

Subject: Fwd: Fwd: B.C. municipalities seek property-tax changes - The Globe and Mail, Sept 2, 2013

From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

Date: 03/09/2013 2:19 PM

To: Corrie Kost <corrie@kost.ca>

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

Subject:Fwd: B.C. municipalities seek property-tax changes - The Globe and Mail, Sept 2, 2013

Date:Tue, 3 Sep 2013 13:23:06 -0700

From:Douglas Curran <dougcurran@shaw.ca>

To:FONVCA <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Begin forwarded message:

From: Douglas Curran <dougcurran@shaw.ca>

Date: September 3, 2013 1:03:17 PM PDT (CA)

To: Hazen Colbert <hazencolbert@hotmail.com>

Cc: DNV Council

Subject: B.C. municipalities seek property-tax changes - The Globe and Mail, Sept 2, 2013

Hello Hazen,

The link below will take you to Frances Bula's news story on the new study by the Union of BC Municipalities, on the inadequacies of the current property tax system for municipal funding. In her article, Bula writes, "It notes that cities are looking at having to spend billions in the next 15 years for projects required by provincial and federal governments. These will force property taxes up and to levels where the weaknesses of the property-tax system will make the cost unacceptable for many British Columbians."

The coming financial crunch arising from the current municipal funding model will be increasingly hit the DNV and its rapidly increasing ranks of seniors living on fixed incomes, along with climbing costs for maintaining their homes. It is exactly this situation that the recent OCP was adopted; to retain opportunities for both "aging-in-place" and accommodating the full range of resident financial needs and capability going into a financially constrained future.

This article is a useful backgrounder that should be referenced in any developing discussions regarding building forms and redevelopment for both Lynn Valley and other parts of the DNV.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/cities-seek-property-tax-changes/article14076883/>

cheers, Doug

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B.C. municipalities seek property-tax changes

[FRANCES BULA](#)

VANCOUVER — The Globe and Mail

Published Monday, Sep. 02 2013, 9:15 PM EDT

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B.C.'s cities want the provincial government to change the property-tax system to be fairer, potentially allowing them to tax public institutions and Crown corporations and to create a low-income tax credit.

That's one of several suggestions made by a special committee of the Union of B.C. Municipalities in a report released Monday outlining the need for cities to get more revenue in the coming years, as they are faced with enormous tax hikes for water, sewer, road and other expensive infrastructure.

At the moment, city budgets are "heavily reliant on the property tax, which neither grows with the economy nor distributes costs fairly," says the report, Strong Fiscal Futures. B.C. municipal politicians will be spending a half day debating the report at their annual convention in the third week of September.

It notes that cities are looking at having to spend billions in the next 15 years for projects required by provincial and federal governments.

"These will force property taxes up and to levels where the weaknesses of the property-tax system will make the cost unacceptable for many British Columbians," the report says.

Other suggestions it makes about changing its tax and revenue system include:

- Set a limit on property taxes so they account for no more than 65 per cent of the municipal budget.
- Get all traffic-fine revenues the province collects.
- Negotiate an improved agreement on sharing the hotel tax between the province and cities.
- Give TransLink appropriate funding.

The study comes after years during which municipalities have said they are taking on the burden of many costs downloaded to them from provincial and federal governments, including everything from housing for the homeless to upgrades to meet new environmental standards.

Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard, who was on the committee that produced the report, said the aim is to "get some discussion of revenue-sharing for when prosperity returns to the province."

Surrey Councillor Barbara Steele said she expects there will be a fair amount of discussion at the UBCM convention about finances in increasingly stressed cities.

“There is a lot of talk about the overall ability to pay – where are we supposed to get the money?”

It is likely to be one of the major discussion points at an annual convention that is otherwise somewhat low-key this year.

Typically, the meeting of hundreds of city councillors and mayors from around the province generates a raft of news, as debates about drug laws or policing costs or taxes erupt.

This year, the number of resolutions for the convention is down from previous years. As well, there is some concern among convention organizers that attendance may be low, after some suburban politicians who attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference in June were pilloried in the media for staying in hotels downtown rather than driving home each night.

The organizers for the annual meeting had also been anticipating a new NDP government, and the focus was going to be on meeting new cabinet ministers.

However, the time needed for that in the program vanished after Premier Christy Clark led the Liberals to an unprecedented fourth election win.

Some issues that arose in the election may resurface at the convention, as politicians discuss tankers, pipelines, resource extraction and other items that provoke increasingly large splits along urban and rural lines.