

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

**Date:** Mon, 22 Sep 2003 17:29:55 -0700

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

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

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

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

Hello all:

The sole reason for the District to go to referendum and ask the public to pay for the commercial sector of the civic square is so that the District can lease it and use the income to subsidize operating expenses. This would not be possible if the private sector would put up the money.

The money for the Library itself is already in place. Indeed, if the District really wanted to finance the commercial portion of the civic square, we could do that too - what with the money we have from recent land sales etc., it would be possible. Another option would be to stop subsidizing the City via the Recreation Commission "sieve". Yet another would be to reorganize the Commission along the Parkgate model saving the District millions of dollars annually. The very least we could do is finance the commercial portion of the square jointly with the private sector. The District could put up a portion of the capital. In any case never forget that had we played our fiscal community planning cards right, we could have had the civic square including the Library, at no cost with a real community center to boot - given District reality, an unthinkable scenario at present, I agree.

To understand the motivation for the referendum approach is critical in the understanding of the policies and District objectives. Grasping the extent of the fiscal mismanagement of the last 15 years will also provide an understanding for the referendum rationale. The District is a junkie unwilling to wean itself lose from its present addiction of depending on land sales to cover operating expenses. To get the public to pay for the Civic square including the commercial building is easier to sell since it is going to be combined with the "Library" something the public supports -it is easier to swallow.

It is always important to understand the motivation of a party - in this case the District's fiscal policies and mis-leadership. The first "must do" to "get the picutre" is to shed any illusions about the real intentions of the initiators. Selling land to finance operating expenses can have it's downside especially if it impacts neighborhoods directly, while going to referendum brings the same results which is invisible taxation - an area where the District has considerable experience. In any case to sell land to feed our junkie habit is always an option.

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

From: Bill Tracey [<mailto:wrtracey@telus.net>]

Sent: September 22, 2003 10:56 AM

To: Dan Ellis

Cc: Brian Platts; Allan Orr; Corrie Kost; Maureen Bragg; Eric Andersen;

Cathy Adams; Elizabeth James; Mayor and Council - DNV

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

Hi Dan,

Your well-presented clarification of several points is helpful, and I thank you and respect you for that.

To provide some clarification of my own, I would like you and others to understand that I am not opposed to the Lynn Valley OCP, nor to the proper implementation of it. I am not, in principle,

opposed to the library replacement, nor to the development of the town centre concept -- both can be good things, if done carefully and without pressure.

What I am opposed to is the concept of the District getting into the commercial real estate business -- or any other business, for that matter, that is more properly handled by the private sector. My attitude can be summed up in one phrase "If you can find more than one private company in the Yellow Pages that is in this business, the District should not be doing it"


The District (nor most other municipal governments, for that matter) does not have a good record for performing projects of this magnitude on time or on budget (if we're talking about the budget presented before the projects started, not the budget amended as the projects progressed). I have seen nothing to make me feel comfortable that this project would be any different. Nor have I seen any justifiable explanation for the inability to involve a private partner in building at least the commercial side of the project.

And finally, because this is to be paid for by all District residents (whether it amounts to an extra \$11/year or \$110/year in taxes), and because this is not the same project that was approved in the earlier referendum re a library, I believe there is a moral responsibility on those involved to take it to the public in a referendum. If there really is a good case for this project (and there very well may be) and it is presented properly, then it should have no trouble passing in a referendum. With proper disclosure of information that might make me feel comfortable with the project I might vote for it in a referendum -- but if it goes the counter-petition route I'll fight it tooth and nail just on the moral principle that it should not be done that way. And Council should be concerned that many others will feel the same way.

The air of secrecy and the hurry to ram this through at District Hall is scary. "Why is there never time to do it right, but always time to do it over?" You've said the LV OCP looked out to 2025 -- what's the rush now? Please take the time to enlighten the rest of us who haven't been involved in Lynn Valley planning over the many years, so we can support you rather than oppose you.

Regards,  
Bill

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