



## **FONVCA AGENDA** **THURSDAY June 15<sup>th</sup> 2006**

**Place:** DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6

**Time:** 7:00-9:00pm

**Chair:** Cathy Adams – Lions Gate

Neighbourhood Assoc. Tel: 604-987-8695

Email: cathyadams@canada.com

### **1. Order/content of Agenda**

### **2. Adoption of Minutes of May 18<sup>th</sup>**

### **3. Old Business**

**3.1 BC Rail Lands – next chapter..**

### **4. Correspondence Issues**

**4.1 Business arising from 3 regular emails:**

**4.2 Non-Posted letters**

0 this period.

**4.3 FONVCA Correspondence**

- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

Magazine – costs – Brian to report

### **5. New Business**

**Council and other District issues.**

#### **5.1 Dialogue with Recreation Commission**

Gary Houg and Leslie June

- Needs assessment and ageing facilities.

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/jun2006/rec-com-invite.pdf>

#### **5.2 Parking and Loading Requirements**

Public Hearing Tue June 20 on revised parking and loading requirements.

[http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Council\\_PH/ph060620.htm](http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Council_PH/ph060620.htm)

#### **5.3 Residential Taxes increase**

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/jun2006/taxes.pdf>

-the real story by Corrie Kost

-see also A6 Sun -June 3/2006

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/jun2006/taxes-sun.pdf>

#### **5.4 Risks – Ottawa Citizen article**

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/jun2006/risks.pdf>

Balance not bans – Corrie Kost

#### **5.5 Latest FONVCA Membership List**

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/jun2006/members.pdf>

### **6. Any Other Business**

#### **6.1 Legal Issues:**

**Council Meetings held outside of municipal boundaries:**

<http://www.sms.bc.ca/logo/2006/spring/spring2006-4.html>

Rationale sound but open to abuse! Legislation is far too permissive – Corrie Kost

**Municipal Sign Bylaw upheld:**

<http://www.sms.bc.ca/logo/2006/spring/spring2006-2.html>

Commercial “expressions” deemed low on freedom of expression scale – and thus a demonstrably justified restriction under Section 1 of Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

### **7. Chair & Date of next meeting.**

**July 20<sup>th</sup> 2006**

Attachments

**ONLY NEW ENTRIES**

OUTSTANDING COUNCIL ITEMS

-Cat Regulation Bylaw

-Review of Zoning Bylaw

-Securing of vehicle load bylaw

-District-wide OCP

-Snow removal for single family homes bylaw

**Correspondence/Subject Ordered by Date**  
**15 May 2006 → 11 June 2006**

LINK	SUBJECT
<a href="http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/Barbara_Murray_21may2006.pdf">http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/Barbara_Murray_21may2006.pdf</a>	Bears
<a href="http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/John_Fair_18may2006.pdf">http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/John_Fair_18may2006.pdf</a>	Bicycling
<a href="http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/Noreen_Brox_8jun2006.pdf">http://www.fonvca.org/letters/2006/15may-to/Noreen_Brox_8jun2006.pdf</a>	Capilano Suspension Bridge

For details/history see

<http://www.fonvca.org/letters/index-letters-total-jun2006.html>

# FONVCA

## Minutes of May 18<sup>th</sup> 2006

### Attendees:

Brian Platts(Chair Pro-Tem)	Edgemont C.A.
Maureen Bragg	Save Our Shores
Diana Belhouse	Delbrook C.A.
Lisa Thon	Upper Lynn R.A.
Hugh Murray	Lower Cap. C.R.A.
Corrie Kost	Edgemont C.A.
Dan Ellis(Notetaker)	Lynn Valley C.A.
Fred Gooch	BlueRidge C.A.
Knud Hille	Norgate Park C.A.
Cathy Adams	Lions Gate N.A. (9pm)

Meeting started: 7:10pm

## 1. ORDER/CONTENT OF AGENDA

Add: 6.2 Save Our Shores - annual walk – July 9<sup>th</sup>  
6.3 Vancouver Coastal Health Newsletter  
6.4 588 Elstree Pl.

## 2. ADOPTION of Apr 20<sup>th</sup> MINUTES

Approved as circulated (specific comments on the Shirtsleeve meeting with council were edited to meet the “off the record” protocol for such meetings)

## 3. OLD BUSINESS

### 3.1 Commercial Dog Walking in Parks

- yet to be adopted – allowing 6 “off-leash” for commercial dog walkers (private residents limited to 3 dogs).
- Parks not zoned for commercial use, but council/staff felt this is just a “regulation” of an activity. Bylaw 7534 (see Council Minutes of April 24/2006) has passed 3<sup>rd</sup> reading.
- Be allowed only on parts of: 1. Baden Powell Trail, 2. Parts of BC Hydro right of way, 3. Parts of Lower Lynn Canyon Park, and 4. Parts of Inter-River Park. See Schedule A – page 23J of Council package of April 24/2006 for details.
- Concerns were expressed as to recourse for incidents involving dogs in these circumstances. Consensus opinion is that the **District has a legal obligation** if foreseeable problems are not properly regulated.

## 4. CORRESPONDENCE ISSUES

### 4.1 Business arising from 12 regular emails

Strong concerns were expressed about the appearance and lack of upkeep of medians and gateway interchanges: Capilano Rd median and Lynn Valley interchange were particularly noted. Individual community associations are urged to pursue this with MLAs/Translink/DNV.

### 4.2 Non-posted letters: 0 this period.

No discussion.

### 4.3 FONVCA Letters:

Letter to council re: shirtsleeves meeting:

[http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/may2006/Brian\\_Platts\\_14\\_may2006.pdf](http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/may2006/Brian_Platts_14_may2006.pdf)

Letter to Rec. Commission re: invite to FONVCA meeting.

[http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/may2006/Brian\\_Platts\\_14\\_may2006b.pdf](http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/may2006/Brian_Platts_14_may2006b.pdf)

Above were sent as per previous FONVCA meeting.

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

### 5.1 \$5.5m taken from Heritage Fund

Monday April 24<sup>th</sup> council approved “2006 Heritage Fund Appropriation Bylaw No.1” – see page 22E of council package. \$4.8m going to LVLTC. No indication was given by council on if/when this would be repaid.

### 5.2 Residential Tax Increase: 4.75%

(The above was erroneously reported as 4.95%) Discussion took place of residential / commercial / industrial rates, assessments, impact of ownership change on tenancy (return on recent investment vs. long-past investment)

### 5.3 Municipal Reporting Requirements

As outlined in

[http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/Local\\_Content/Manuals/4615.pdf](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/Local_Content/Manuals/4615.pdf)

The 2006 reporting requirements are quite stringent and MUST meet the June 30 deadline (with public having adequate notice and involvement beforehand so that the document could be revised before going to Ministry. Corrie to contact James Ridge as to prospect for compliance this year. **ACTION ITEM**

purpose, strategy, and consideration of cost effective alternatives (eg WEB posting with email notification).

**ACTION ITEM**

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 6.1 Legal Issues

#### Municipal Campaign Expenses

The following references were distributed:

Vancouver:

<http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/election2005/profiles.htm>

<http://www.oipcbc.org/orders/2004/Order04-01.pdf> by David

Loukidelis, Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC

BC

<http://thetyee.ca/Views/2005/08/24/BuyMayor/>

<http://thetyee.ca/News/2005/11/17/CandidatesAgree/>

Ontario:

<http://www.blakes.com/pdf/ElectionFinance0903.pdf>

[http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts\\_1\\_8570\\_1.html](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_8570_1.html)

(note that contributions after elections are not allowed in Ontario)

Saskatoon:

[http://www.saskatoon.ca/org/clerks\\_office/elections/disclosure/index.asp](http://www.saskatoon.ca/org/clerks_office/elections/disclosure/index.asp)

Edmonton:

<http://www.edmonton.ca/bylaws/C10407.DOC>

It was noted that a waiver is required in DNV for all those wishing to read this “public” document. No copies are permitted to be made. Notetaking is permitted. Policies in rest of Canada are much more open – and some post the information on their government web site (Vancouver does – but blanks out names).

Discussion generally supported more open disclosure and lower limits on donations as per Federal rules. It appears that DNV could even post the complete (with names) information on their web site - as there is no legislation forbidding such. Corrie stated that Council members must be given a hard copy.

### 6.2 Save-Our-Shores Annual Walk July 9<sup>th</sup>

Starts at 9:30AM at Cates Park – finishing at Panorama Park. 435 attended last year. Improvements in return shuttle arrangements are being pursued.

### 6.3 Vancouver Coastal Health Authority Magazine

All associations receive a hard copy of this magazine. It looks largely promotional in nature. Concerns were expressed about costs and benefits.

Given that this is a taxpayer funded magazine, Brian to correspond with VCHA Kathleen Butler as to costs,

### 6.4 588 Elstree Place

Last year, this property was the beneficiary of a piece of public parkland at what some felt was a low price - \$17,000 – others putting a value of \$50,000 on it. The adjacent parkland was subsequently put through a dedication process making it almost impossible that this could happen today. The property was recently put up for sale at \$1,390,000.

### 6.5 Street-End dedication on Waterfront

The 6 lot residential subdivision near shipyard was discussed. It will have waterfront access.

### 6.6 NVTAC – Cathy Adams reported on NS Bus Depot – option on BCRail lands has expired so Translink is looking at other options.

## 7. CHAIR AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting on the usual 3rd Thursday of month:

**June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006.**

Pro-tem Chair will be **Cathy Adams** – Lions Gate Neighbourhood Association Tel: 604-997-8695

Meeting adjourned ~ 9:30pm

**FONVCA June 10/2006**  
**RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH VANCOUVER**

2012 Dollarton Hwy V7H 1A4  
Area: E. International College S. Dollarton Hwy  
W. Seymour River N. Seymour Parkway

**(\*)Blueridge Community Association (+SHRA)**  
**Eric Andersen**.....929-6849 BFAX:736-7797  
2589 Derbyshire Way N.Van. V7H 1P9  
Ms Angela Trudeau (co-chair).929-4367 FAX:929-7441  
2590 Derbyshire Way, N.Van V7H 1P8  
Area: E. Northlands. S. Mt Seymour Pkwy  
W. Riverside. N. Berkley

**Deep Cove Community Association**  
**Wynn Wright**.....929-7004 FAX:684-2769  
2525 Panorama Dr. N. Van. V7G 1V4  
Area: W. Lima&Cliffwood. N. Panorama Dr.  
S. Mt Seymour Pkwy E. Indian Arm

**Delbrook Community Association (low-active)**  
**Diana Belhouse**.....987-1656  
580 Granada Crescent, V7N3A8  
Area: W. Mosquito Cr. N. Mt Royal  
E. Mahon S. Queens

**(\*)Edgemont Community Association**  
**Brian Platts (COUNCIL AGENDA)**...985-5104 FAX:988-5594  
**bpatts@shaw.ca** 3187 Beverly Cr. V7R2W4  
**Corrie Kost (V.P.)**.....988-6615 CELL:604-790-6615  
**kost@triumf.ca or corrie@kost.ca** 2851 Colwood Dr. V7R 2R3  
Area: W. Capilano S. Upper Levels Hwy  
E. Mosquito Creek N. Grouse Mt.

**Grousewoods Residents Association**  
**Lorraine Jamieson (Pres.)**... 604-988-5712  
Jamieson\_Lorraine@hotmail.com  
710 East 10th Street N. Vancouver, V7L 2G1  
Area: Grouse Woods (especially near Cleveland Dam)

**Hillcrest Avenue Community Association**  
Ms Nancy Heffring, Chair ....604-988-8924  
email: **jimja@direct.ca**  
4011 Hillcrest AvenueNorth Vancouver, BCV7R 4B7(T)

**Indian Arm Ratepayers Association**  
**Det Schmidt (Pres.)**.....Res:469-7164/684-7130  
#1 March Road, Anmore,B.C. V3H4Z4 469-9575(B)469-9428F  
Area: S. Roche Pt. N. Indian River  
Indian Arm Waterfront

**Keith Lynn / Brooksbank Community Association**  
**Ian Abercrombie (Pres.)**...604-988-5712  
710 E 10th V7L 2G1 **aber@telus.net or ciaber@shaw.ca**  
Area: W. Sutherland. N. 14th St.  
S. Keith E. Upper levels hwy

**Lions Gate Neighbourhood Association**  
**Cathy Adams (Pres.)**.....987-8695 FAX:987-1100  
2037 McLallen Crt. N. Van. V7P 3H6 **cathyadams@canada.com**  
Val Moller 926-8063  
Area: W. West Vancouver N. Upper Levels Hwy.  
E. Cap. Rd. S. Marine Drive  
Includes Woodcroft & Klahanie areas

**(\*)Lower Capilano Residents Association**  
**Hugh Murray**.....987-4240  
**hughmurray@shaw.ca** 1749 Bowser Ave. N. Van. V7P 2Y6  
**John Miller (Pres.)**.....985-8594 FAX: 528-3174  
**john\_miller@ultranet.ca** 1666 Tatlow Ave. N. Van. V7P 2Z9  
Area: W. Capilano N. Capilano Heights  
E. Bridgeman S. Marine Drive

**(\*)Lynnmour & Inter-River Community Association**  
**Ms. Pat Neufeld (Pres.)**..980-2036 FAX:NONE -use mail  
807 Old lillooet Rd. N. Van. V7J 2H6  
Mr. John Fair ..... 604-986-9220  
1980 Purcell Way, N. Van. V7J 3K3  
Mr. Reg Bryant ... 604-980-4141  
1131 Lillooet Rd. N. Van. V7J 3H7  
Area: S: Burrard Inlet N: GVRD  
W to E: Lynn to Seymour Creeks

**(\*)Lynn Valley Community Association**  
**Dan Ellis** .(604)985-7880 Bus:(604)592-7910 pgr 801-3775  
**ellis7880@shaw.ca** 1488 Ross Road, N. Van. V7J 1V2  
**Maureen Bragg (Pres.)**.(604) 985-7272 **m.bragg@shaw.ca**  
1846 Draycott Rd. N. Vancouver V7J 1W7  
Area: W. William. S. Upper Levels Hwy.  
E. Lynn Creek N. GVRD

**(\*)Maplewood Community Association**  
**Tom Young**.....929-3108 FAX:925-8160

**Mt. Seymour Parkway Community Association**  
**Brent Mayall (Chair)**.....929-1195 FAX:903-9056  
3344 Mount Seymour Parkway, N. Van. V7H 1G3  
bmayall@direct.ca

**(\*)Norgate Park Community Association**  
**David Knee**.....980-3863  
**pairofknees@telus.net** 1225 Alderwood Pl. N. Van. V7P 1K2  
Area: W: Reserve. N:Marine Drive  
S: Welch E: Pemberton

**North Vancouver City&District Boundary Ratepayers**  
**James Glassford**.....985-3550  
405 East 29th St. N. Van. V7N 1E2  
Area: E: Fromme S: Upper Levels Hwy.

**Panorama Drive Ratepayers**  
**Tom Hodson** ...604-929-4707 kowarsky@smartt.com

**(\*)Pemberton Heights Community Association**  
**Herman Mah** ... 604-985-8597 (**hermanmah@shaw.ca**)  
1252 West 21st St. N. Van. V7P 2C9  
Mr. Colin Metcalfe, President **cejm@shaw.ca** 604-980-9025  
1970 Pemberton AvenueNorth Vancouver, BC V7P 2S8  
Area: W: Capilano River S: Keith Embankment  
E: Mackay Creek N: Upper Levels Hwy

**Queensdale Ratepayers Association**  
**Mr. Dick Brighton (Chair)**...(604) 986-2942  
245 East Windsor Rd. N. Van. V7N 1K2  
Area: N: Carisbrooke E: St. Andrews  
S: 29th St W: Lonsdale Ave.

**(\*)Save Our Shores**  
**Maureen Bragg** ...985-7272 985-7272(FAX) **m.bragg@shaw.ca**  
1846 Draycott Rd. N. Van. V7J 1W7  
Kevin Bell - 604-980-9085  
1302 Sunnyside Dr. N. Vancouver V7R 1B1  
Area: DNV Waterfront

**(\*)Seymour Community Association**  
Ms.Del Kristalovich, Chair ... (604) 985-0748  
clarity2001@shaw.ca  
790 Plymouth Drive, N. Vancouver V7H 2H7  
Bill Tracey...929-4122 **bill\_tracey@telus.net**  
**Jean Thompson**.....929-6305 **bandi\_hodgson@telus.net**  
3865 Brookton Cr, N. Van. V7G2B4  
Area W. Apex. S. Dollarton  
N. Seymour Park E. Indian Arm

**(\*)Seymour Valley Community Association**  
**Ray Burns**....(604)929-8088 257-7391(FAX) **rburns@direct.ca**  
847 Riverside Drive, N. Van. V7H 1V6  
**Bill Maurer (Chair)**...(604)-929-9442 **billm@millsoft.ca**  
2403 Riverside Dr. N. Van. V7H 1V8  
Area: Lynn Valley

**(\*)Strathcona Community Association**  
Ms. Chris Sallis, Chair, Tel: 604-9298757 csallis@vcc.ca  
1009 Kinloch Lane, N. Vancouver V7G 1V8

**Sunset Garden Neighbourhood Association**  
**Kitty Castle** 4139 Sunset Blvd V7R 3Y7...980-9464(&FAX)  
**kcastle@shaw.ca**  
**Harry Kirwin (Chair)** 4031 Sunset Blv V7R 3Y6 986-1189

**Treelynn Residents Association**  
Greg Fowler 2591 Fromme Rd. V7J 3K5 ... (604)986-5173

**Upper Delbrook Community Association**  
Ron Clevan 411 Ventura Cr. N. Van. V7N 3G8...986-5563  
**Al Casselman** 4511 Prospect Rd. N. Van...980-3989(&FAX)  
Area: Delbrook North of Montroyal. V7N 3L8

**Woodlands Sunshine Ratepayers Association**  
Jim Best.....(604) 929-5119  
5525 Indian River Dr. N. Van. V7G 1L3  
Area: W: Indian River Dr N: Sunshine  
S: Woodlands E: Indian Arm.

=====  
**(+SHRA)**Previously known as Seymour Heights Ratepayers Association  
**Note:** Regular Contact(s) are Underlined  
Presidents are **Bolded**. Unless noted 604 is area tel code  
**(\*) - Officially Registered with District Hall**  
**BFAX:**Please supplement with call to regular number  
Current FONVCA contact address is  
CORRIE KOST, 2851 COLWOOD Dr. N.VAN. V7R 2R3 tel: 604-988-6615

## Consumers have to weigh risks against advantages

The Ottawa Citizen

*Thursday, June 08, 2006*

Modern science, filtered through industry, agriculture and the products we buy, fills our world with chemicals. It's modern science that permits us to know how many of those chemicals have taken up residence in our bodies. That number can be useful, but it only has meaning in context.

Manganese, for example, is a naturally occurring substance. In small amounts, it's a nutrient. In large amounts, it's a toxin. We make negative assumptions about the word "chemical" and positive assumptions about the word "organic," which may mislead our perceptions of the harmfulness or the benign nature of a certain compound.

Even some scarier chemicals can be present in small amounts in our bodies without posing a health risk. A report released last week by a group called Environmental Defence emphasizes the number of chemicals found in our bodies, but for a proper reading of the dangers these chemicals pose to our health, it's really the levels at which they are present that matter most.

Of course, what's deemed safe for any chemical can change with new research, so some people try to avoid all exposure to toxic substances. Also, some chemicals are not dangerous with a single small exposure, but they build up in our bodies over time. Some, such as DDT and PCBs, are so persistent that they've show up in children born some time after the substances were banned. And speaking of children, the Environmental Defence report showed that children have higher concentrations of some chemicals than their parents, owing in part to their smaller bodies.

So what do we do with this information?

Helpless denial is one possibility -- to say that because it's impossible to live in modern society without exposure to some toxic substances, we shouldn't bother trying. Paranoia is another -- to say that because any chemical might be linked to any number of diseases, we need far-reaching bans.

The middle course is best. Government, industry and private researchers should continue to test all products rigorously. Anything that presents a proven risk should be removed from products or at least clearly labelled, and consumers should be educated about proper use.

As a general principle, consumers should be able to exercise their own common sense and make their own choices. Is it likely that a long-lasting nail polish, headache-inducing bathroom cleaner, powerful weed killer or non-stick pan doesn't have any chemical in it that might enter your body? If it does, is that a risk you're willing to take? Are there safer alternatives? What are the trade-offs?

The more knowledge we have as citizens and consumers, the better equipped we will be to answer those questions. The trick is to find a right balance, without forgetting that what we put into the world, we put into ourselves.

**Subject:** [Fwd: DNV Municipal Tax increases]

**From:** Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

**Date:** Sun, 11 Jun 2006 21:22:50 -0700

**To:** fonvca@fonvca.org

**CC:** corrie@kost.ca

Please add the following as a FONVCA agenda item.  
There has been no response received by June 11/2006

Corrie Kost

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

Subject: DNV Municipal Tax increases

Date: Tue, 30 May 2006 21:11:40 -0700

From: Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

To: [council@dnv.org](mailto:council@dnv.org), Janice Harris <jharris@dnv.org>, Lisa Muri <lmuri@dnv.org>, Alan Nixon <anixon@dnv.org>, Richard Walton <rwalton@dnv.org>, Robin Hicks <rhicks@dnv.org>, Mike Little <mlittle@dnv.org>, Doug MacKay-Dunn <dmackay-dunn@dnv.org>  
CC: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>, Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>, Nicole Deveaux <Nicole\_Deveaux@dnv.org>, James Ridge <james\_ridge@dnv.org>

Your Worship & Members of Council,

I received my tax notice today. I am not impressed. The 2006 attached Newsletter states that the increase in AVERAGE municipal taxes was 4.59% over 2005. While the previous year number was correctly stated as 3.64% (\$2,443.85 in 2005 over \$2,357.43 in 2004) the current number of 4.59% is not consistent with \$2,569 in 2006 over \$2,443.85 in 2005, which works out as 5.12%  
Last year we funded 7.53% from our reserves/surpluses to reduce our taxes. This year we funded 16.0% from our reserves/surpluses. I thus conclude that our taxes are underfunded, in a sustainable fashion, by at least (16%-7.53%) 8.5%, and possibly as much as 16%. \* In essence our real tax increase is in the range of 5.12%+8.4%= 13.5% to as much as 5.12%+16%=21.1%\*

I will have more to say on this subject at a later date but we are clearly on an unsustainable path. I look forward to a response which would indicate otherwise.

Also note, that unlike previous years, the Consolidated Financial Plan numbers (eg. total revenue \$122 Million in 2005) have not been provided in the current newsletter.

Your truly,

Corrie Kost  
2851 Colwood Dr.  
North Vancouver

## Homeowners to get hit hard by increases

An estimated 650,000 residential property owners will dig deeper than ever this year

Maurice Bridge

Vancouver Sun

*Saturday, June 03, 2006*

An estimated 650,000 residential property owners around the Lower Mainland will dig deeper than ever this year, with average increases in municipal taxes and utilities ranging from \$30 in Langley City to \$159 in West Vancouver.

In addition, taxpayers will pay varying levies assessed by other bodies for such things as transit, schools and hospitals.

With inflation running at two per cent for B.C. last year, the hike exceeds four per cent at the top end in real terms.

Vancouver experienced the biggest jump at 6.35 per cent, and was followed by North Vancouver City, Richmond and Maple Ridge, all of which recorded a six-per-cent hike or greater.

However, in Vancouver, the politicians who ultimately determine taxation rates were unrepentant.

Coun. Peter Ladner, chairman of the city's finance committee, said Vancouver aims to keep budget increases at the level of inflation, but said voters had indicated they could go higher this year.

The average Vancouver property owner's bill for municipal taxes and utilities rose from \$2,078 in 2005 to \$2,210 this year.

"We went out to the citizens, we had focus groups, surveys and public meetings, and the response we got was that people could tolerate a tax increase above inflation if they were getting better services," Ladner said.

"They value services very highly, and were willing to pay more to get them."

He said much of the increase was created by salary increases for municipal employees, most of them in the two-per-cent range, although police and fire increases average 3.5 per cent.

The increase would have been close to four per cent had council not decided to take some of the tax burden off commercial property owners, Ladner said.

"We shifted some taxes from the non-residential to residential to give our small businesses a break, because they're still getting taxed at a rate six times higher than residences," he said "They screamed for relief and we gave them some.



CREDIT: Ian Lindsay, Vancouver Sun

Wes Hosler is president of the Lore Krill Housing Co-op, which is a beneficiary of Vancouver's property-tax dollars. The co-op provides housing for about 140 people, with some paying market rents and others getting provincial subsidies.



"Without that, it would have been just barely over four per cent."

One of the beneficiaries of the city's spending of its residential property-tax dollars is the Lore Krill Housing Co-op on West Cordova St., which houses about 140 people. Some pay market rents, while others receive provincial subsidies.

President Wes Hosler said the co-op and its members get good value for their taxes.

"The city has a history of supporting co-op housing so I think our relationship with them is quite good," he said.

Hosler said co-op housing units in Vancouver benefits from reasonable leasing rates on the city-owned land they occupy.

"If we didn't get the leases from the city, it's quite doubtful there'd be as many co-ops as there are because the price of land in Vancouver is astronomical, and if we had to buy out the land and build the co-op, it wouldn't be economically viable."

In Richmond, which had an average increase of 6.1 per cent, the big-ticket item was savings for future improvements of the municipal water system, said revenue manager Ivy Wong.

"The property-tax increase was relatively low," she said. "It was the utilities that were high in Richmond. This year, we decided we were going to put [some money] away."

She said the savings are part of a long-term financial plan which was drawn up several years ago. Richmond aims to match the increase in the consumer price index (two per cent) plus one per cent for its annual budget, she added.

However, such arguments did not impress Sara MacIntyre, provincial director of the watchdog Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

"Total municipal revenue in all of B.C. has increased 44 per cent over the past four years," she said. "Local politicians are not adequately adjusting their mill rates to ease the bite of property taxes for homeowners."

"What are we getting for that money? Has there been any increase in your municipal services? No. Year in and year out, it's just a tax-grab by local politicians."

The federation is circulating a petition calling for a property tax cap throughout the province and has more than 1,000 signatures, she said.

She added the CTF has asked the provincial auditor-general to expand the role of that office to conduct value-for-money audits on public projects to see if taxpayers are getting a good deal.

MacIntyre said municipal politicians should be the last line of defence against fiscal mismanagement of public money, but are approaching their task the wrong way.

"They set their wish-list for the year, and then they calculate their tax rate based on meeting their wish-list expenditures," she said. "This does not provide any incentive for fiscal restraint or fiscal responsibility."

She said politicians should determine how much money is available to them, and limit their spending accordingly.

Ralph Forsyth, acting mayor of the resort municipality of Whistler, which has the lowest average tax increase in the Lower Mainland at 2.5 per cent, said councillors there made a point of keeping a tight rein on spending.

"I think it's belt-tightening on the part of our municipal staff, " Forsyth said. "I think a large part of it is our municipality embracing the concept of entrepreneurial government."

He said Whistler's municipal transit system has the highest cost-recovery of any transit system in the province, as does the municipal sports complex.

Demographer and urban futurologist David Baxter noted there is no reason for taxes to go up simply because property values rise or municipal populations expand.

"If you have more people, you have to provide more services, but you also have a bigger tax base because you have more property to tax," he said. "So population growth alone doesn't drive up property taxes.

"It will drive up total expenditure, but it shouldn't drive up expenditure per property."

He said what drives tax increases is a desire for increased public services.

"If we want more cops on the street per capita, we're going to have pay more and that's going to come out of our property tax," he said. "It's purely a political decision."

Although taxpayers can expect to see their taxes rise by the rate of inflation in order to stay even, any amount over that reflects the will of the elected officials. he said.

"Anything above that, the reason is that we, the electorate, have asked our municipality to spend more money on our behalf," he said. "Or we haven't asked them, but they're going to do it anyway."

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### 2006 Lower Mainland Property Taxes

From two per cent in Langley City to 6.4 per cent in Vancouver, everyone will pay more

	Avg. Assessed value (1)	Avg. 2005 tax & util.	Avg. 2006 tax & util.	\$ change	% change
Abbotsford	\$246,000	\$1,455	\$1,535	\$80	5.5%
Burnaby	\$514,000	\$2,056	\$2,112	\$56	2.7%
Chilliwack	\$214,000	\$1,505	\$1,565	\$60	3.9%
Coquitlam	\$380,000	\$1,820	\$1,909	\$89	4.9%
Delta	\$377,000	\$2,070	\$2,170	\$100	4.8%
Langley City	\$237,000	\$1,478	\$1,508	\$30	2.0%
Langley Tshp.	\$341,000	\$1,707	\$1,803	\$96	5.6%
Maple Ridge	\$292,000	\$1,667	\$1,767	\$100	6.0%
Mission	\$273,000	\$1,773	\$1,861	\$88	5.0%
New West.	\$292,000	\$1,862	\$1,958	\$96	5.2%
North Van. City	\$439,000	\$1,520	\$1,614	\$94	6.2%

North Van. Dist \*\$657,000 \$2,444 \$2,569 \$125 5.1%

Avg. Assessed Avg. 2005 Avg. 2006 \$ %

value (1) tax & util. (2) tax & util. change change

Pitt Meadows \$258,000 \$1,538 \$1,605 \$67 4.4%

Port Coquitlam \$346,000 \$2,017 \$2,091 \$74 3.7%

Port Moody \$386,000 \$1,883 \$1,958 \$75 4.0%

Richmond \$367,000 \$1,633 \$1,733 \$100 6.1%

Squamish \$363,000 \$1,692 \$1,768 \$76 4.5%

Surrey \$348,000 \$1,680 \$1,762 \$82 4.9%

Vancouver \$586,000 \$2,078 \$2,210 \$132 6.4%

W. Vancouver \$1,026,000 \$3,376 \$3,535 \$159 4.7%

Whistler \$720,000 \$2,117 \$2,170 \$53 2.5%

White Rock \$383,000 \$1,853 \$1,915 \$62 3.4%

1. Mean assessed value of residential single-family dwellings and residential strata units, rounded to the nearest \$1000.

2. Mean property taxes and utilities, excluding GVRD, school and hospital levies, and homeowner grants, which are outside municipal control. Utilities include water, sewer, drainage, garbage and recycling.

\*Includes single-family dwellings only

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