming money." (BIA Meeting)

"A portion of lottery funds should go to community building and projects and at least 50 percent into a fund. We should set gaming funds aside for community and cultural programs. Certain communities who have not been able to get in line in the past should be given a priority for new

programs. Let those who have been left out, in. ... Council needs to protect the gaming revenue before it is lost in the City's general revenue fund." (LGBT Meeting)

Support New or Existing Programs?

Participants suggested that the City should use any additional revenues from gaming to strengthen existing community social and cultural programs, and then look at new programs that had a compelling reason for funding.

"I believe that you should fund existing programs as a priority, and then consider new ones based on its merit." (Arts Meeting)

"The City should enhance community services. As a grant recipient, you should expand the community grants program, raise funds to existing recipients and expand to new ones. The seniors' community is a growing need. We assume that gaming money would go into new programs." (Seniors Meeting)

Others felt that gaming revenue should be used for new programs and, in particular, programs that address community impacts from increased gaming.

"Your proposals are issues-based, not focused on positive opportunities. Put gaming revenue into new resources." (Hastings Meeting)

Structure of the City Grants Program

Participants suggested that the City grants program needs to be revised. In particular, participants were concerned about the amount of time and resources required to apply for grants every year. Participants recommended a three-year grants cycle, adding that this would add to the stability of community organizations.

"I ask that the community grants have a three-year funding horizon rather than from year to year. It would help us plan our facilities. ... I support what people have said about community grants and the time involved in applying for them every year." (Seniors Meeting)

In addition, participants suggested the City might want to broaden the criteria for its grants program to include mental illness and other factors. Further, participants said they want the City to set aside a specific percentage of the budget for social and cultural programs.

5. ADDITIONAL THEMES

Support for Library Services

There was support at all meetings for the library system and, in particular, support for the addition of five children's librarians.

"I think this process is very important. I commend Council for engaging in it. How we spend our money reflects our values. I support the Library Children's Outreach and the five additional children's librarians. If we spend money on our children now, we will save money in the long term." (Hastings Meeting)

More access to Council and City Decision Process

Participants (particularly in the Youth, LGBT and Women's meetings) indicated that they would like greater opportunities to discuss issues with members of Council and with City staff.

"City Hall needs a platform for youth to have their voices heard. It should be more than a token program. For instance, three or four workshops might be organized." (Youth Meeting)

Consultation Process

Participants supported the consultation process and, in particular, the fact that the Mayor's meetings were in the community. They would like to be part of the budget consultation at an earlier stage of the process.

Changes to the Information Flyer

Suggestions were made about the content of the newspaper flyer. Although the suggestions were not consistent, they centered around adding content (such as more information on the utilities budget), design (such as using consistent colours to represent similar items) and clarity (such as breaking out the police and fire budgets).

Summary of Meetings¹

Monday, February 7, 2005 - Business Improvement Associations

What is the impact of a 6% tax increase over the following years? (Answer: this would continue through the following years.)

Is there an audit report for the City and the police department, and do they have recommendations for efficiencies? (Answer: no external audit of operations. Consultant's review of VPD due March 3rd.)

It would be helpful if we had a managerial audit, and the City should take this under advisement.

What is being done about the balance between business and residential taxes? (Answer: this will go forward to Council.)

There must be an increase in policing in the City. We don't favour giving the police a blank cheque. We want foot patrols, if there's to be an increase to the police budget.

Why is there such a significant increase in the civilian staff request? (See police flyer.)

The City is getting a rebate on the GST. Will the City continue to bill for GST now that it is exempt? (Answer: we can't exempt on behalf of the federal government.)

How many police do we have in relation to the population? (Note: general discussion of national average and inquiries about what average the police are looking for.)

I would request that the Council address the need for civilian staff. This is a huge request, and we need to know why.

How long is the City's contract with its employees, and what's their increase? (Answer: 2-1/2% each year for three years.)

Back to policing. Is the strategic plan on the web? How many additional police hours will there be as a result of additional civilian staff? (Answer: I do not have that information.)

I can't compare business and residential taxes based in your graph, in your flyer. The data should be comparable. If you want a healthy City, then we need to consider the tax impacts on small business. Otherwise, the community will not have the commercial resources it needs. The business tax rates are not fair and discourage business in the City of Vancouver. The City should do a land-use/economic study of the City. The City is losing business in its core, and the City needs to address this.

¹ The meeting notes are a summary of the questions and comments provided at the budget consultation meetings. They are not a transcription.

Your City Your Choices

I am pleased to see money for CPCs in the community. We have a CPC in Collingwood, and I cannot overstate its value.

One initiative you have is a review of the development application process. We would like to be involved and included in developing the criteria.

My ten-block area has seen significant increases in taxes over the past six years – up to \$6.5 million. We know that we need more police in our business community, but between the assessments and tax increases, we just can't justify the increase to the police budget.

The National Association of Office Property Owners tells us that the tax rates in Vancouver are so much greater than elsewhere. 6% increase in taxes is obscene. We are from Mount Pleasant, and we do not accept that this increase is acceptable. We think 1% transfer to residential from commercial should happen every year for the next ten years. Commercial stores will leave if we do not address this.

It would be more convincing if the commercial-to-residential transfer happened earlier in the process. It is unconvincing at this point.

Staff should flesh out the criteria for changing the commercial-to-residential tax, and include the difference between big-box stores and small retail operations. They should look at how much retail has shifted out of Vancouver.

40% of arrests live outside of Vancouver. This is a GVRD issue and Council should speak to them about a transfer payment to the City.

When you have rising residential values, business does not gain when land values go up. It is the property owner who benefits. This is a philosophical issue about who bears the tax burden.

The City should develop a capital plan that is longer than five years. How are you going to address the capital and policing needs of the Olympics? (Answer: We are developing an implementation plan and the policing needs are in the hands of the RCMP.)

The flyer has many details on new police initiatives, and not a lot of detail on other City initiatives. (Comment: these are on the City website)

The police always get an increase because this is a motherhood issue. But you should tell people what the increase will mean to their community, and then people will understand and may accept the increased taxation.

Why can't we save through efficiencies such as you are proposing in the development application process? And have you asked employees to take a 10% cut? What did they say? (Answer: report to go to Council March 15th)

Tax increases should go into public safety. Slots revenue should go to community and social services, library and arts. Keep lottery money separate from general revenue.

I agree with this. Homelessness, low-cost housing, arts and culture should receive gaming money.

Your City Your Choices

There should be less regulation requiring less staff, and that would solve a tax problem. The process is way too long and dissuades development.

We have contradictions. The City asks us to reduce the number of cars, and then put in more underground parking.

I like to support public safety areas, and do not cut the graffiti program. With street maintenance, if the question is lighting or potholes, the City needs to recognize that lighting is a public safety issue.

If there are any grants from the federal government to the cities that host the Olympics, we should look at any cost sharing that we can. Some money identified on February 3rd report suggests money has been set aside to leverage more money from other levels of government.

We need to look at other efficiencies so we know what can be cut.

We talk about banners, etc. This seems small to the City staff, but this is important to small businesses, who already pay taxes. Is there a way for businesses to have a credit from the City to use in these types of programs? In addition, you should use gaming revenue to re-balance residential and commercial tax rates.

I am a small business owner on Granville with four employees. Tax hikes hit us hard. The number of businesses that have closed in the City's core is significant.

I own a building in Mount Pleasant. Increases in taxes as a percentage of gross income have doubled. I can't do repairs or increase my personal income. Commercial taxes are too high.

To say at this time where money should be cut is difficult. What difference will the police decisions make? (Note: one police officer position requires hiring five officers.)

Soon the City will be wireless. A network of wireless cameras would be easy. The police won't respond even if they have a person on the street. In Oxford Street in London, cameras caused a huge reduction in crime. Has Council considered this? (Note: being discussed at FCM)

There should be a philosophical shift toward deterrent policing rather than "response" policing.

Monday, February 7, 2005 - Seniors

Seniors are very concerned about home invasion, etc. More detail is needed on this in your flyer. Is the police request a minimum? (See police flyer.) 75% of street people are homeless and do not have access to social assistance as a result of provincial cutbacks.

The issue of increasing police is important to seniors. But it is not the only answer. Social programs must be in place, and this would require fewer police.

The City should enhance community services. As a grant recipient, you should expand the community grants program, raise funds to existing recipients and expand to new ones. The seniors' community is a growing need. We assume that gaming money would go into new programs.

I am concerned that gaming revenue is dedicated, and I think it should go into general revenue and programs. Social programs should be funded from general revenue and not tied to gaming revenue. The City Council should make a specific statement that we are not funding social programs out of gaming revenue. User fees constitute a fair chunk of revenue. For instance, an increase of \$22 per home for utilities such as garbage, sewer and water.

It is a little hard to think in global terms. I tend to focus on people I know. Small problems from the City's perspective are significant for the people I know. For instance, unevenness of terrain such as sidewalks is a major issue. Furniture on the street such as bus stops is also very important for seniors waiting for a bus.

With respect to infrastructure, it is sexier to do new flashy things than to maintain what we have. Put money into existing services rather than new ones.

What percentage of the tax increase goes to the Olympics or RAV? (Note: \$900,000 currently for Olympics planning, and \$300,000 for RAV)

The new garbage containers are quite small, but it is of concern to seniors, who must pay for the containers and modify their sites to fit the container. There should be financial support to homeowners for these changes.

If another level of government says we will give you money to support your pipe dreams, would the City still fund cultural programs? (Answer: we are funding cultural programs that we want, such as the Sea Festival.)

It would be interesting if you could get the FCM to ask the feds to give money directly to the cities rather than through the provinces.

I advocate for direct service grants to seniors' issues. Gaming money is precarious. Money from the City is very important to us, and we would like to see this increase if possible. For people delivering service to seniors, rent, utilities and salaries increase every year, but the grants remain the same.

Everyone at the table agrees that increases to the seniors' grants are required, with special attention to multicultural communities.

Your City Your Choices

The liaison people – people who speak a language and know a culture – are the most important in assisting our multicultural communities.

Surplus funding could go to a “fall prevention” program. There are ways of targeting money towards crime such as a “violence against seniors” workshop.

More community police centres are a bit of a loss leader for seniors. Services need to be provided to seniors in their homes, and by people with language and cultural connections.

Aside from housing, we still need an increase to senior services in the downtown core. There are about 6,000 seniors and only about 800 to 1,000 served.

On the budget side, staff should consider:

- A long-term plan for services
- Look at increasing investment income from City’s investments
- Planning longer-term, and then using windfall income to save for savings

I ask that the community grants have a three-year funding horizon rather than from year to year. It would help us plan our facilities.

The new application process requires an evaluation process being included. This is a challenge for us.

I’m from the library, and provide service to homebound seniors. We serve 437 seniors and rely on talking books. The CNIB is not using cassettes any longer, but digital. Now we need a new digital collection and players for the seniors. We’re trying to get revenue from users who have been long-term taxpayers. We have to be creative. The Seniors Foundation folded. Now what do we do for funds? We need more staff and outreach librarians in particular.

City service grants are very important, especially for small organizations that service maybe only 50 seniors. This type of organization would close without a City grant.

The library may not seem important, but we ask that there be no cuts to our libraries.

Any expense for police should be dedicated to the other three legs of the four pillars. This is critical to seniors. It is better that someone doesn’t burgle your house, so treatment and prevention are important.

Salaries of organizations providing community service should be part of the staffing plan and budget of the City, not grants.

There is a good argument for an increase in police officers. However, if sentences for criminals were longer or stronger, wouldn’t this reduce the requirement for police officers?

Young people trying to buy a home in Vancouver find it very difficult with these cost increases.

Your City Your Choices

Permits and Licensing in the City make it difficult to develop assisted living buildings. Assisted living falls between the cracks.

The provincial government has not protected assisted living homes and seniors are not protected once they move into a home. There is no City inspection after people move in, and seniors are abused.

I support what people have said about community grants and the time involved in applying for them every year.

The South Granville folks have concern about traffic lights. For example, at 12th and Granville, they are not long enough for seniors to cross. The Engineering Department should look at this.

I would reinforce what people have said about grants. They should be three years. As well, you should have a seniors' liaison person who is able to talk to each community.

The City should have a staff person who can look at seniors' issues in particular, but not necessarily an independent staff position, but part of some other job.

Monday, February 7, 2005 - Arts Groups

We would like more detail on the initiatives that are proposed by the City.

How is the consultant doing the report on the police? For instance, have you considered not using police in special events and instead using reservists?

I agree, reservists should be used for special events. There would be no net gain or loss to the City. This would be for special events such as the Jazz Festival, the Children's' Festival or the Folk Festival.

The increase for policing is huge, and I would like more information. I'd like to know why. (See police flyer.)

I see that part of the increase the City is seeking is for inflation. And yet there has been no increase in cultural funding since 1996, or maybe just a little. We have not been able to increase our budgets for inflation over that time.

The provincial process for funding arts is not stable. We have applied for our 2005 funding. Do you have any suggestions on how additional funding can get to us this year? (Answer: proposal to increase arts funding by \$1 million in 2005.)

I believe that you should fund existing programs as a priority, and then consider new ones based on its merit.

The City supports good working conditions and cost-of-living increases for its staff. But in the arts community, we can't address these concerns because we don't have the resources. Look at healthy working conditions and standards, and then fund cultural programs appropriately. Is there any way that new revenues can be directed to current

Your City Your Choices

needs? What is desirable, but not essential, and what would be an investment that generates new revenue?

I support the report that Sue put forward. There is a great need for the additional \$1 million. I may not agree with all the police want, but the CPC initiative needs support. There is a very obvious need for increase in policing.

I think money is an investment when provided to the arts. We produce at the economic level. At the same time, we are part of the aging infrastructure. There is a looming crisis ahead with no new (young) people coming in.

Do Vancouver police cover the port? (Answer: Yes, under contract.) You know, if I was a citizen, I would have agreed that we should cut cultural programs based on the structure of this feedback forum.

What is the mathematical formula that brings you up to \$5 million from gaming revenue in 2005? (Answer: we went to the Lottery Corporation and used their numbers.) I support some increase to police. The lane behind the Orpheum has become a site for drug dealing. And since panhandlers think they are protected under the law, some audiences stay away because they are intimidated by the panhandlers. When we reviewed the Orpheum's budget, we had to add \$40,000 for security.

I'd like to make a pitch for infrastructure and maintenance. It is important to finance this. We need to watch the growth of the bureaucracy in the City – we need the money more than the bureaucracy does.

I support the \$1 million increase for cultural grants.

I have one comment on the survey. It does not say that there is a proposal for \$6.5 million for computers. That's not a choice on the form. Is there some way that we can help support the argument regarding the economic benefits of the arts?

Sometimes the argument for the arts is not about money, but values. How do we connect to people's values? People think that we subsidize the arts, when in fact we are subsidizing the audiences, not the cultural centres or the artists. If audiences had to pay the full cost of the productions, they would find it prohibitive.

I am concerned about how the questions on funding are posed. The budget process pits one group against the other. If you want new festivals, you have to first support existing ones.

We think the cultural scene is thriving, but in truth organizations are struggling. We only get one-half of a percent of our budget from Vancouver for the arts community, whereas in Montreal they get 20 to 25 percent from the City.

Our property assessment went up 30%, and that was a shock. But it may cause some citizens to not want an increase. We need 6%, and we need to make that known. If the arts went down, it would have the same impact as the consequence of the NHL being down, in terms of jobs and revenues.

Your City Your Choices

Back in January 2004, at the forum on safety and livability, people said they wanted more police. But I don't think that's what works. I think a percentage of the money the police are looking for should go to community services.

I support police on bicycles. It is incredibly humanizing.

Tuesday, February 8, 2005 - Hastings Community Centre

How did you establish the revenue from gaming? (Answer: we used the numbers from BC Lottery Corporation.) Well, the five million dollars is a lot less than people indicated when they were seeking approval for the casinos. The police will track any criminal activity related to the casinos.

We need more traffic police. How much of the 7.5 million dollars the police are seeking will go to speed patrol? (Answer: We will focus on this if we get the revenue for the Strategic Plan.)

We have parents who walk their kids to school because they're afraid of the traffic on the roads, and they shouldn't be required to do this.

Council has imposed 600,000 more vehicle visits to Hastings Park. The priority for gaming revenue should be to address these impacts. Either the track or the City must take responsibility.

All money going to the City from gaming should go to mitigate the impacts in our community.

We don't have a large green space in our area. We need to have this addressed.

What was an increase in policing based on? (Answer: see police flyer.) Usually the percent of increase for City programs goes to the other side, the west side of the City. Is there a strategic planning process available to the public for police? If you get the number of police you want, how will we compare with other cities? (Answer: See police flyer.)

Often our neighbourhood feels left out, passed over and passed through. The flow of traffic through our neighbourhood to downtown is enormous. The City's engineering department is our greatest problem. They do not seem to understand the impact of the traffic on our community.

I have a problem with reporting crimes. If we see a suspicious person and call the police, they ask more questions of us and then do nothing.

Property taxes are constantly going up. My property went up 30 percent over the past years and this creates a hardship.

I'm with Hastings Little League. We have a major freeway through our neighbourhood. This creates an incredibly unsafe situation for young people. It is difficult for children to get to and from the baseball field.

Your City Your Choices

I think this process is very important. I commend Council for engaging in it. How we spend our money reflects our values. I support the Library Children's Outreach and the five additional children's librarians. If we spend money on our children now, we will save money in the long term.

The police should ticket speeders. They'll make more money.

If my taxes are increased even a little, I want to see the money spent wisely. I want a generous budget for the East Side, I want money spent on youth programs, I want to make sure that people with drug problems get help, in terms of treatment, I want housing and jobs for the homeless and the City should do something to provide daycare. Every child needs day care. These are the areas I want my money to go.

Traffic is the major issue. For example, Dundas Street. There should not be commuters on Dundas Street.

I would echo Betty. Your proposals are issues-based, not focused on positive opportunities. Put gaming revenue into new resources.

Where are the efficiencies in your budget? I think there is a tremendous amount of waste in the City staff. For instance, when two police cars, a fire truck and an ambulance all show up at the same scene.

I am speaking on behalf of the school community. We have gravel playgrounds. We want green lawns for our children. With the horrible provincial cutbacks in education, we lost five out of six community schools, and now we have to use our community centres for after-school programs. We need help with our children. We need investments in our community centres to address this issue. There is a terrible east/west inequity across the City for children.

Community policing centres represent a great process. And I know it's a tough job. We need funds for community policing. CPCs are a good investment because they are close to the ground and the police officers can spend time with citizens. I support the application of the VPD to the City. I am concerned about the VPD's ability to follow up on sex offenders. Greening of our parks is critical, and community centres are an area that needs funding. Community police play a critical role. We need to support them. I support an increase in the police budget, especially for traffic control. And the City long ago promised the greening of our park.

You should put information on the utility charges on the City website.

Wednesday, February 9, 2005 - Youth Groups

What control does the City Council have on the police budget? Clearly the police had some expenses they couldn't control, and yet we were forced to cover it.

We need to support aboriginal youth in Vancouver with more money into community programs. This would reduce the number of police. Some percentage or point of a percent must go to aboriginal youth.

Your City Your Choices

We should have a youth coordinator from the police department.

Where do schools factor into the budget? (Answer: This is not part of this budget.)

How does the contribution to youth in Vancouver compare to other cities? (Answer: We don't have that information – grants are increased at the rate of inflation.)

I'm with the Environmental Youth Alliance and I support an increase in community services. More money for the police will not solve problems. Putting more money into community services is better than putting it into the police.

Put money into youth at risk rather than the police.

Increasing school staffing is where I would put part of the money.

My understanding was that there was \$352,000 worth of requests for community programs and only \$150,000 to hand out.

I hope there is more money coming for subsidized housing.

We need more youth voices. Can the budget allow for youth mentorship from City councilors? There should be a Youth Aboriginal Council funded by the City, and more funding for youth-driven programs.

We need a bit more money for programs that bring people into the schools to tell us how things really are – for example, drugs.

There should be some way for youth to get together more frequently, and provide advice to Council.

City Hall needs a platform for youth to have their voices heard. It should be more than a token program. For instance, three or four workshops might be organized.

Youth need to be represented on each of the City boards or committees.

The City Council should focus on what it can do to prevent social problems.

Policing would have more impact if there was more cooperation between police and youth.

Some things need to be stopped before they start. Policing is not always the answer. We need more police in our schools.

I had no idea that there was a youth position at City Hall. There needs to be a way for youth to know who represents them.

What initiatives are in place to treat mental illness in youth?

What provincial off-loading is the City facing this year? (Answer: None this year. There is an increase of \$7.5 million dollars from the province to the City.) And how are you going to enforce sustainability? Youth could act as an example.

Your City Your Choices

Can we get more information on the request from the police? (Answer: see police flyer.)

If you are providing extra money for fixing the streets, fix the streets near Windermere.

Food security is an issue. Put a focus on this.

Parks Board needs to make it easier for people on low income to take advantage of the community centres and parks.

Many young people feel left out, and want in to the process.

Wednesday, February 9 2005

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community

Does the budget address homelessness? (Answer: not in this budget but a report is coming forward.)

Is the increase in policing because there is a shortage? (Answer: see police flyer)

If the police are understaffed, and I agree that they are, and given what people want, that is, more patrol and CPCs, does the budget in fact reflect the need? I think you will be continually catching up.

I am thinking about homophobic and transphobic violence and domestic violence in same-sex relationships. In Toronto, they did a major training program on LGBT sensitivity. I believe that mandatory training should be included in the budget, as it is a priority for police officers to make sure that they are aware of the needs of these communities.

We have been working with the police on appropriate budgets for CPCs. On average, we need about \$100,000 for each one. We should put a caveat on the money given to the police that it must go to street officers and CPCs.

For new social and cultural programs that you mention in the flyer, what could we expect to see as a result of this item? If I say I will accept a tax increase, what will the LGBT community get?

We need a new community centre. We have asked for a \$100,000 grant for a feasibility study. So where does this come into the process? We have tried to work with the City staff, and they have been helpful, but we need to know how to make it move more quickly.

I am pleased that the City came out to consult with us. There are various committees reporting to Council. Is it useful to have an LGBT committee reporting to Council as well?

A portion of lottery funds should go to community building and projects and at least 50 percent into a fund. We should set gaming funds aside for community and cultural

Your City Your Choices

programs. Certain communities who have not been able to get in line in the past should be given a priority for new programs. Let those who have been left out, in.

Would people object to 6%? Why is there a general agreement that this would not be accepted by the public?

Council needs to protect the gaming revenue before it is lost in the City's general revenue fund. We do need better communications with City Hall and a closer connection to City Council. We definitely need space for a community centre to increase the safety in our community. More money to police, but only if they meet our need for safety in our community.

Thursday, February 10, 2005 – Women's Organizations

Is homelessness housing included in the budget? (Answer: Yes, within the planning part of the budget.)

How did we fall behind so badly on the number of police? (Answer: see police flyer) I have a definite preference for police patrols.

I'm aware that in our past, the City funded social service programs. Has this gone, or is this included in the social budget? (Answer: about half a million dollars went into social and community programs, as indicated in the budget)

If you get new officers, will this decrease your overtime, and the budget deficit? (Answer: yes.)

The police lobby is very large and vocal. Most women I know are not asking for more police. I would like to speak about the community that's indicated in your pie chart, which says "Community and cultural program". It is less than 5% of the budget. We support an increase for community programming. Cuts at the provincial level have impacted City residents, so funds are lower and demand has gone up, and we have had to fill the gap. Community service grants have to go up. Slot revenue should go into general revenue and then the community services grants should increase. Do not tie services to gaming revenue.

The sex crime unit says they can't investigate historical crimes because they don't have enough staff. This leads me to wonder how many women who are victimized do not go to the police. Are the services for women coming out of the small grants under community and cultural programming? It is not enough. Look at being more creative about the VPD budget, and look at more community services. When we look at parks, can part of that budget be put towards public safety in the parks? In emergency response, such as with an earthquake, we can expect more violence against women. Women's programs provide a resilient source of community connection. The Safer Communities Initiative might fund women to participate in their process. Participation costs us money.

Police involvement in the sex offender program is understaffed, and we want you to put six more officers in this area.

Your City Your Choices

Women's Hospital provides some funding to assist women who have been assaulted. The police should contribute to this, if they can. (Police response: we do have partnerships with WAVAW and other women's services, but we do not have funds to contribute.) My concern is that there are increases to police and to victims' services, but what about women?

A part of the budget should be assigned to community services, such as 7%, and this should be maintained. I can't in good conscience give an open funding agreement to the police. We need to be able to direct where the funds to police go.

The community grants are very small for women's services, and I support increasing these. We have issue with the response of the police, it is not adequate.

Community service grants should be set aside for women's services. Some of the emergency response could be handled by women's support groups, and funded in part by the police budget.

The program we provide has been in existence over a long time, and not just one-off or one year. 49% of residents come from visible minorities, yet there are few women from this community on the police department. There is a need to reach out and educate the police. I would like to see more visible minority women hired. Another concern about the police is training in cultural and gender issues.

Is there some flexibility in spending the revenue from slots? (Answer: none of the money has been budgeted until we get direction from Council.) I don't support casino revenue. I would like to be directed to a place where I can learn more about the CPCs. I don't want to see women's services connected to gaming revenue, and I don't want to see the police more involved in women's emergency services.

I support more community police services. We need a plan of action for community policing, especially where there are women's issues. Social and cultural programs are so under-funded, the City should better coordinate with program service groups. We need to inform the mayor of needs, including the needs of aboriginal people. You should start budget consultation earlier.

I support not tying community and cultural services to gaming revenue. I understand the police are necessary, but \$14 million more for police, when the total budget for women is only \$250,000, is unacceptable. I have trouble with the police getting more and more of the pie while community groups get less and less. Community and cultural programs should be assigned a percentage of the budget, and a part of that should be assigned to women. We need more money and access to the Vancouver Agreement.

I agree women's programs should be a separate funding stream, and not tied to gaming. Planning should be more than two months.

Social planning is very important, and the small piece in the budget shows what our values are regarding these groups.

Provincial funding does not support emergency services, so the City needs to recognize that 52% of taxpayers are women, and they need to be supported. Gambling revenue is not money I want to take, as it is harmful to women and children.

Your City Your Choices

I am amazed that public safety takes up one-third of the budget. Police need to re-envision their work. Putting more police is not the answer to social ills. The Women's Task Force shows City support for women, but this is not recognized in the City budget.

City revenue comes from property tax, and an increase will affect women who will have to pay this increase in things such as rent and it jeopardizes their needs.

The CPCs were funded by the provincial government and the City is trying to pick these up. The City is not mandated to cover provincial program cuts. Part of emergency services to women are funded partially by the province. The City does not fund community-based programs for emergency services for women.

Funding for employees in women's service agencies is very low. It is very hard work that I take home every night. I understand life out there, and it is very difficult. There are people dying every day. I thought women would get in leadership positions and things would change, but nothing changes. I am so tired of nothing changing. The residential school thing goes on for seven years now. Why is nothing happening?

It is all fine when we talk about overtime to police, but we don't have money for overtime and 2% of the City budget is a very sad statement.

I support not tying women's funding to gaming revenue.

I agree with the others. I work at the library, and see people who do not have access to the Web or whose hands cannot handle a mouse. And often, they do not have a phone, let alone a computer. Even at the City, staff don't understand that residents do not have a phone or Web access. These people cannot have their voices heard.

Women's needs are different, and they need to be served in a different way. City government is closest to the citizens. We are all different women whose needs are different: i.e., aboriginal, immigrant, etc.

It is important to bring out the connection between gaming revenue and programs. Women's and community programs should not be linked to gaming revenue. We need more police without guns to help women.

If the police budget is increased, part of it should go to emergency women's services. For instance, there is no budget for women's programs in 2010. We need to address women working on the street. What is being planned for shelters and housing in this area?

PACE has reduced its hours to three days a week, and we don't have enough money. We should not have to struggle and beg for more money.

If more money were put into community services, maybe there wouldn't be a need for more police. It is pathetic to see how much money goes to the police and not women's community services. I would challenge Council to be more creative about resolving these problems.

Your City Your Choices

Do not tie funds to gaming. I am disappointed that we spent so much time today on the police budget. The City needs to make a stronger commitment to women and assign a percentage of the budget to them, for such things as food, housing and health.

I would echo what others have said. I was surprised we talked so much about the police. If women's groups had more funding, they could direct people to the services they need.

I think that the Council should give priority to women's issues. I want the Council to make a bolder contribution to community programs, and one envelope must be assigned to women's programs. If we want more services for women that I serve, and women in Vancouver, then that means more taxes, and that's okay. Slots revenue should go into general revenue, and then the community grants should be increased.

I also say we should not tie women's and community programs to gaming. We need core funding to women's groups for service delivery.

Do not tie gaming revenue and women's services together.

If the City wants more than one women's centre, we are there, ready to build it.

If we do not have to pay rent to the City for space, then we would have more money for staff.

Neither PACE nor WISH will be allowed into the remand centre. The BIAs do not want us anywhere. The City should provide a building for women's programs. We need more creative thinking from the City.

Additional input associated with Women's Organizations Meeting

February 16 2005

MAYOR'S BUDGET REVIEW

I attended the budget review committee meeting held at the DEWC on Thursday, February 10th. Like most of the women from advocacy groups represented there, I was very confused to discover that apart from Councilors Woodsworth and Roberts and the budget presenters from the City, the only civic agency represented was the Police.

Where was Social Planning, Health and other civic agencies whose decisions impact women's groups? All of the agencies there asked this question. Why the Police presence, promoting police services, and no other agencies represented? Questions from mental health, addiction counseling and women's counseling advocacy groups, and from WISH, PACE, the Women's Centre and many other agencies made it clear that policing issues, though important, could not answer questions around the fact that there are only 6 detox beds for women in the City, and that there is little or no financial support for agencies supporting women. Representatives from many of these agencies spoke up and said theirs were the agencies that the police would refer victims to. It was pretty heartbreaking when an aboriginal worker from the DEWC spoke about the struggles she had as an advocate working for her people, with little or no money.

Several of the women's groups raised concerns that they did not want funding for women's services tied into gambling money. They were pretty outraged and felt it looked as if money from gambling, which is a form of addiction, had to "appear to be cleansed" as one woman expressed it, by then being used to fund other addiction services and women's services. They appealed to have all that money from gambling, etc. put into general revenue and that there should be core funding for women's support services.

Mary Ann Cantillon

Thursday, February 10, 2005 - Dunbar Community Centre

I am shocked by the statistics of car break-ins. Citizens need food, shelter and safety. We have a lot of crime. We formed a layperson patrol group. I am surprised we have to do this. I am in favour of the police request.

I would like to support our libraries. Half of our lending is to children, and programs such as Story Time for pre-schoolers. We had 80 people in for Story Time this morning in Dunbar. I support the children's program for libraries.

Prevention and policing go hand in hand. I called the police about an incident and they said they couldn't come. We need more police on the street. We can't afford the insurance for our community patrol volunteers. We need support for the insurance costs. We need more citizen groups to support the needy, and we need support for these community groups. We need to attack both ends, prevention and crime.

I never hear any talk about finding efficiencies by City staff. For example, street maintenance people standing on their shovels. Five or ten police officers attending an accident. We should be able to save at least two percent through efficiencies.

I support safety issues and the police department, but why so many civilian staff?
(Answer, see police flyer.)

How much of the tax increase is from TransLink? (Answer: not part of the City budget)

Police costs will be 3 percent a year for the next five years, to deal with the proposed police plan. That's over a 15 percent increase. Why don't we fund a lobby group to get the federal government to adjust sentencing laws so that we get habitual offenders off the street? There are a few hundred people responsible for most of the crime.

Why do we allow foreigners who are refugees to sell drugs on the DTES? We should do something about that.

The pie chart on utilities in your flyer is not part of the tax review because they are user fees and already set by City Council. We should include these costs in the information.

I want you to include youth in this process, and in decisions relating to policing.

Your City Your Choices

How will your survey be done, and your sample collected? (Answer: we use the Mostel Group and they surveyed the whole City.) This process happens every year, and has for the past seven years.

A \$600,000 home pays more than you say in the flyer. There are TransLink, public education, water and other taxes.

Why are Vancouver taxes so much higher than elsewhere? I think the loss of the homeowner grant is terrible. (So do I – second voice)

We would like a citizens' meeting with the City and province to discuss homeowner grants. The property tax and homeowner grant are unfair.

We have the police here. Is Dunbar slated for a CPC? (Answer: there's one allocated for the north and west part of Vancouver, and will be based on a needs assessment.)

Policing is important, but if we don't provide community centres, then kids don't have anything to do and will get into trouble. If we look after our citizens, then we don't need more police.

The questionnaire should have a lot of weight when Council makes the decisions on the budget. The questionnaire asks about street-level patrol. We want police officers on the street to cover community needs. Did the police have an opportunity to have input on the consultant that is reviewing their plan? (Answer: yes)

Friday, February 11, 2005 – Organizations delivering social programs

Sometimes police are doing non-police work such as car 87 or emergency services. They fill the gap in emergency services and you should look at having others delivering these services.

Grandview Woodlands CPC is very effective, when there are bike and foot patrols. However, there is a significant turnover in the police officers involved in the CPC, and it is difficult to build up relationships between the police and the community.

Is the evaluation of the police request going to look at prevention and CPCs? Answer: yes.

With any increase in funding you must maintain the value of the civic grants. More and more, it's tied to outcomes, but the City supports core funding to keep organizations going. The City is the only organization that supports our core funding. The City should look at both existing and new funding initiatives.

Vancouver has a well-established neighbourhood-based social infrastructure. The provincial government has withdrawn and left some services very stranded. This is not the time to start new programs, but to solidify and save what we have.

The paper is reporting that the province expects 9% growth in GDP over the next three years. What is the City's process for involving community groups into decisions related to City grant money?

Your City Your Choices

You did say publicly that gaming revenue would go to charity. The City's idea of a Centre for Excellence in Addiction is a good idea.

Be cautious in how you administer gaming revenue. The BC Lottery folks are constantly shifting the criteria on who can get money. The City must look at lottery policy and how it might affect City grants. If we get money from lotteries through the City, we may lose provincial grant money. (The implication here is that lottery funds should go to general revenue, rather than be isolated as a separate City funding source.)

Many organizations lost money from provincial gaming. I support putting gaming revenue into a social/cultural pot, but I think you should revise the criteria for grants. I think you should consider including mental illness as part of the criteria.

I support CPCs, and I support the proposal to revise the development application process and regulations. You need to look at efficiencies. Does everything need to be regulated?

I support gaming money for social programs. Fund core funding. The City should support and enhance existing programs unless there is a compelling case for a new program.

We need a forum on processes and the social infrastructure of the City. It is disappearing very rapidly. For instance, a youth care worker in the schools was lost. The programs supported by this staff person disappeared. A change in one program can have an unanticipated consequence, because as a result, not only did we lose the programs, we lost the volunteers.

Many contracts were in neighbourhood houses. They lost people who delivered these programs – for instance, when a million dollars was cut from Little Mountain House.

We spend so much time bidding for grants, or balancing grant applications, that it's time not well spent. The City should look at how its programs link with federal and provincial programs. Maintain core funding of existing groups, and work with funding organizations to make sure they complement each other.

Doctor Clyde Hertzmann shows that the City of Vancouver is the riskiest City for families. The provincial government is de-building communities. They pit one group against the other. The City has been good support for community programs.

If a lot of organizations are cut to support new programs, how does this help build social infrastructure? This will get worse for childcare as the feds flow money through the province.

I would like you to restrict gaming revenue to social services and the homeless. The external review of the development services process should include community representation. New developments should provide for social housing. Housing should include social support for residents.

Your City Your Choices

Social services always has a cycle. The City should anchor some physical assets such as the Broadway Youth Drop-In Centre. The City should have area service provider meetings to help people work together and raise advocacy issues.

The City should provide more information on the idea of a Centre for Excellence on Addictions.

The City should examine the Vancouver Charter to see what changes are needed to support City programs.

Friday, February 11, 2005 - Chinese Community

I see an increase of 2.7 million dollars to capital programs. Who makes the decisions on new initiatives? (Answer: Council) So the Mayor and Council have the final say, but I understand that they normally accept the recommendations of the budget committee.

It would be helpful if we had a comparison between the tax rates of cities of comparable size. The flyer only compares British Columbia municipalities.

I would support more money that is taxes for policing, but how do we decide where they go? I think the community should have some say in where police are allocated.

I am in support of a property tax increase of at least 3.5 percent. Safety is the biggest issue, and I would like to see the \$7.8 million go to the police, and especially the CPCs.

I support increasing the police spending, but why so many civilian employees? (See police information flyer)

Where does the plebiscite funding come from? Answer: the contingency fund. So how much was the contingency fund in 2004? Answer: \$5 million. So over the years, how much of the contingency fund was not spent? Answer: \$2 million in 2003. So I support an increase in taxes, but want the money spent wisely.

I support more for policing patrols, and I hope we don't have to spend more money on overtime.

I support money for policing, but constantly increasing property taxes all the time is unfair.

Security is an important issue. I support civilians being hired by the police department.

How does the police cost compare between Vancouver and other municipalities? (See police flyer) I think that bar owners should pay more for policing costs above the normal policing levels.

We should consider what the advantages are of having a City police force versus a regional police force. Can we consider some form of regional model?

Move the fireworks to Burrard Inlet so that others become responsible for policing, such as North and West Vancouver.

Your City Your Choices

I'm happy about the police initiative.

I want to talk about traffic lights. We need left-hand turn signals to match up with left-hand turn lanes on our roads. It's the drivers in Vancouver that are a problem.

In the DTES, drug addiction is the issue, not just policing. We need to re-open Riverview Hospital and to provide additional services to people with mental illness.

Vancouver has 600,000 residents and yet at the Plaza of Nations, none of the people arrested were from Vancouver. We need to address regional drug-related crime and mental illness. I also support re-opening Riverview.

Drug courts are so expensive. They only deal with a few people. More treatment is required.

I support increases in spending for police, and support the plan that they have put forward to council.

Success in policing is a reduced crime rate. The federal and provincial government need to help out by changing the law and also by increasing the number of mental institutions. We need to improve the optics in our area. We see people urinating and defecating on the street. This would be helped if people saw more police driving and walking around. Success is about how people feel, how confident they are that the police will respond when they are needed. Success is peace of mind.

Monday, February 14, 2005 - Multicultural Community

Even though it is a small amount, in terms of taxes, there are constant tax increases. Everyone's costs are going up at the same time. There must be another way. Cutting is not a good idea. What about other sources of revenue, such as user fees, and gaming revenue?

The police should let the RCMP do their work such as commercial crime, and Vancouver Police should move out of these areas. This would save some money. Focus on community policing.

We should be more efficient and find areas to cut back. Money is not always available. Our organization has faced this, and we've had to cut back.

It is hard to respond to the budget without knowing more information. For instance, we don't know how police staffing levels relate to population growth.

Additional gaming revenue should go to community and cultural services. The quality of life for Vancouver residents has decreased very much as a result of cutbacks by the two senior levels of government.

CPCs are important to the community and should be supported.

Your City Your Choices

The changes that we have gone through to deal with the grant process and cutbacks from the provincial government has hurt our communities very badly.

Immigrants are doubly whacked in BC because the province does not use all of the money allocated by the federal government for immigrant and refugee programming.

Although provincial and City budgets are separate, when the province cuts back this impacts on our ability to deliver services at the City level.

Immigrants and refugees experience the most dramatic cuts. The decrease in services is tremendous. This makes it difficult for people to settle. The places I would send people for help no longer exist. Staff who had the language skills that allowed for the connection between immigrants and social services have been laid off because of budget cuts. Immigrants have to live in isolated basement apartments, crowded, and this leads to illness. If gaming revenues will fill the gap, then I support this.

We don't get money from the City, but provincial cutbacks affect us. Over time, the police have developed awareness of multicultural sensitivities. However, there still needs to be more training and education of police in this area.

There is no social housing for single women who do not have children. They get \$325 a month for rent and utilities. We need more non-market housing for this population.

In cases of domestic violence, police make an initial response but then there is little follow-up. The police need to address this.

Because of cuts imposed by the provincial government, we have had to significantly reduce services. The CPC and Family Services supported by the City must be maintained, and this would include libraries and skating rinks that help parents with cultural and recreational programming.

Looking at the budget flier, the only flexibility seems to be in the public safety budget. Community, social and cultural programs must be maintained and enhanced.

We get a social planning grant. Is the film revenue up or down? (Answer: flat) How police are viewed depends on what community you are in. The CPCs would help with how people feel about the police. A few years ago, when the police came into the DTES, none of the police spoke Spanish, although most drug dealers were from Latin America. When hiring police, we need to consider a broader range of skills.

I support new gaming income going to social and cultural services. Agencies have been hit many times over by cuts from various levels of government, and I support the CPCs. It only takes a little to enhance programs, so put some of the gaming revenue into enhancing existing programs and the rest to provide for new ones.

We need both cultural and social programs and so put gaming revenue to this. The City needs to be more efficient. For instance, do City staff really need as many cell phones as they have? Could we cut back in this area? What about photocopying? Federal government cultural funding is directed to programs and away from core funding. That is, the fixed cost infrastructure. We need more core funding.

Your City Your Choices

We get a City social services grant. The City's application process is very stable and predictable. We have received money every year, although we have not had a cost of living increase or inflation increase. The social planning department faces some challenges in trying to meet so many needs with so few dollars. The City should allow for inflation in organizations that the City funds.

The homelessness initiative is one that we support. But the City's plan does not seem to recognize the needs of immigrants and refugees.

We get City money that pays for our coordinator's salary, and this is a huge contribution to our core funding. CPCs are great and we support them. The public needs to be educated about what the real issues are, especially about the effects of provincial cutbacks. There will be reduced services on the east side of Vancouver because of the provincial strategy, and this will force immigrants into the DTES, which is where we do not need them to go.

As non-profit agencies, we are continually asked to justify our budgets. So what percent of the City's budget is administration as opposed to direct service? (See the flyer.)

There has to be a property tax increase, but that means we will have to pay more for rental space for our programs. And then we have to increase our requests for funding. Many of our clients rent, and increased taxes get passed on to them. This needs to be considered when considering the size of a tax increase.

Wednesday, February 16, 2005 - West End Community Centre

Utilities in your pie chart include water, sewers, solid waste and Iona Treatment Plant. This should be included in options for cutting.

How do the police handle contingency spending? I assume their cost over-run was a result of retirements.

What is the ratio of police officers to population? (Answer: see police flyer.) We need to make sure we are not over-policed. We need more treatment and prevention programs, especially for youth.

I want to speak in favour of enforcement. It is increasingly difficult to live here without fear or anxiety. We do need to make our streets safer. We need police on the streets. I would like to be able to direct where the new officers are used – i.e., foot patrols and bicycles. Street people who take up semi-permanent residence on the streets and parks create a dangerous situation. Visiting friends are appalled when they see this. These people need to be dealt with.

The province cut 2,000 people off welfare. These people are the ones in our streets and our parks. The issue is homelessness, not just drugs or enforcement. We need alternatives to enforcement.

What happened to the VPD auxiliary force? (reserves) (Answer: the union objected to the reserves and we lost these people. We do have traffic auxiliaries.)

Your City Your Choices

I support increasing the number of police officers. I think there's overwhelming support for street officers in the surveys our group has carried out. (At this point, a petition with 4,000 signatures supporting the policing was passed to Councilor Tim Stevenson.) We need ambassadors in the West End like the ones they have in other parts of the City. And we need to be careful about the union position on anyone doing police work.

Does the City have any programs for employing people? People are on the streets because they have no work. (Answer: The City supports hiring, such as at the Edgewater Casino, where 100 street people were hired, and supports programs like Blade Runners.)

We need more police resources like Car 87 for people with mental health issues.

I'm not happy with a big increase to the police. I think we need better services for the homeless and drug addiction. I have never felt threatened in all the years that I have lived in the West End.

I think the gaming revenue should go to support the prevention and treatment pillars of the four pillars, and then some to homelessness.

I think we are balancing on one pillar, harm reduction. We need to move on the treatment and prevention pillars.

There is concern about the harm caused by addition to gaming. Some of the money should go to this.

Revenue was downsized without any community supports. Some of the \$5 million should go to support these people.

I would like to see community policing done differently. We need 24/7 policing and we need real street-level CPCs. I would like a real community based police centre, not just volunteers. This is serious work. I am concerned about how police will spend the money if we give them more police officers.

Many problems in the West End need to be handled with something other than enforcement.

The GST money should go to maintaining existing infrastructure. I support part of the \$5 million from gaming going to the four pillars, and some to arts and culture.

The City should reinstate a lunch program for schools.

I support the "support and legislative services" component of the budget. These are vital to the administration of the City.

If there are no resources for people to go to or use once they're caught by the police, then there is no benefit.

I support literacy programs in our libraries. This will reduce crime in the long term.

Your City Your Choices

Vancouver and British Columbia are low relative to other provinces in terms of contributions to arts and culture. I support money going to this area. This also creates opportunities to leverage funding from other levels of government. Provide some to existing and some to new arts and cultural programs.

Can the police in fact recruit enough people? (Answer: Yes, but there is a time lag. It takes about a year to hire and train 100 officers.)

We should remember that the money we invest today in people will save costs in the future.

Monday, February 21, 2005 - Kitsilano Community Center

The tax increase last year was 2.9%. I like the idea this year of spending more money on CPCs. Why not restore all 18 policing centres? (Answer: We are planning for one in the Kits/Dunbar area and one for the aboriginal community. The rest of the CPCs need stable funding.) I would differentiate between community policing and community-based policing. (Answer: Police are involved with NIST, and that is community-based, and we support that.) I would support more for community-based policing.

Could you explain more about the difference in your request for officers versus staff? (Answer: See police flyer.)

I would think we would increase police 20% over five years. I think this is reasonable, not the current proposal. There are many ways to attack crime. For example, social programs and community centres. Policing is only one way. Hiring so many new police officers means that about 1/3 of your force will have three years or less experience.

I am missing an historical perspective. Is this the largest budget increase ever? (Answer: Generally speaking, budgets increase by about 5%. This year our initial budget proposals are the lowest ever. The major budget cutting was in 1997, when we lost significant provincial revenue, about \$20 million.)

There are other ways of making our community safer; that is, of fighting crime. Literacy fights crime. And investing in our public libraries helps social problems in the long run.

Clive Hertzman mapped Vancouver in 2001 and 2003. He shows that the West side of Vancouver has a decided advantage. Parental support for children up to 5 years old is critical. Go to the UBC website and see HELP in the research section. Their social planning department does good work. My only complaint is that they do not have enough money. Homelessness in Kitsilano is a major issue. The 1993 Vancouver City Council approved all appeals for funding under community programming regardless of the criteria used by the Social Planning Department. This was wrong. Give money to the Social Planning Department, and let them allocate it.

I was disappointed that Council expanded gambling, and this will drive up police costs. Gambling has been expanded because social service organizations wanted the money. The organizations were manipulated by the gaming lobby. I don't want social programs to feel that they are funded by gaming revenue. Gaming revenue should not be targeted to social and cultural programs, but put into general revenue.

Your City Your Choices

I think we need more affordable housing on the west side. Single moms should be able to move to the west side, where there are better educational opportunities and social programs. We have 40 men in our Saturday shower program, which is a respite program. These men need non-market housing. Social Planning can provide \$2,000 to us for service especially during extreme weather.

Can't we get more money by fining grow-ops and the owners of the buildings? (Answer: We do charge homeowners the cost of busting the grow-op.) I think you should charge more, and use it as a revenue source.

Make the expense pie chart correlate more closely with feedback. Council should consider the utilities budget in the budget consultation. I note that \$22 per household has been added for utilities. Also, differentiate between the fire and police in your pie chart. Can you clarify the bar chart on page three, i.e., how your money is used. Use the same colours in the bar chart and the pie chart.

If the police receive all their money, what will change? (Answer: More police on the street, more officers responding to break-ins, and this sort of thing.)

We need more police in the community working with the community.

Additional input associated with Kitsilano Community Center

-----Original Message-----

From: rcooey@shaw.ca [mailto:rcooey@shaw.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2005 2:15 AM

To: Klein, Annette; rcooey@shaw.ca

Subject: Correction re Corrected item in "City Choices: City Services: An overview"

No, not \$661 million, just \$661.

Hello,

I was going to ask about this, but I see the wonky heading accompanying the page 2 traffic-controller photo in "Where the money goes now" has been fixed:

The inclusion of water, garbage, recycling in the "Public Works (\$85 million)" text beside the photo is incorrect in the newspaper insert. It's been fixed by leaving the text and simply changing the heading to "Public Works and Utilities (\$233 million)" in the website version. Awkward to have different info in the two media, but better than letting something stand that's confusing and inaccurate.

So, please also fix the following items on the website, again for clarity and accuracy:

1) The bar chart on page 3-- the bar labeled as "Utilities \$661," (= 36% instead of 20% for Utilities) I asked about this one tonight at Kits Comm Ctr

2) The pie chart on page 1-- by using two slices, not one, for the Fire and Police expenditure percentages.

Your City Your Choices

Please let me know if there's a problem...
Rider

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2005 13:57:45 -0800
From: rcooey@shaw.ca
Subject: Re: Correction re Corrected item in
"City Choices: City Services: An overview"
To: "Klein, Annette" <annette.klein@vancouver.ca>
Cc: 'Andrew Mackey' <mackey@telus.net>
X-Accept-Language: en-us, en
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.0; en-US; rv:1.7.2)
Gecko/20040803

Hello Annette,
If it was worth making the first Budget website correction (below), it's worth making two more. I think you should make the two changes I've suggested. Here's my reasons.

More than a month remains for citizens to read and respond to the Choices website info and questionnaire. Interest will increase as final budget decisions get closer. People should get the clearest, most accurate version possible.

I'll take your word for it (in your response) that "on a net basis" somehow explains the big disparity in the bar chart percentage (20%) for Utilities on page 3, vs. the pie chart percentage (\$661 represents 36%) on page 1.

But it just confirms my point: an explanation is needed.

The text says the bar chart shows "how the money from the average tax bill is divided up." Nothing about on a net basis. If netting is a factor, then it must be stated. Otherwise, it just looks like a mistake and sows confusion. Perhaps Andrew can suggest an addition to the text that will clear this up.

Fire and Police Dept Budgets

With respect to specifying Fire and Police in the pie chart: no, it's not my personal need "to see more details." I just think for coherence and transparency the pie and bar charts should have a similar structure.

Without justification, this bar chart uses a different structure, different terminology, and different colours. Plus you say it has an unstated relation to netting and revenues. It may be "correct" but it's not clear, and it's not equivalent to the pie chart.

The pie chart is bigger and clearer, and it's on page 1.

Substantively, the pie chart should specify Fire and Police because:

- a) Council controls Fire Dept funding, but the Province controls Police Dept funding
- b) Despite its lack of control Council (taxpayers) are required to fund Police spending
- c) Governance and budgeting are very different for the two departments
- d) The Police budget is double the Fire Dept budget.

Your City Your Choices

I hope you'll consider contemplating these two changes.
Regards,
Rider

Tuesday, February 22, 2005 - Kensington Community Center

My property assessment went up 30%, so I am afraid I will have a huge tax increase. (Method of calculating taxes explained.)

The mill rate across the City is the same, east and west.

So I understand that the difference between 6% and 3.3% tax increase is the new program requests.

I am concerned about the fact that the police report appears March 23rd, yet the deadline for input on the budget consultation is February 25th.

CPCs make a valuable contribution to the community, and should be supported. I would like the police budget "windfall" of \$10 million to go to the CPCs.

As a librarian, at Mount Pleasant there used to be a CPC, and it was visible and welcome. The Collingwood Community Police Officer now handles this. All they have is a table in the mall, and it is very busy. We need the CPC back at Mount Pleasant Community Centre.

It seems like the hours of the CPC are shorter, as well.

The sodium vapour mood lighting used by the Engineering Department makes people feel not safe. We need brighter street lighting. Since they put in the new bike route, at 37th, along with traffic calming, 37th and Commercial has become a speedway.

I would like to see property taxes remain at the rate of inflation. Regarding the CPCs, traffic revenue should go to the CPCs to replace what the provincial government took away. There needs to be an arm's-length relationship with the CPCs and the police department.

The library gets \$31 million of its \$38 million operating budget from tax revenue. We should support the children's program called Ready To Read. We need the librarians to go into childcare and other children's centres. There are no current proposals for capital this year. We need to make our libraries more visible. Every hour we are open is a victory.

Just to let people know, each of the new librarians will be assigned to one of the four main branch libraries, and then work in the community.

I live on Gladstone, and the streets need to be repaired. I spoke to the City staff and they said that local property owners will not pay for this. I was shocked.

When a new house is built, the City never seems to fill in the potholes evenly.

Your City Your Choices

I was born in Vancouver, and have lived in Fraserview since the early 60s. I question whether we have fair taxation. I am surrounded by large homes. In the early 60s, my taxes were \$794. This year I paid \$2,600 in taxes, including school, GVRD and other taxes. Property is taxed in Vancouver not on usage of services. We are, in fact, subsidizing the increase in zoning potential. My home is 1,800 square feet, and others are 5,000 square feet, and yet they pay the same usage fees. I have given up on the battle over single-family homes. Base taxes on square footage, not assessed value.

For many years I have wondered why and when single-family areas began to become regarded as multi-family areas. (Answer: Some years ago, neighbourhoods were allowed secondary suites, but were not required to identify this. Now everyone is allowed a secondary suite, and the City is checking to see where these are.)

I want to look at the budget oversight of the police budget. I find it incredible that the Police Board sees financial statements only three times a year. This must occur more often. (Answer: There is a new program and we review budgets now every month. This is an improvement.)

Who paid for the police study? (Answer: It was paid for by the City, and the consultant was selected jointly by the City and VPD.)

I am perplexed by this. What is the politics between the police and City Council? It seems to me the answer should be simple. We determine how many police officers we need per number of residents, and then identify exactly how many police officers we need. As the population grows, the per capita cost for policing should go down. I think you can sell the need for police based on growth of population.

And with all the sprinkler requirements, we should need fewer firefighters.

I have been going through terrible problems with the Permits Department in trying to add 36 square feet to my 1,800 square foot home.

We need more money for a swimming pool at our Community Centre.

There are only two community centres with child care, one of which is Riley Park, and the equipment is terrible there – out of date. They won't repair it, so I go to Richmond and use their facilities, which has good childcare.

The whole southeast part of the City needs more community centre facilities.

All of the west side community centres are in better condition and better maintained.

I used to work for the City. We had 21 fitness centres in Vancouver, and 8 are fully staffed. Riley Park has minimum staffing. 13 facilities are run by community associations. We have been developing a maintenance program. The west side sites have larger square footage. Most community centres were built long before there was anything called "fitness" and other kinds of programs.

I think the pricing structure is unfair to families in Vancouver. We should have family rates.

People will pay more taxes if they know their money is being well spent.

Wednesday, February 23, 2005 – Vancouver Board of Trade

Is the presentation available on the web? (Answer: No, but I can e-mail it to you.) Our major concern is the amount of taxes paid for by business. The Fair Tax Coalition is taking the message down to the street level. There is a disproportionate tax on businesses, and we would like cooperation in re-balancing this over the next 20 years.

During the next 2 to 3 weeks, members of the Coalition will meet with Councilors.

The commercial tax rate does not create jobs, and does not create the right conditions for investment.

The Board of Trade has two main concerns with the City. The commercial tax rate is one of them. The difference between the municipalities in the region is significant. Crime and safety are the second concern. Vancouver is the unsafest City in Canada. Canada is in the bottom tier of the OECD countries on crime and safety. Vancouver is the worst City in North America for crime. Out of the 18 cities studied, in their report, we are the worst. And this is the Vancouver CMA. I tell my children that they should pull the fire alarm if there is a burglar. The fire department will get there faster than the police. Is it satisfactory to be the worst in Canada? The Council needs to consider this. When I look at Jamie and his officers, they do a fine job. Fixing graffiti and broken windows is important to creating a climate which says "We do not tolerate crime." The province is finally getting on board. All of the institutions in the network including the police need to coordinate better. We are a City full of victims, and are reaching the tipping point. The request by the police is reasonable, but there needs to be better cooperation from the Crown attorneys and the judges. The police need all the support we can give them.

Last year we did a poll, and people said they would pay higher taxes for policing, and yet the police have dropped resources for property crime. When police devote officers to property crime, the incidence goes down. So we need more officers. (Question to Board of Trade: does the Board of Trade, then, support an additional 3% tax increase to pay for the police? The representative of the Board of Trade declined to answer the question, but added "We need the number of police officers per population other cities have.")

We want to see the policy of the last 20 years reversed. Business leaves if it cannot make a profit or expand. We need a policy reversal.

(Police: We are working hard with the City toward a reasonable solution. Any discussion going on with the Crown counsel and judges is important. Their budgets have been cut as well.)

I trust that the police study will take into account the comparison between big cities and Vancouver. On the commercial tax rate, you should reduce the 5.47 rate to 5.35, and then work over the 20 years to bring it down further to the regional average.

Your City Your Choices

When it comes to the tax rate, we need to look at City expenditures. I realize ethical purchasing is a moral issue, but if it's between ethical purchasing or more police officers, then I think ethical purchasing should be an option. There are other Council programs as well that need to be considered. (Answer: Ethical purchasing creates a vision of what our City should be like.)

I think everyone here understands the task that Council has in balancing interests and objectives. I would emphasize that when the Board of Trade raises issues related to taxation and public safety, the Board is not just another interest group. We have 5,000 members, and we represent the business community. What we are saying is that citizens consider crime and safety the most critical issue. We are saying that this is not just another issue. We cannot have a system where police say that they do not have faith in the criminal justice system. The consequence in not dealing with public safety is dramatic.

Drug and mental illness courts have worked in Florida. The federal government needs to realize that this is not just a Vancouver issue.

We cannot use the excuse of the need for provincial and federal action to avoid dealing with this at the City level.

Why did you present the business increase as \$100,000 per assessed value and residences as a \$400,000 home? (See flyer.) Why not include an example for the average business? The City could take a principled stand on the commercial rates. We need to look at who is consuming the services of this City, and most of this is residential.

20 years to reach the GVRD average is what we are seeking. We want to look at the total tax burden carried by business. And we have been talking to the provincial government about public safety issues. We will continue to put pressure on the provincial level.

My understanding is that the assessed values of properties last year in Vancouver saw a 17% increase. In a perfect world, an increase of 17% in property values would cause a reduced tax rate. (Answer: An explanation of how taxes are collected.)

In this flyer, it says businesses pay 5 times a greater increase than residential in their taxes. A ratio of 2.5 to 3 of residential to commercial is the best practice in most cities. (Comment: We need a strategy to keep our business when we realize the lower land costs in other GVRD communities.)

We need to look at more than a consumption of services model for establishing commercial rates. There needs to be a policy shift. The reversal of the last 20 years of policy is critical.

The national average is 1 to 2.5 for residential to commercial rates and it is recommended that a ratio of 1 to 2.4 is preferred.

How practical is it to get your new officers this year, given the time required to recruit and train? (Answer: We have planned for this. Some are already in the Academy.) It will take a year to get to the levels we need. We need the increased benefit of additional police now, not a year from now.

I would remind Council that small businesses in particular are hit by a double-edged sword. As a member of a BIA, we pay taxes and we pay BIA levies.

You hear from the Board of Trade two issues. Shifting from commercial to residential, and supporting more policing. I know we are suggesting ways of spending more money, but you need to also look at ways of making efficiencies and look at priorities for spending.

Wednesday, February 23, 2005 – Mount Pleasant

(There was an initial discussion of how property tax rates are set.)

We at the Community Centre Association try to make life better. We help the Parks Board make their money go farther. As a society, we have not done a good job making children into healthy, productive citizens. We are trying to use the New York model of increasing police and driving criminals out of Vancouver to surrounding areas. The other alternative is to try to deal with the circumstances that lead to criminality. Community centres, neighbourhood houses, and the Parks Board in general assist with this, and each of these requires more funding. If we are going to increase the pillar of enforcement, we need to increase the other pillars as well. We need secure funding for the redevelopment of the Mount Pleasant Community Centre, so that we can include childcare.

My son attends before- and after-school programs, and that is the only day-care attached to school, so I moved to this neighbourhood. Childcare is needed and must be maintained.

I am a Board member and a minister. The community-based structure must be maintained and enhanced. It is the community that gathers around the pool during the summer. Loss of our programs will destroy our community.

I am a member of the Friends of the Vancouver Library. I commend the Council for increasing library hours. There is a solid level of support for the library. Over 60% of residents have a library card. We need adequate levels of policing and we need social services like the library. There are over 5,000 programs for children – Ready To Read is only one example. There is a need for pre-school children to become familiar with books. I hope you can find money for the library's children's program.

I am here to support the children and mom's programs. I am here because the moms are putting their children to bed. I support the five new children's librarians. There are a thousand children born in this area every year, but we only reach 100 with literacy programs. I often wonder what happens to the other 900.

It is much better to invest in childcare and library services in the long term, over funding of police. We have seen the commercial sector grow on Main Street and Broadway, and major changes in the population. By supporting these developments, you make the area more livable and then need less police. Any new capacity in the neighbourhood can be leveraged to create a better community.

Your City Your Choices

I want to add that the Mount Pleasant library has had to open up longer to handle the Baby-Time programs. We have had pregnant women sign up their babies before they are born. We deal with immigrants bringing in their children to learn to speak and read English. We have people who come into our library to wash and clean up. We are not looking after our most disadvantaged, and 30% of residents in this area are below the poverty line.

Children are the canary in the mine. When you see the study done for the City, you see Mount Pleasant is going through tremendous change, and needs support. Our community is diverse. East of Mount Pleasant needs special attention. Not all neighbourhoods are equal. I am not sure how we influence the Vancouver Police Department decisions about where the CPCs should go. I support more money for CPCs, but want a say as to where they should go. Mount Pleasant residents support the Four Pillars, but we need help so that we can help our residents deal with the issues the Four Pillars cover.

My wife and baby were here a while ago. I want to thank Jane for the baby program. It created a tremendous sense of belonging for my wife. I support the child programs for my wife and baby. It is a wonder what Jane has done with this program.

I support the Mount Pleasant pool program. Pools are needed now more than ever. Swimming is the #1 fitness priority for 2005. We also need to invest in our aging recreational infrastructure now.

I support the Mount Pleasant requests as well.

There should be a fee for people parking on the street outside of their homes.

I am on the board at Mount Pleasant. I think that the 6% tax increase is too much. I support the pool program. These are difficult choices. A lot of what we have said tonight indicates the needs at the community level.

I was in the police chief's consultation last year. The police chief asked us what we needed, but there was no suggestion from anyone in the consultation that we needed such a large increase in the number of police officers. What would we see if the police department only got half the number they want over the next five years? (Police: We don't argue with what is needed for libraries and pools. We need the officers for security in 2010, and I am ashamed we don't have staff to answer home break-ins.)

I don't know we can be asked to support such a large financial contribution to the police, when the police report won't be available until next week. I am interested in the fact that the last year's police consultation did not suggest such a large increase in the number of officers.

Why do the police not better explain their need for so many officers now?

I think we need more police officers. My building has been broken into so many times, and bicycles stolen, and I found a machete. I called 911 and they told me to go to the Collingwood CPC, miles away, carrying a machete. I don't know how many more officers we need, but we need more. It seems futile to call 911, because there are not enough police officers to answer.

I share the last speaker's concern about break-ins. However, I dispute the solution with so little evidence. I am not sure that more police is the solution. Not only do we have more police, but we have more private police – security guards, etc. Social and community services are being asked for evidence-based arguments. Why are there no evidence-based arguments for the police department?

I am a homeowner and I would be happy to pay the 6%.

It's a tough decision for Council, but I would ask you to remember that Mount Pleasant needs support.

Additional input associated with the Mount Pleasant Meeting

From: Margery Duda

The Save Mount Pleasant Pool Committee formed almost two years ago, when faced with the reality that if something were not done, the Outdoor Pool in Mount Pleasant would be lost forever. It was unimaginable that anyone would want to close one of the best community recreational facilities in the City, with usage increasing by 69% over the past five years. After doing some research it became clear that the reason for closing the facility was money, as the pool is in need of replacement after 35 years of very heavy use by many children, adults, and seniors – swim clubs, water polo teams, and day camps. Budget cuts led to decisions that would impact communities forever.

You are aware of the petition and the lobbying that we have done in order to raise awareness and try to change the fate of the pool. Our Committee looks at what is important in this community and in the entire City. Oak and Hastings outdoor pools were closed without public debate as they outgrew their lifespan, and residents are still outraged. Sunset outdoor pool is also slated for demolition. These pools were built at a time when the need for community recreation was recognized by a growing City full of active children. Now more than ever, our City is growing, and families are having children at higher rates (1,000 babies per year in this catchment). Mount Pleasant, growing at a rate of over 50% by 2021, will still be the quiet, friendly, and pleasant neighbourhood on the edge of downtown, still with needs for community recreation and an outdoor pool that is accessible to those who cannot get to Kitsilano or Stanley Park. Our crime rates have increased across the City and we believe that money spent on facilities such as our outdoor pool is a wise long-term investment in the health and safety of our community. We believe that in the hot Vancouver summers, the children who are out of school need a safe and enjoyable place to develop a community and social spirit. Our investment in such a resource made sense in 1967 and makes even more sense now. A world-class City can afford an outdoor swimming pool in Mount Pleasant, and cannot afford to lose it. Swimming is the Number One fitness resolution of the Vancouver Park Board for 2005. This facility is an investment in the health of our community, by a City that promotes health and fitness for its citizens.

To lose Mount Pleasant Outdoor Pool is to lose it forever. Investing in the pool now will ensure that we have the pool in our community for another 50 years. Investing in our outdoor pool now will save the dampened spirit of a young child who can not afford or is unable to travel alone to Stanley Park, the discomfort of a senior living in the sweltering

apartment across the street, will help us to reduce traffic and greenhouse gas emissions for travel to other facilities and overcrowding at these facilities as our population grows, and will help retain the character and beauty of Mount Pleasant and the recreational assets of the City of Vancouver. The residents of this community have been made aware of this issue, have engaged in public debate, and have spoken strongly in favour of keeping Mount Pleasant Outdoor Pool in Vancouver.

The Save Mount Pleasant Pool Committee asks you to look at providing more for Parks and Recreation in the upcoming Budget. Aging infrastructures need attention and rebuilding now, and although the investment is large, the return is invaluable.

From Jane Cobb, Coordinator of Mother Goose Programs for Vancouver Public Library, 604-331-3657

The moon is round
As round can be
Two eyes
A nose
And a mouth, like me.

Words have power. And they especially have power when they are used between a parent and a child.

1. My name is Jane Cobb and I'm a Children's Librarian with VPL I do a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program here at the Mount Pleasant CC, and I would like to speak on behalf of families in the Mount Pleasant area – parents who can't be here tonight because they are busy at this time putting their children to bed. And I would like to speak on their behalf in support of the library's application for funding for 5 new Outreach Children's Librarian positions.
2. The Mother Goose Program I do as outreach for the library is an early literacy program for parents and babies. What we do at the program is teach the parents rhymes and stories that they can use at home with their babies every day to encourage their baby's language development.
3. Many research studies have shown that literacy begins in infancy. And it begins with the communication between a mother and a child. The oral language experiences these moms are using with their babies will teach the babies, in a fun way, the skills that ALL children need in order to be able to learn to read successfully when they get to school.
4. Currently there are 5 programs in the Mount Pleasant Health Unit catchment area that meet families' need for early literacy experiences: 3 Mother Goose Programs at: the Mt Pleasant CC, the Mt Pleasant Neighbourhood House, and the Riley Park CC; and 2 Babytime Programs at the Mount Pleasant branch of Vancouver Public Library.
5. There are over 1,000 babies born each year in the Mount Pleasant catchment area. (Statistics gathered in 2005 from the Community Health Office at Ravensong.) Currently our combined programs reach approximately 100

- families. In this one area of the City alone, there are 900 families who are not being served by our current ability to provide library services. I could fill my one program 3 times over next week, if we had the staffing required. There is that much demand for this program.
6. Mother Goose is just one of the many community development programs we could add if our budget request is approved and we are able to hire 5 new Outreach Children's Librarians. Other programs that reach out to children and teachers in Early Childhood Care Centres will also be added.
 7. We all have a stake in our community's children. If we want a literate society, we have to start early with the youngest members of our society, the little children who are being sung to sleep right now as we talk about their futures.

Thursday, February 24, 2005 - Marpole Community

I'd like to see a breakdown of how much money actually goes into the DTES. I support community policing. My area is in trouble from crime, and something needs to be done.

It would be helpful if you put the costs next to the examples you provide. For instance, you mention the graffiti program. If it's \$500,000, I could see reducing it. But if it's only \$5,000, I can't.

All those plebiscites in 2003 and 2004, are they also in the 2005 budget? And does the 3.8 million dollars in capital fit into this budget? (Answer: The plebiscites were exceptional, and the capital program is for every three years.)

With respect to your budget projection, do you take into account what might be coming from the provincial or federal governments? (Answer: We only include guaranteed sources of revenue.)

There seems to be a significant under-funding on security issues. What will happen in the next five or ten years? I would like to see more community policing, so we can feel more comfortable. Police are so busy, and have other priorities. We need more focus on traffic enforcement.

We could really use more children's librarians. If we can go out and do more story telling, we can get children ready for school. The police budget is really important, and so are the CPCs.

I lean towards supporting the libraries, and making sure that children are ready for school. I also support the police and the CPCs in particular.

The Collingwood neighbourhood has 70% of its population with English as a second language. Increasing CPCs is important, but doing the prevention work so we have safer community and need fewer police is also very important. If we build neighbourhoods, we won't need more and more police. Our Board (Collingwood) supports the police budget. They are stretched way too thin. We also support the

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school liaison officers and we could not operate without City grants, given the level of provincial cutbacks.

I support the CPCs, and in particular one in District 4. With the review of the permit application process, we could be focusing on private or commercial development. (Answer: The focus is on first-time users of the system.) Community safety is important, and the police need to be more diligent about traffic violations.

I understand DCLs go into general revenue, and Vancouver's ability to use these is limited by the Charter. Gaming revenues will generate negative consequences as well as positive. The City needs to support programs that respond to problems with gaming.

I also agree we need to address the sources of criminal activity and not short-term solutions. Gaming revenue is tentative, and New Westminster decided to put it into general revenue. We received a lump-sum payment from the gaming industry and used the revenue from that endowment fund for social and cultural programs. I am concerned about the conversion of business towers downtown into residential towers. If we do not support business downtown, we will lose the tax base, which is five times that of the residential base, and we will create traffic problems.

Why fund only a few CPCs heavily rather than funding more CPCs at a lower rate? I support the sustainability infrastructure of the City and of the City getting involved in this program. Otherwise, nothing will get done.

The City should develop a long-term forecasting for its budgets. If your budget was for 2007 or 2010, then I would feel more included and comfortable participating. Do not cut parks and recreation. Centres should open earlier and close later. This would address some of the social and policing issues. My observation is that Council cuts back on what the community centres ask for. Every time we put parks into a plebiscite, the vast majority of residents support parks and recreation programs by about 75%. The police have a strategic plan, and there is a consultant looking at it. If the police get all the money they say they need, would this be a Cadillac or a Chevy police department?

As a veteran 30-year schoolteacher who has taught in the DTES, I support literacy programs. But more importantly, people must be safe. People simply do not report crimes because there is a ceiling on their insurance. It is a fact that 3% to 4% of the population at any one time will need to be incarcerated. Vancouver is a magnet for criminals. We have a concern that some groups are minimizing criminal behaviour. We have a boondoggle of consultants and staff. I have concern about the Vancouver Agreement. We have spent a great deal of money on the DTES without many results. The question I have is, what are the results of all of this financial investment?

I am from the False Creek, and I think parks and recreation are important, and I support CPCs and libraries. The engineering department's not here. It's not fair that the police are here, the libraries are here, but not engineering.

I realize they are putting more money into community policing. I think that the police should look at more than two new CPCs. I would like to see a couple of constables at each CPC.

Your City Your Choices

Marpole issues include traffic, especially the arterial roads such as Cambie, Granville and Oak. When traffic backs up, it moves into residential streets. Traffic calming and restrictions would help a great deal.

Registered Participants

BIA

Cheryl Foss	Strathcona BIA
Randy Atkinson	Davie Village BIA
Lyn Hellyar	Davie Village BIA
Leanore Sahi	Gastown BIA
Jon Walters	Gastown BIA
Patricia Barnes	Hastings North BIA
Karen Peterson Ivanick	Downtown Vancouver BIA
Charles Gauthier	Downtown BIA
Don W. Low	Mount Pleasant BIA
Leonard Schein	Point Grey Village BIA
Stephanie Williamson	Hastings North BIA
David Gray	Collingwood BIA
Brad Nuber	Collingwood BIA
Cheryl Easton	Kitsilano 4 th Avenue
Sharon Townsend	South Granville BIA
Jean Price	South Granville BIA
Lynn Warwick	Mount Pleasant BIA
Stephanie Williamson	Hastings North BIA

Seniors

Myrna Campeotto	Friends of VPL
Mary King	South Vancouver Seniors Network
Ruy Lawrence	Cosco
Steve Chan	Vancouver 2 nd Mile Soc.
Desiree Baron	Vancouver PL Outreach Services
Phil Lyons	Seniors Network B.C.
Bruce Chown	Advisory Committee on Seniors' Issues
Mary A. Hill	Vanc. Cross Cultural Seniors Network
Shell-Lee Wert	Renfrew-Collingwood Srs.
Jenn McGinn	South Granville Seniors Ctr.
Maggie Duckett	South Van. Neighbourhood House
Margaret Coates	411 Seniors Centre
John Halani	Multicultural Advisory Council

Arts

Christina Ritchie	Contemporary Art Gallery
Chris Wootten	Vancouver Art Gallery
Dylan Mazuv	Headlines Theatre
David Diamond	Headlines Theatre
Jackie Crossland	Headlines Theatre
Jim Smith	Eponymous
Lindy Sisson	VI Children's Festival
Jennifer Johnstone	Ballet British Columbia
John Kidder	Vancouver Folk Music Festival
Dugg Simpson	Vancouver Folk Music Festival
Norman Armour	Rumble Theatre/Push Festival
Robert Kerr	Coastal Jazz
Jeff Alexander	Vancouver Symphony Orch.
Howard R. Jang	Arts Club Theatre Co.

Your City Your Choices

Duncan Low	Vancouver East C/C
Donna Spencer	Firehall Theatre/Firehall Arts Centre
Tammy Isaacson	Pi Theatre
George Laverock	Festival Vancouver
Dolly Hopkins	Public Dreams
Hazel Currie	Pacific Cinematheque
Heather Redfern	Alliance for Arts & Culture
Jane Davidson	Vcr. Int'l. Writers Fest.
Hastings	
Don Wong	HCC
Angela Kenyon	VSBC
Alberto Ciamorra	
Betty Greenwell	Hastings C. Assoc. Trustee
Charlotte Kramer	Resident
Carol Alexander	Slow Down Dundas
Bay S. Shaw	HCC
Stewart Anderson	Kiwassa N/H
Janis McKenzie	VPL
Haida Lane	Hastings Association
Maya Russell	CPC
Eric Harms	Hast. Comm. Assn.
Rolf Tevely	Hastings Community Assn.
Patricia Coutts	Hastings Community Assn.
Andy Seto	Hastings Community Assn.
Marion Oliviero	Hastings Community Assn.
Don Wong	Hastings Community Assn.
Elaine Barbour	Hastings North Comm. Policing Centre
Richard Saunders	Hastings Community Little League
Andy Seto	HCA Assoc.
Claudia Ferris	Hastings School
Rider Cooney	
Youth	
Doug Ragan	Environmental Youth Alliance
Stan Williams	Redwire
Rodney Chan	VDSC
Victoria Marshall	VDSC
Andy Cohen	VDSC
Susan Kurbis	Environmental Youth Alliance
John de Haas	Vancouver Police
Anna Leggett	VDSC Exec.
Jimmy Craig	VDSC Exec.
Rosanna Yusuf	VDSC
Savita Kaila	Gladstone S.C. President
Vincent Lai	VDSC exec
Judy Rom	Magee Secondary S.C.
Lien Phan	Windermere Secondary President
Jennette Leung	WDSC & Windermere Vice-President
Sophia Tran-Vu	Eric Hamber President
Chris Hildreth	Point Grey President
Anka Raskin	Social Planning Youth Outreach
Zoe Jordan	Lord Byng President

Your City Your Choices

Mohsen Chowdhury
Howard Kwan
Darryl W. Moore
Raven Taylor
Mat Lyle
Rachael M. Dillman
Cam Charron
Judi Walker
Curtis Clearsky
Nancy Hay
Natasa Skoro
Sanja Vukicevic

LGBT

Jack Herman
Cindy Holmes
Pat Hogan
Phillip Banks
Jim Deva
Drew Dennis
Pat MacDiarmid
Chris Morrissey
Donna J. Wilson
Vince J. Marino

Women

Alice Kendall
Reta Bund
Cynthia Low
Tracy Porteous
May Brown
Audrey Johnson
Shashi Assanaud
Kate Gibson
Amy Stack
Mary Trentadue
Nike Antonopoulou
Nancy Olson
Caryn Duncan
Alice Lee
Kathleen Piovesan
Angela MacDougall
Bernie Whiteford
Stephanie Kellington
Sarah Davies
Irene Tsepnopoulos-Ghainer
Mary Ann Cantelle

Dunbar

Donna Hossack
Joel Milgram
Eve Alexander
Arlene Higgs
Bill Hooker

VDSC
Van Tech Student Council
Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth
Kinex
Britannia Secondary Student Council
Churchill Secondary
Kitsilano Student Council
Vancouver Public Library
KAYA
GAB Youth Services @ The Centre
Youth4Youth Council Roundhouse Comm. Centre
Youth4Youth Council Roundhouse Comm. Centre

W.E.A.V.E.
(BCASVACD) Safe Choices
M.O.B. Team Van or Not So Strictly Ballroom
AIDS Vancouver/Gayway
Davie St. Commun. Policing, BIA
Out On Screen
Rainbow Refugee Committee
LEGIT – Canadian Imm. for S.S. Part.
The Centre
Business Owner

DEWC
DEWS
DEWC
BLASUACP
Minera Fn. for B.C. Women
West Coast LEAF
Van. & L. Mountain Multicultural Family Support
WISH
PACE Society
PACE Society
Atira Women's Res. Soc.
Single Mothers Network, Vancouver YWCA
VWHC
Van. Rape Relief
VRRWS
Battered Women's Support Services
Helping Spirit Lodge Society
Inner-City Women's Initiatives Society
WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre
WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre
Carnegie Library

Friends of Vancouver Publ. Library
Dunbar Neighbourhood Assn.
Dunbar Patrol Community
VPL
Dunbar Comm. Cent. Assoc.

Your City Your Choices

Linda MacAdam	Dunbar Community Patrol
Mary Allard	Resident
Kellsie McLeod	Resident
B. Evans	Resident
Allen Andrews	Resident
Axel Hovbrender	Police Dept.
Ivy Vuu	Dunbar CC Youth Worker
Mike Andruff	Dunbar Residents Assn.
Meredith Kimball	Dunbar Comm. Patrol
Rider Coeey	
Stephen Sothy	D. Com. Assos.
Social Programs	
Karen O'Shaunacery	Lookout Aid Society
Mary Johnston	Eastside Family Place
Mebrat Beyene	Self-Help Resource Assn.
Judy McGuire	DTES Youth Activities Soc.
Margaret Birrell	BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
John Harvey	Covenant House Vancouver
Ingrid Kastens	Pacific Community Resources Soc.
Peter Greenwell	Gathering Place/Gathering Place Assn.
Heather Edgar	Coast Foundation Society
Ken Lyotier	United We Can
Terry Miller	Pacific Community Resource
Chinese	
Grace Wong	Chinese CPC
Chuck Chang	The Chinese Freemasons
Daisen Gee-Wing	Chinese CPC
Tony Lam	VCBIA
Michael Ng	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden
Albert Fok	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association
Carol Lee	Linacore, CHAPAC, VCBIA, Vanc. Crime Task Force
George Chow	Chinese Benevolent Assn. Van.
Lilian To	SUCCESS
Multi-cultural	
Tulia Castellanos	FSGV
Cecilia Tagle	MCC Refugee Office
Ranjeet Kanda	Multicultural family service support
Chris Friesen	ISS BC
Nancy McRitchie	Kiwassa Neigh. House
Alexandra Charlton	SOS (Storefront Orientation Services)
Jean Muloney	PIRS
Carol Lloyd	Vancouver Multicultural Soc.
Silvia Musholt	Inland Refugee Society
Kelly Pollack	MOSAIC
Frances MacQueen	VAST
West End	
Patricia Johnson	From Grief To Action
Gail Brown	WECAN
Dana Walker	City of Vancouver
Sylvia Escobedo	

Your City Your Choices

Thomas Quigley	
Brent Granby	WECC
Don Ransom	Davie St. CPC & VACPC
Aaron Jasper	WERA/Davie St. CPC
Michael Doucette	Davie St. CPC/MINN
Jim Deva	BIA, CPC, WEINN
Rider Cooley	
Brig Anderson	Sojourn Housing Co-op
Sheryl Williamson-Harms	WECAN
Chris Harms	WECAN
Kits	
Robert Haines	Kits War Mem. Com. Assn.
Dianne Sankey	Kits CC Board
Judy Andersen	Kits CC staff
Arlene Brown	Kits CC Board
Monica Tang	Kits CC Board
N. Lum	
W. Von Schleinitz	Resident of Kits
Janan Carr	Van. Pub. Lib.
Wm. McGrath	Social Justice Group
Alfred G. Lam	Kits CC Board
Penny Rogers	Kits Showers/Shelter
Sharon Federal	Kits Showers/Shelter
Rider Cooley	
Letizia Myers	West Side Family CC
Wendy Dubois	Neighbourhood Link Van
Ray Melland	Ret'd Kits homeowner
Joan Andersen	Vancouver Public Library
Kensington	
Roberta Smith	Kensington C.C.
Dianna Smith	Community Member
Cindy Crapper	Kensington Community Centre
Bob Chapman	VPD
Wayne Forbes	Kensington C.C.
Paul Hughes	Kensington Pool & Ctr.
Mary Dunai	Kensington C.C.
Susy Bando	Kensington C.C.
Ronda Field	KCC
John Buckberrough	VPL – Board
Daniela Erparo	VPL – Mount Pleasant Br.
Po Ng	
Richard Nadtel	Resident
Mount Pleasant	
Alexandra Straccini	MP Cares
J-B Bonnemaïson	Save Mount Pleasant Pool
Rider Cooley	
Daniela Esparo	VPL – Mount Pleasant
Neale Adams	Friends of VPL
Peter Royce	MP Comm. Centre Assn
Gary Richmond	MPPA
Jane Cobb	VPL

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Anne Olsen	VPL
Marlene Rodgers	MPCCA
Rosalind Kellett	MPCCA
Greg Scarborough	Mount Pleasant Cares
Rod Hashimoto	Mount Pleasant Cares
Stephen Tang	
Sally Barnes	
Margery Duder	Save Mount Pleasant Pool
Naomi Bridge	
Jennifer Standeven	MP Neighbourhood House
Caroline Abramson	Simon Fraser Elementary
Larry Buck	
Board of Trade	
Jamie Graham	VPD
Cam Pearson	Vanc. Board of Trade
Yvonne De Valone	Vanc. Board of Trade
Frank Borowicz	Vanc. Board of Trade
Darcy Rezac	Vanc. Board of Trade
Graeme Stamp	Vanc. Board of Trade
Raymond Louie	COV
Doug Snider	Board of Trade
Tina Beer	Group Telecom, a Bell Canada company
Terry Frounfelker	Vancouver Port Authority
Rob Fitzgerald	Vancouver Port Authority
Daryl Wiebe	VPD
Marpole	
Ron Loui-Ying	MOCA
Harry Wong	MOCA
Brent Novak	Park Board
Jane Curry	Vancouver Public Library
Jocelyn MacNiel	Friends of VPL
Sherry Baker	Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Manny Fernandez	Kerrisdale, Oakridge, Marpole Community Policing Centre
Alida Jurconi	CHAT co-chair
Clair Lee	MOCA
Geoff England	MOCA
Paul Stewart	MOCA
Patti Milsom	CHAT co-chair

Vancouver Police Department Information Sheet

(see Vancouver City website (<http://vancouver.ca>)
for .pdf file of this information sheet)