

**Subject: RE: Fwd: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003**

**Date:** Mon, 22 Sep 2003 19:26:51 -0700

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "Dan Ellis" <ellis7880@shaw.ca>

**CC:** <eric\_g\_andersen@hotmail.com>, <corrie@kost.ca>, <cagebc@yahoo.com>, "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, <fonvca@fonvca.org>, "Irwin Torry" <Irwin\_Torry@dnv.org>, <cathyadams@canada.com>, <m.bragg@shaw.ca>, <kost@triumf.ca>, ">" <allandorr@shaw.ca>, <bplatts@shaw.ca>, <wrtracey@telus.net>

Dear Dan:

I am sorry you put yourself between myself and the District Council who screwed big time in Lynn Valley albeit it has all the markings of not being accidental and follows a familiar pattern. You know if it walks like a duck and quacks like duck etc. I am certainly not blaming the people who worked hard to produce the plan. Most of them did so in good faith and there has never been any doubt in my mind that you belong to that group.

The first torpedo against the plan was launched when the District agreed to the box stores without asking the owners to play ball in conjunction with the larger Lynn Valley Plan. The second was when the District allowed development to proceed just as soon as the plan was in place without a fiscal and amenity plan being in place. This alone puts the District into the category of a big time loser. To have done so is so preposterous and so dumb as to defy imagination. It is almost as if it had been done deliberately by a master manipulator for political reasons.

You understand, of course that such a scenario is furthest from my mind. As it is, we got the development all right but sans Library, sans civic square and sans community center unless we pay for it. That is the issue and there is no other issue. It is also a fact that there is no Pedestrian Oriented Town Center unless you insist that the civic square is the Town Center instead of being merely its core. What we do have is an enhanced regional car mall. You are also aware no doubt that we are in the hole to the tune of millions of dollars for the cost of a large portion of the infrastructure, regardless of what bureaucrats may tell you.

In any case, the people do have the capacity to learn from past mistakes. I hope that this is the case here which is precisely the reason why I have made such a big deal out of it. You know me, Dan, I am a bad loser.

Subject: Re: Fwd: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003

Ernie:

As Maureen Bragg has passed your e-mail along to me, I'm taking the opportunity to reply.

Your first paragraph reads:

> *Modern Community planning and sustainable growth means in fact no growth*  
> *unless it is truly neighborhood and or community driven and is done for*  
> *the*  
> *sole benefit of enhancing the livability of the local or the larger*  
> *community as expressed by the people of such a community themselves.*

To that I say: "Right On!"

It neatly summarizes exactly what the Lynn Valley OCP has been all about, from 1995 to the present.

There are so many positive aspects to this plan.....that's why so many are enthusiastically in support.

In light of that, I really would like to invite you to sit down privately with some of us who were fully involved

in the OCP process, so we could get on the same page about what the plan really says, and the consensus thinking that underlies the what, when, where, why and how.

I'm not going to re-hash all that's been said to date, except to say that in their zeal, several folks I know have really damaged their credibility in my eyes. Can't say how others have seen it.

If you or those cc'd have any new, factual information to offer that is relevant to this specific project, I'm interested. But Ernie, please spare us the opinions, and the assumptions, as well as the personalization's and innuendos about our naiveté or astuteness, either individually or collectively, that I read in your previous e-mail. We expect better.

I accept there may be cases where elected officials will support their own viewpoint in opposition to the majority of their constituents. However I believe such cases should be the exception, rather than the rule, in a "representative" government. When Council unanimously endorsed the Lynn Valley OCP in 1998, you said, and I quote: "If that's what the people of Lynn Valley say they want, then I support it." We didn't take those words lightly.

Sincerely, Dan

> From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>  
> To: "Eric Andersen" <eric\_g\_andersen@hotmail.com>; <corrie@kost.ca>;  
> <cagebc@yahoo.com>; "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>; "FONVCA  
> (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>; <cagebc@yahoo.com>; "Irwin Torry"  
> <Irwin\_Torry@dnv.org>  
> Cc: <cathyadams@canada.com>; <m.bragg@shaw.ca>; <kost@triumf.ca>;  
> <allandorr@shaw.ca>; <bplatts@shaw.ca>; <wrtracey@telus.net>  
> Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2003 1:15 PM  
> Subject: RE: Fwd: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003  
>  
>  
> My comments;  
>  
> Modern Community planning and sustainable growth means in fact no growth  
> unless it is truly neighborhood and or community driven and is done for  
> the  
> sole benefit of enhancing the livability of the local or the larger  
> community as expressed by the people of such a community themselves.  
>  
> All reasons for growth other than the above are nothing more than  
> propaganda  
> provided free of charge by real estate or developer interests and/or their  
> apologists well meaning or otherwise. Tell me pray other than being in the  
> hole to the tune of millions of dollars for the cost of the infrastructure  
> to accommodate the increased density in Lynn Valley and more cars, what  
> are  
> the benefits that have accrued to the people of Lynn Valley or the  
> District  
> for that matter?  
>  
> I remember a member of the District Planning Staff during the selling of  
> the  
> "Pedestrian Oriented Town Center" and the ensuing propaganda sessions  
> telling the unwilling, the skeptical, the unaware and the naive, that the  
> region will grow whether we like it or not and that we have a  
> responsibility  
> to do our share in accommodating those people. They will come he told them  
> without blushing and we have to be ready. That is the philosophy which was  
> peddled by the architects of the Lynn Valley "Pedestrian Oriented Town  
> center" so called. The developers who have all left liked it. Their  
> spokesmen beat the path to the District Planning Department with their

good

> advice practically wearing out their shoes. But it certainly was not for  
the  
> benefit of the people of Lynn Valley by way of example - and it certainly  
> did not result in reduced taxes.

>  
> Have a nice day.

>  
> Ernie Crist

>  
>  
> -----Original Message-----

> From: Eric Andersen [[mailto:eric\\_g\\_andersen@hotmail.com](mailto:eric_g_andersen@hotmail.com)]  
> Sent: September 17, 2003 7:17 AM  
> To: corrie@kost.ca; cagebc@yahoo.com  
> Cc: Ernie Crist; cathyadams@canada.com; m.bragg@shaw.ca; kost@triumf.ca;  
> allandorr@shaw.ca; bplatts@shaw.ca; wrtracey@telus.net  
> Subject: Re: Fwd: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003

>  
>  
> Not to mention that the population of the NVD also rose in the meantime -  
> another argument deflating the myth that an increased population will  
result  
> in decreased taxes.

>  
> Rgds/Eric

>  
>  
> Eric G. Andersen  
> Home: 604 929 6849  
> Work: 604 694 2857

>  
>  
>  
>  
> From: Corrie Kost <corrie@kost.ca>  
> To: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>  
> CC: "Clr. Crist" <criste@district.north-van.bc.ca>, Cathy Adams  
> <cathyadams@canada.com>, Eric Andersen <eric\_g\_andersen@hotmail.com>,  
> Maureen Bragg <m.bragg@shaw.ca>, Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>, Allan Orr  
> <allandorr@shaw.ca>, Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>, Bill Tracey  
> <wrtracey@telus.net>  
> Subject: Re: Fwd: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003  
> Date: Tue, 16 Sep 2003 22:42:16 -0700

>  
> Want some numbers? Well during the time (say 1992 to 2002) the sewer  
> and water rates were respectively: \$106.10 / \$140.50 (in 1992) to \$227.00  
/  
> \$242 (in 2002)  
> WAY above the inflation rate of 20% and despite an ~15% per capita  
> drop in consumption AND no improvement in water quality. A  
> monumental drop in cost effectiveness.

>  
> Corrie

> Elizabeth James wrote:

>  
> > Some interesting parallels here. The April 22 2003 report of GVWD's  
Paul  
> Archibald, presented to the GVWD  
> > Water Committee on May 13th, contains the following statements - the  
> emphases in blue are mine : "Since  
> > twice-weekly lawn sprinkling regulations were first implemented in

1993,  
> the District [GVWD] has seen a  
> > reduction in per capita average daily demand of about 15%, and per  
capita  
> peak day demand of about 25%. As  
> > a result of this significant decline in demand, it is possible for the  
> District [GVWD] to defer some planned  
> > water supply and transmission system infrastructure. In general, the  
> District has come to rely on the lower  
> > demand achieved as a result of summer period lawn sprinkling  
regulations  
> and is conducting the long-term  
> > planning of the system based on lower per capita demand. All GVWD  
> municipalities enjoy the cost savings.  
> >  
> > COMMENTS [not in any particular order]:  
> >  
> > 1. As is shown by the Quebec experience outlined in John Sewell's  
> newsletter below, the GVWD decisions  
> > will mean that not only will costs and debts continue to climb,  
but  
> we'll also be behind the eight-ball  
> > on infrastructure renewal and upgrade. That can only spell  
> disaster.  
> > 2. GVWD residents may well have achieved a lower per capita demand,  
but  
> the Region has increased the  
> > number of "capitas!" So my guess is that the amount of water being  
> used throughout GVRD has actually  
> > steadily increased over that period of time.  
> > 3. The comment that "all municipalities like the cost savings" is  
> egregious and cynical. Of course,  
> > politicians like it - that way they get to pretend some more that  
> our taxes are not being raised.  
> > Bureaucrats like it 'cos that way they get to move the dollars  
> around and keep their jobs. Citizens -  
> > all except LOCW's that is - may well like it 'cos they like to  
keep  
> their heads in the sand and to  
> > reverse that stance, they might actually have to take some  
> action.....  
> > 4. It is this type of staff report that keeps people like Janice  
Harris  
> happy.....that way she can "learn  
> > a lot on the committee" and, if/when found out, blame it all on  
our  
> "professional" staffs.  
> >  
> > It's enuf to make you f'wow up, it is.  
> >  
> > Liz  
> >  
> > 1. John Sewell <j.sewell@on.aibn.com> wrote:  
> >  
> > From: "John Sewell"  
> > To:  
> > Subject: [Bulletin]Local Government Bulletin No. 39, Sept. 2003  
> > Date: Tue, 16 Sep 2003 09:54:42 -0400  
> >  
> > LOCAL GOVERNMENT BULLETIN - No.39, September 2003<?xml:namespace  
> prefix = o ns =  
> > "<urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office>" />  
> >  
> > The purpose of this bulletin is to focus debate on the need to  
> increase local self-government in

> > Canada and to help local communities achieve more autonomy. The local  
> self-government web site is  
> > <http://www.localgovernment.ca>  
> >  
> > In this issue  
> >  
> > \*\*\*\*\*  
> >  
> > 1. The financial crunch for Quebec municipalities  
> >  
> > 2. Buffalo falls into trusteeship  
> >  
> > 3. Local government and the Ontario election.  
> >  
> > 4. Subscribe to the Bulletin  
> >  
> > \*\*\*\*\*  
> >  
> > 1. The financial crunch for Quebec municipalities  
> >  
> > The latest evidence of the dire financial status of many local  
> governments in Canada comes from  
> > Quebec. A new study concludes that the only way local governments  
in  
> Quebec have been able to  
> > control expenditures in the last decade, is by not maintaining  
> infrastructure. Even having taken  
> > that risk to control spending, debt loads have still increased.  
Debt  
> appears ready to continue  
> > rising in the next decade, and municipalities face the prospect of  
> incurring operating deficits as  
> > well.  
> >  
> > The study was done jointly by the Union des Municipalities du  
Quebec  
> and the Conference Board of  
> > Canada, and was released in May 2003. The conclusions are not much  
of  
> a surprise but the data is  
> > very telling in its conclusions.  
> >  
> > The study notes that revenues of the provincial and federal  
> governments have increased at double  
> > the rate revenues have increased for local governments in Quebec  
> during the last decade. Taxable  
> > property values have grown less each year on average than the  
Gross  
> Domestic Product, and non  
> > residential property values - particularly industrial properties -  
> will continue to be less  
> > helpful in generating revenue as the knowledge economy replaces  
> industrial activity. Thus  
> > traditional revenue sources are not capable of meeting financial  
> obligations.  
> >  
> > The Montreal urban area experiences these problems, as do six  
other  
> major centres in Quebec, but  
> > the biggest negative impact is seen in smaller communities. As  
noted  
> in Bulletin 38, this trend is  
> > seen throughout Canada.  
> >

> > At the same time these financial pressures are occurring,  
municipal  
> roles and responsibilities are  
> > growing, and there are added costs for police, transit, affordable  
> housing, waste and water. The  
> > problem is finding the extra money required to meet needs.  
> >  
> > The study runs through the gamut of possible financial changes,  
such  
> as municipalities getting a  
> > share of sales tax, GST, provincial and federal income tax,  
> provincial and federal corporate tax,  
> > fuel tax and vehicle registration. Unless very sizeable chunks of  
> these taxes are available- that  
> > would require redirecting revenue away from the provincial  
> government - municipalities will  
> > continue to face pressures.  
> >  
> > The report concludes: "These findings are important because they  
> show that there is no longer any  
> > room to manoeuvre. Thus, unless municipalities slash the services  
> they provide their populations  
> > and continue to neglect their infrastructures, they absolutely  
must  
> consider ways of obtaining  
> > additional fiscal revenues. Although it may seem that a property  
tax  
> hike is one solution, we have  
> > to remember that the Quebec taxpayers' tax burden is already quite  
> high. Furthermore, the required  
> > increase would have to be slightly more than 40%.  
> >  
> > "This means that other avenues will have to be explored - for  
> example, a tripartite finding  
> > program for infrastructure improvements that involves all levels  
of  
> government. However, this  
> > solution will not be adequate in itself, since even without  
> infrastructure improvements, the  
> > fiscal condition of Quebec municipalities will continue to  
> deteriorate over the next few years. For  
> > that reason, other alternatives, such as the transfer of certain  
> taxation powers to municipalities  
> > will have to be seriously considered."  
> >  
> > The 33 page summary of the study, in English, may be found at the  
> Union des Municipalities du  
> > Quebec website:  
> >  
> >  
>  
<http://www.umq.qc.ca/publications/memoire/pdf/FiscalSituationFINALSummaryRp>  
> t.pdf  
> .  
> >  
> > 2. Buffalo Falls Into Trusteeship  
> >  
> > Buffalo, New York, is not in Canada, but it's a city well known to  
> residents of Ontario. A century  
> > ago it was a very prosperous place, but it is now on the ropes.  
> >  
> > In June, the New York State government passed legislation  
> establishing the Buffalo Fiscal  
> > Stability Authority which has thrown the city into trusteeship.  
The

> new control board (as it's  
> > generally called) must approve any expenditure over \$50,000 and  
all  
> collective agreements.It can  
> > set spending levels, impose hiring and wage freezes and downsize  
the  
> workforce.It is a solution  
> > that has been advanced for Buffalo for many years by the city's  
most  
> influential private sector  
> > groups.The control board has nine members appointed by Governor  
> Pataki, one of which one is  
> > Anthony Masiello, the city's mayor, and another is Joel Giambra,  
the  
> head of the Erie County  
> > Executive Committee, representing the county surrounding the city.  
> >  
> > Buffalo has substantial financial problems, but contrary to the  
> implications of the trusteeship  
> > imposed on it, it is not bankrupt. Since Masiello assumed office a  
> decade ago, the city has often  
> > feared operating deficits, but it has usually managed to find a  
way  
> out and balance revenues and  
> > expenditures. The worst year was 2001/02, largely a result of the  
> terrorist attacks on September  
> > 11, 2001.  
> >  
> > The biggest financial problem is revenue. The city's economic  
> decline has meant a decline in  
> > property values and that, combined with constitutional limits to  
> raise property taxes, means less  
> > money is available from the property tax base. The tax levy has  
> declined from \$142 million in 1993  
> > to \$131 million in 2002.  
> >  
> > Of the funds available, 40 per cent are required to pay for police  
> and fire services, and a  
> > further 32 per cent cover fringe benefit costs for employees and  
> retired employees. The killer in  
> > fringe benefit costs are health insurance costs. In 1993 health  
> insurance costs stood at \$21  
> > million: in 2003 they increased to \$48 million. Lobbying of the  
> State government to reform health  
> > insurance costs have not been successful. Facing these pressures,  
> the city has been forced to  
> > drastically cut back on programs. Mayor Masiello's summary of the  
> problems can be found at  
> > [http://www.city-buffalo.com/document\\_1719\\_178.htm](http://www.city-buffalo.com/document_1719_178.htm) . The reward for  
> facing these problems head-on  
> > is apparently trusteeship.  
> >  
> > Buffalo's financial plight seems to result from the very classic  
> urban/suburban split.The suburbs,  
> > represented by Giambra, have more financial resources than the  
city,  
> including access to the sales  
> > tax which because of a political deal made a decade ago, is not  
> available to the city.On the other  
> > hand the city has all the problems: poverty, a lack of jobs,  
> declining property tax revenue, an  
> > expensive school system, and the handsome contracts for the police  
> and fire personnel. .  
> >  
> > Attempts by city representatives over the last decade to

> rearrangesome of the revenue and  
> > expenditure patterns with the county have not been successful - in  
> fact the county has repulsed  
> > any attempt to share the burden with the city. Just after Labour  
Day  
> Mayor Masiello asked for a  
> > share of the sales tax with the county, that the state government  
in  
> Albany reform the program for  
> > medical insurance, and he suggested further staff cuts. County  
> representatives screamed at any  
> > thought of sharing the sales tax yet, unless some kind of program  
> like this is put in place, it is  
> > estimated that the city's annual deficit could be over \$100  
million  
> within three or four years.  
> >  
> > Some of the most trenchant comments on the situation comes from  
the  
> electronic journal Buffalo  
> > Report (<http://buffaloreport.com>), such as: "The real issue for  
the  
> control board is  
> > philosophical.Is the Board just supposed to control city spending  
> and keep Buffalo in the black,  
> > or is supposed to really do something about the fundamental  
problems  
> of more ways to spend and  
> > fewer ways to raise money?Will it recommend a different split of  
> county sales tax revenue?"  
> >  
> > Bankruptcy and trusteeship is not unknown to municipalities in New  
> York State.The City of New York  
> > faced the problem 30 years ago and is now burdened with a very  
large  
> deficit that is clearly  
> > unsustainable.Other municipalities in New York state have also  
found  
> the same problem.Given the  
> > current hostility of some provincial governments to their  
> municipalities in Canada, similar fates  
> > may befall large municipalities here as well.Buffalo is a  
cautionary  
> tale.  
> >  
> > 3. Local Government and the Ontario Election  
> >  
> > Ontario voters are being offered real choice in the October 2  
> election at least on the subject of  
> > the relationship between the provincial government and local  
> governments.  
> >  
> > The Progressive Conservative Party under Ernie Eves is offering a  
> program entitled "Fair Deal for  
> > Municipalities."Jeffrey Simpson of the Globe and Mail tags the  
name  
> of the program as "Orwellian"  
> > since there's nothing about it that's fair. The proposal of the  
> Tories is to require  
> > municipalities to have a referendum before being permitted to  
raise  
> property taxes, and the  
> > referendum must garner support from half the voters before the  
> increase can be levied. Since less  
> > than 40 per cent of those on the municipal voter's list usually  
> vote, the new rule effectively



> > means that municipalities will never be allowed to increase  
property  
> taxes. Together with the  
> > extraordinary financial restraints imposed on locals government by  
> the Harris/Eves government  
> > since 1995, municipalities would be in a desperate situation.  
> >  
> > In contrast, both Dalton McGuinty's Liberal Party and Howard  
> Hampton's New Democratic Party are  
> > suggesting a return to normalcy in provincial/municipal  
> relationships.Liberal commitments include  
> > changing planning polices to control sprawl; transferring to  
> municipalities 2 cents a litre of the  
> > existing provincial gas tax to be used for public transit;  
matching  
> federal support for new  
> > affordable housing; increasing housing allowances; changing the  
> Ontario Municipal Board to be  
> > fairer to citizens and municipalities; and several other  
matters.The  
> full program may be found at  
> > <http://www.ontarioliberal.com> , and look under policy package 2,  
> 'Strong Communities.'  
> >  
> > Hampton's NDP has a smorgasbord of ideas for urban areas, some of  
> which are similar to the  
> > Liberals, such as the gas tax transfer and stronger controls to  
> prevent sprawl. It may be found at  
> > <http://www.publicpower.ca>  
> >  
> > If by any chance there is a minority government led by the  
Liberals,  
> it seems that the Liberals  
> > and the NDP won't have much problem agreeing on programs to  
> strengthen local government and  
> > address local concerns. If the Tories are re-elected,  
municipalities  
> will be in serious trouble.  
> >  
> > 4. Subscribe to the Bulletin  
> >  
> > The bulletin is sent monthly, at no cost, to about 1500  
individuals  
> involved directly or  
> > indirectly in local government in Canada. Those who receive this  
> Bulletin directly (not forwarded  
> > by a third party) are already part of the subscription list.  
Others  
> who wish to subscribe should  
> > go to <http://www.localgovernment.ca> and follow the instructions.  
To  
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you  
> wish to share with us and  
> > others who visit the web site. Our next Bulletin will be in  
October.  
> >  
> > - end

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> -----  
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