

I would like to start by thanking Amy Hennessy and all that you do in the community. Also the band from Semiahmoo Secondary was wonderful. On behalf of White Rock City Council, welcome and thank you.

Special thanks to Terry Ross, president of the chamber of commerce and Cliff Annable for pulling this together. When you talk about community service, these two are stellar. I would also like to thank Chris Magnus, Shannon Levesque, the wonderful music from the jazz band at Semiahmoo Secondary and especially my biggest supporter, my wife Jane.

I would like to acknowledge the Councillors at the City – Councillor Grant Meyer, Bill Lawrence, and Louise Hutchison. Councillor Fathers was unable to attend this evening due to a family emergency. Councillor Al Campbell was unable to attend as he is in the middle of the ocean.

Senior Management present this evening are Chief Administrative Officer, Dan Bottrill; Jacquie Johnstone, Director of Human Resources; Sandra Kurylo, Director of Financial Services; Greg St. Louis, Director of Engineering and Municipal Operations, Eric Stepura, Director of Leisure Services; and Chris Zota, Manager of Information Technology.

This is the last opportunity I will have to address you before the municipal election. So briefly, this evening I will recap some of the key priorities we had as a council at the beginning of the term, how we have progressed with them, summarize what we have planned for the balance of the term, and what the future holds for the city.

Strategic Priorities

Arts as an Economic Generator

I would like to start with the promoting art as an economic generator and a quote:

“ I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities,... the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discover, and achievement. “

This quote is from Paul G. Allen, the cofounder of Microsoft. It’s interesting that a technology man understands the value of the arts on business. Arts are a key factor in the economy and unleash creativity within individuals and opens minds. I definitely think us engineers need to take this to heart!

The promotion of the arts is progressing very well and the arts community is helping to lead the way. Strong partnerships have been formed with Semiahmoo Arts and the business community. We have facilitated events as the International Artist Day Festival which was phenomenally successful.

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We have hired a staff cultural manager, and we have seen local businesses such as Kelly Breaks from the Blue Frog Studios totally blow us away with the number and quality of the musical performances he has hosted in White Rock. I am thrilled with the innovative live streaming of these events.

Peninsula Productions dazzle us with a wide range of classical and popular music shows and high quality theatre productions. The Players Club has gone through a bit of a metamorphosis and emerged even stronger than before with their popular productions of the Christmas pantomime and their Vancouver zone prize winning production of Neil Simon's Fools.

The Promenade and Library have been opened up to showcase artists as never before. I think we are all coming to the realization that truly something wonderful is starting to get established here.

Town Centre Redevelopment

In accordance to our priorities, it was realized that a healthy and sustainable commercial core in the town centre was crucial to the economic well-being and quality of life in White Rock. In order to achieve this, and working from the adage that we need to have about 10,000 people within a 10 minute walk of the Town Centre to make it work, we started to 'set the table' for the investors.

When I was elected, I said that we needed investment in the city but that it had to be investment on our terms, whereby the developers fundamentally shared the profits with the community. It would not be a "take take" situation – it would be a "give and take" one.

In order to accomplish this, we had to quickly change some of our policies and bylaws for dealing with investors. With the help of consultants and our economic investment committee, we did just that. The results were very positive. Certainty was provided to investors- they now knew what was expected in terms of community investment and profit-sharing to set financial targets.

I would like to quote you a few examples.

Most recently, under the old rules, there were four major projects approved. In terms of community charges this is what the city received:

- Newport – 0
- Saltaire – Over \$370 thousand in onsite amenities
- Avra - \$100,000 plus \$50 in on-site public art
- Royce – just over \$200 thousand

We have only had one application with the new policy - The 12-storey Cressey proposal on Vidal. However, their amenity contribution will amount to \$650 thousand, and \$100 thousand in a land sale – a considerable increase over the previous policy.

Waterfront

We want to see a more vibrant and active waterfront. To that end, we worked with the Business Improvement Association to amend the pay parking rates and extended the winter season rates from three to six months.

The OCP was amended to allow commercial activities south of Marine Drive so we now have extended seasons and sites for artists and buskers, food carts and kayak and paddle board rentals. More is to come!

We completed an extension to the promenade and improvements to Bayview Park on the west end of the promenade. It is not intended to turn the waterfront into an amusement park, but to make it more vibrant in order to attract visitors and more customers for our businesses.

Maintain and Improve our Protective Services

It is fundamental that a great community is a safe community. WE are cogniscent that the single biggest cost drive we have is our protective services. Indeed the main reason for the difference in taxation between White Rock and Surrey is the relative cost of protective services. We started off our term of office by increasing our RCMP detachment by one officer. We now have a detachment of 23.

However, they are all ours. When there is a crime wave in Newton, our members do not get re-assigned like the South Surrey detachment.

The crime statistics reflect this:

2013 Robbery rate:

- Surrey: 406 per cent higher per capita than White Rock
- Langley: 261 per cent higher
- Lower Mainland district (LMD): 281 per cent higher

2013 Persons Violent Crime

- Surrey: 200 per cent higher
- Langley: 147 per cent higher
- LMD: 168 per cent higher

2013 B&E Business:

- Surrey: 246 per cent higher
- Langley: 413 per cent higher
- LMD: 235 per cent higher



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2013 B&E Residence:

- Surrey: 156 per cent higher
- Langley: 104 per cent higher
- LMD: 113 per cent higher

By the same token, our fire services continue to offer the best response time and care we could ask for. The BCAS recently down-graded their response to non-life threatening medical emergencies. Consequently, their response time to too many 911 calls has lengthened dramatically. The firefighters, who are in a back-up roll, have had to step up to fill that need.

Councillor Larry Robinson had a medical emergency at his home shortly before he passed away. Our fire department, in their back-up role, responded in less than three minutes. The ambulance did not arrive until more than 20 minutes later to take Larry to the hospital.

So we pay higher taxes for this service. Is it worth it? I would say yes! While in the hospital, Larry said, "After what I experienced, I do not want to hear any more talk about doing away with our fire service to save money."

Infrastructure

We continue to focus on infrastructure and on ensuring that we are able to finance its renewal. A number of major road projects - Victoria and Marine Drive – have been initiated and either completed or on the verge of completion.

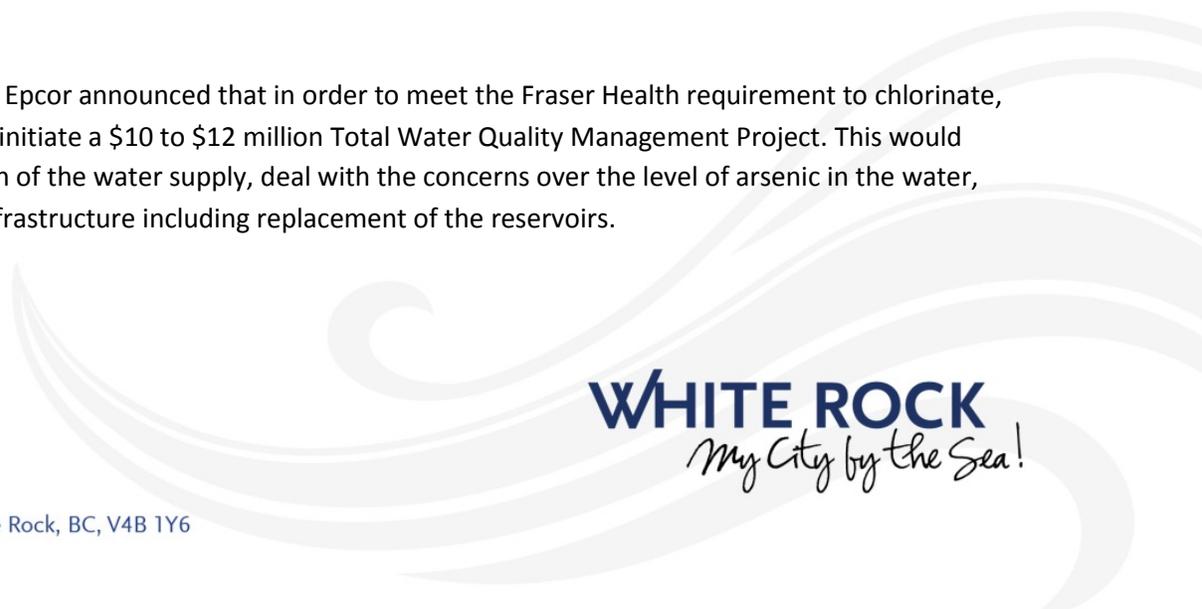
We chose not to spend \$15 to \$20 million on a new City Hall and instead renovated what we have at a cost of \$2 million.

In addition, we have realized a new revenue source of \$90,000 per year by leasing out the unused church building we purchased about four years ago. As a result, we welcomed a new start up IT business with more than a dozen employees who will be using the space.

So what have you done for me lately?

EPCOR

At the end of 2012, Epcor announced that in order to meet the Fraser Health requirement to chlorinate, they were going to initiate a \$10 to \$12 million Total Water Quality Management Project. This would provide chlorination of the water supply, deal with the concerns over the level of arsenic in the water, and upgrade the infrastructure including replacement of the reservoirs.



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The net result would be a significant increase in water fees.

Staff examined the financials and demonstrated sufficient concern that council decided to pursue the purchase of the utility. I would like to say that we have the utmost respect for EPCOR's operation of the utility. They are very good at what they do:

However, some of the considerations of the sale are:

Under the present operation, EPCOR sends about \$250,000 to Edmonton annually as profit. After completion of the Total Water Quality Management Project, that amount will increase to over \$1 million.

EPCOR finance the capital at a borrowing rate in the order of 5 to 7 per cent. It is guaranteed a rate of return of over 10 per cent by the province – this a virtual money machine. The more they borrow, the more they make.

The city can borrow the money at a rate about half of EPCOR and is eligible for government grants that are not available to EPCOR.

The City can entertain the possibility of joining the Greater Vancouver Water District which is not available to EPCOR.

What remains to be determined is how much we have to pay to acquire the company White Rock operations and whether voters are prepared to allows us to borrow that amount and the amount needed to implement the Total Water Quality Management Project.

Task forces

In order to accomplish some of the key priorities that council wants to get done before the end of its term office in November, I have created some task forces each under the leadership of one of the councillors.

A. Arts Task Forces

Councillor Louise Hutchison is pulling double duty and will be leading two task forces on the arts. The primary responsibility of the first task force is to prepare a cultural strategic plan for the city and to oversee the coordination of the Fall Arts Festival which includes the International Artist Day Festival and Moon Festival.

The second task force is the Public Art Task Force. Its purpose is to inject public art into the community. The task force has worked with Semiahmoo Arts to arrange for a muralist, Richard Tetrault, to paint a mural on the Mel Edwards Centre in Centennial Park. They are also commission a family grouping of bronze statues in front of the museum to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the station and the pier, as well as starting the process to paint a mural on one of the City's retaining walls.

Finally, they will be instrumental in providing some public art for the new Johnston road sidewalks such as mosaics and a sculpture garden to enhance the natural beauty of the centre street linear park.

B. Johnston Road Task Force

As you know, Johnston Road from North Bluff to Thrift is in need of a major overhaul. The sidewalks are abysmal & the traffic is getting worse. It has, in areas become unsafe, and is a source of concern for ICBC. Councillor Al Campbell has been asked to lead the Johnston Road reconstruction task force up to the end of the design phase.

We want to completely overhaul and beautify the street to make it something truly special.

To accomplish that, Councillor Al Campbell will be working with the engineers, planners, members of the public, business owners, the BIA, and artists to come up with a design we can all be proud of, and really makes a statement.

C. Centre Street Road Allowance improvement Task Force

We have long talked about improving the unopened road allowances that form corridors down the hillsides to the waterfront. A lack of a plan and funding has proven to be stumbling blocks.

Now, there is the possibility of getting some community amenity money from developers as well as senior government grants so the money aspect could possibly be covered.

Councillor Helen Fathers is leading a task force to prepare a plan for the Centre Street Road allowance. Except for some stairs and an old asphalt path built 40 or 50 years ago, it is undeveloped and under-utilized.

It represents a great opportunity for a linear park, possibly community gardens, and a spectacular pedestrian walkway to the beach. Councillor Father's task is to prepare the plans assisted by staff, consultants, and selected members of the public that is acceptable to the neighbourhood and the public in general. So that when the funds become available, we are shovel ready - ready to go instantly.



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D. Rail safety and dangerous goods task force

Rail safety and dangerous goods are issues that have really come to the forefront in this term of office.

The controversy over coal trains started it off. Then the Lac Megantic disaster as well as subsequent rail derailments that demonstrated the myth of rail safety wasn't quite as solid as we thought. There was a recent derailment in the past week. Finally, we had the tragic death of Anita Lewis.

Councillor Grant Meyer is leading this task force which is looking at how we deal with the safety requirements of Transport Canada instigated in response to Anita Lewis' accident, as well as working towards removing all dangerous goods (including coal) from our waterfront.

In this regard, we have sent a letter to the Minister of Transportation asking that action be taken to reroute the dangerous goods.

It is not a case of if an accident will happen – it is a case of when it will happen.

E. East beach promenade enhancement task force

Councillor Bill Lawrence is heading up a task force to prepare a plan to enhance the waterfront promenade starting with the e. Beach. The purpose is twofold:

- beautify the waterfront
- climate change proof it

East Beach currently suffers from the winter storms and rising sea levels will only make it worse.

We want to raise the level of the promenade and provide some spectacular year round attractions such as the whale sculpture, the all abilities playground, and activity areas.

Councillor Lawrence's team will look at preparing the engineering plans, getting the cost estimates, and obtaining the necessary approvals so that when the money is available we are ready to go.

The money could be from a number of sources including government grants, fundraising, private donors, developers' contributions, and city reserves (not taxes).

We do not want to miss out on a funding opportunity because we don't have our act together.

What does the future look like for White Rock?

White rock is in the process of transitioning from being a very good community to a great community.

What makes a good community great? There are a number of factors?

- location and geography
- community services and amenities
- economic viability
- a vibrant cultural and artistic environment
- people

White Rock has a huge advantage in terms of location and climate. We are certainly one of the best in Canada.

We want to use that advantage wisely in order to improve our economic viability through continued investment. In this regard there are a limited number of opportunities left for us – we must use these opportunities wisely.

The city has committed to revitalize the annual spirit of the sea festival and has undertaken to promote and encourage other special events such as:

- International Artist Day Gala
- Moon Festival
- RCMP Musical Ride
- And I'm pleased to announce the upcoming snowbirds airshow on August 6

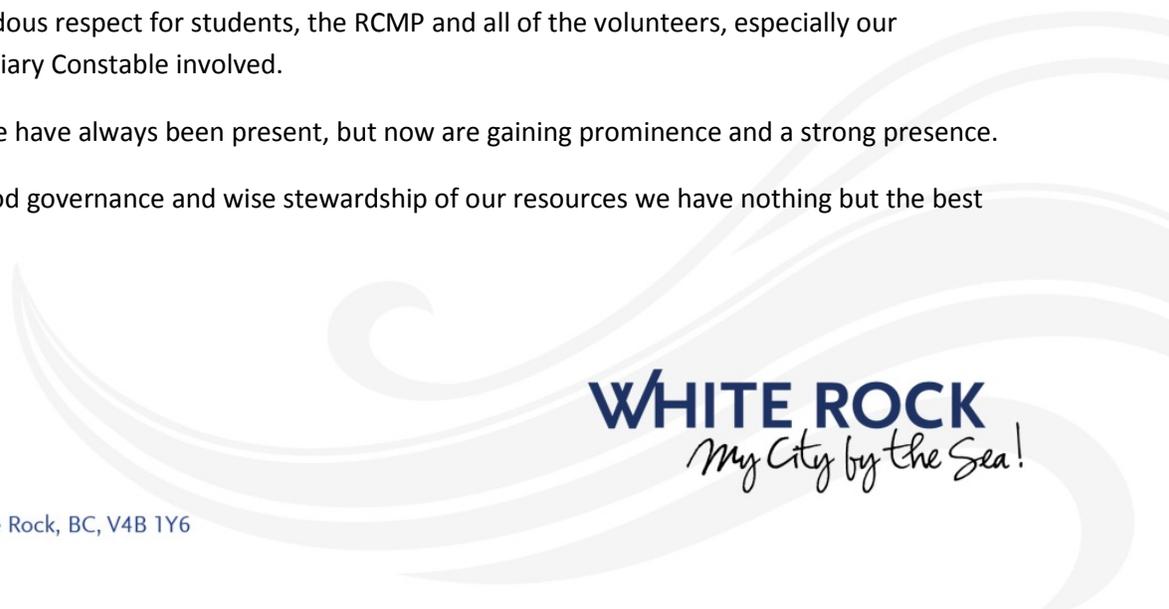
Our community services are exceptional and we really value and respect our employees and their contributions to the city and our residents.

Our protective services are second to none. We have our own hospital, and excellent health care which many communities do not have.

Our schools are superb. For example, I recently spoke at DARE program graduation. It was a wonderful scene with tremendous respect for students, the RCMP and all of the volunteers, especially our Constable and auxiliary Constable involved.

Our arts and culture have always been present, but now are gaining prominence and a strong presence.

With continued good governance and wise stewardship of our resources we have nothing but the best ahead of us.



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The people who contribute to this community in a meaningful way are absolutely amazing.

Let me share with you some numbers of community volunteers. This is just a sample, there are far more out there who are not listed.

- Peace Arch Hospital Auxiliary - 370
- Tour de White Rock - 200+
- White Rock Community Policing - 33
- Meals on Wheels - 68
- Sources/White Rock South Surrey Food Bank - 200
- Peninsula Productions - 75
- White Rock museum and archives - 35
- White Rock tourism - 45
- Semiahmoo Arts – 100

From the sample, there are approximately 1100 volunteers. These volunteers, and all the others I have not listed, and that would include the Chamber of Commerce, the service clubs like rotary and lions, and all the youth sports clubs, truly make our community great.

Collectively, we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for all they do.

You know, we have always said that the beach and the promenade are the jewels of white rock. Over the years, I have come to realize that it is really the people of white rock that are the jewels. Everything else is just the setting.

So, in summary, what do I see ahead?

Well, there are some challenges for sure.

But regardless, what I see is so bright and full of promise that i am happy just to be a part of it.

On behalf of council, I want to thank you and all the voters in white rock for giving us the privilege of being your elected council for the past two and a half years.

Thank you for coming tonight, and for your attention and support.