

Subject: Surrey has the fastest growing rate of drug incidents in Canada

Date: Mon, 22 Mar 2004 16:32:36 -0800

From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <Cagebc@yahoo.com>

CC: "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

A recent story in the Vancouver Province sheds some very interesting light on the social consequences when the philosophy of fast growth takes hold in a municipality. It should be of interest also to the District of North Vancouver Council as well as its staff and the residents of the District.


When it comes to drug incidents, fast growing municipalities are outdistancing slow growing municipalities, such as the District of North Vancouver, by a wide margin. It is no coincidence therefore that the drug incidence rate in the District, with its slow growth rate, should, judging by the statistics, also be the lowest in the region or even the province when it comes to crime. Fast growth municipalities cannot cope with drug problems and subsequent crime as well as slow growth municipalities. West Vancouver may be an exception, for although it boasts some growth, its drug incident rate is one of the highest in the Region. On the whole, however, it seems that slow growth communities are better equipped to handle crime than fast growing communities.

This may have something to do with increased alienation. Surrey does not have the highest drug incident rate. That distinction is reserved for White Rock where it is 866 per hundred thousand of population followed by West Vancouver with 842 and Richmond with 651. Both White Rock and Richmond are fast growing, however. But Surrey with 531 has the fastest growth of drug incident rate in the region it was revealed.

We already know that, in addition to the fastest growing population, Surrey has the highest drug incident rate in Canada. It should, therefore, not come as a surprise that it also has the highest crime rate for the two are obviously closely related. The District of North Vancouver with a mere 179 drug incidents per hundred thousand of population by comparison is the lowest on the totem pole not only in the region but the whole province.

It stands to reason that if the pro development forces in the District had won the day and it was certainly not for lack of trying, the situation would be different today. They came close and have still considerable support both in and out of Council. Community driven development as enunciated in the District Community Plan and a policy supported by the Federation of North Vancouver Community Associations has been the difference, I dare say. As it is, the District, has a mere 179 cases, while in the City of North Van it is 458. This is a dramatic increase in the City of North Van since the increase of high-rises.

It is something Planners, politicians and residents in the District and all those who are thinking of turning the District into another West End or another Surrey or Richmond may wish to think about when the issue of community driven and subsequently sustainable development as opposed to developer driven development rears its head again. As for the perennial affordable housing issue, it has already been exposed for what it is - a hoax which has done nothing either for the community nor for the people who need truly affordable housing.

 winmail.dat	Name: winmail.dat Type: application/ms-tnef Encoding: base64
---	---