

**Subject: ANOTHER BOONDOGGLE IN THE MAKING - A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST.**

**Date:** Sat, 6 Aug 2005 13:28:59 -0700

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

**To:** <fonvca@fonvca.org>

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

On Monday July 11, 2005, the District Clerk sent the following letter to Ms Heather Baker, North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. "This is to confirm that on Monday, July 11, 2005, the Council of the District of North Vancouver received your presentation regarding the NORTH VANCOUVER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - NORTH SHORE TOURISM NEW INITIATIVE. Council subsequently passed the following resolution: That

1. The delegation of Ms Heather Baker, Chair, North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, and Ms. Nancy Stibbard, member of North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, regarding the NORTH SHORE TOURISM NEW INITIATIVE be received; and
2. this issue be referred to staff for a report back to Council commenting on the proposals and the funding requests. Accordingly, we'll be in touch with you when the staff report in this regard is available".

The promotion of tourism on the North Shore, as everywhere else in the world, is closely intertwined with support for the Arts and Culture plus the natural environment. That Vancouver and especially the North Shore is ideal tourist country is no secret. We are endowed with one of the most beautiful surroundings in the world. We are sitting on a gold mine. Indeed these are the very words I used 30 years ago when I first became involved in the political arena on the North Shore.

Countries like Austria, who have taken advantage of their surroundings and have combined it with their cultural and historical heritage, have one of the highest standards of living in the world. Austria, with a population of only 8 million inhabitants, has over 200 million tourists a year. The secret of the success of tourism in Austria is culture, the arts, music, sports festivals, and a dedication to cleanliness and friendliness. There is much to see and do and the people who come stay, which is where the money is. It is not being made by people coming and leaving on the same day as is the case on the North Shore but by people staying. They will do that if it is worth their while. The beautiful natural scenery in itself is not the key to success although it helps.

The history in the struggle for tourism in North Vancouver is the history to convince the tourist, the business community and the politicians that the role of municipalities is not to provide taxpayers dollars to the industry directly but by supporting the arts and culture, by keeping the municipality clean and attractive and by raising cultural, recreational and environmental standards.

For the municipality to give the industry funds so they may print more leaflets to be distributed around the world advertising Grouse Mountain or the Capilano Suspension Bridge is not the way to go. It is done by having exhibitions, concerts, festivals to build and exhibit various historic facilities, promote theatre and outdoor events so the people have something to see and something to do.


At the moment this is not the case. Although we have over a million visitors a year mainly coming from Vancouver, they do not stay. They come, see Grouse Mountain or the Capilano Suspension Bridge, they get out of the buses, take a few pictures, have a cup of coffee get back in the bus and on to Vancouver again. There is little money in this and no amount of money or leaflets distributed throughout the world advertising Grouse Mountain or the Capilano Suspension Bridge, will alter this scenario. But this is exactly what the general thrust of the Chamber of

Commerce money request is all about. The Tourist industry, the Chamber of Commerce and the local politicians simply do not understand that this will not work. The Tourism Marketing Plan sent to the District Council by the Chamber of Commerce is an indirect request to pay the cost to advertise private facilities.

Trying to convince that the key to promote tourism is by promoting arts, cultural activities and festivals has been a long and mainly futile struggle. We did finally succeed in the District hiring a cultural and tourist development officer. We were fortunate to get one the best there is. The person did a marvellous job but spokespersons of the tourist industry worked hard to get the person fired. Why, because she promoted the tourist industry not directly but by promoting cultural and other events geared to attract people and make them stay. But this was not good enough. The industry wanted to see the money directly and to get it they worked through a previous Mayor. He had absolutely no clue about tourism, never mind culture, but he did understand the meaning of political support in return for his co-operation.

And this is where we are now. Our Cultural Development Officer who knew a thing or two about the business was fired. The door is open for the taxpayers to pay to advertise a few private tourist facilities - a far cry from the great vision we had to put the North Shore on the map of international tourism via the promotion and support of the Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation. In the meantime much of the money spent for arts and culture itself, pathetically small as it is, is wasted. We don't have one administration we have three. All attempts to simplify this failed. Bureaucratic incompetence and political opportunism won the day.

---

 <a href="#">winmail.dat</a>	<b>Name:</b> winmail.dat <b>Type:</b> application/ms-tnef <b>Encoding:</b> base64
--	---