

Councillor's Neighborhood Report:
May 7th, 2014 - Volume #59

Councillor Chris Coleman, Council Liaison to James Bay
(But, by request, also distributing to the folks in
all other neighborhoods in the City of Victoria...
.....and beyond!)

Upcoming days of celebration important to our multicultural country, include:

Mother's Day.....	May 11 th
Victoria Day (& the Parade!).....	May 19 th
Swiftsure Races (Memorial Day Weekend in the USA).....	May 24, 25 & 26
Ascension Day.....	May 29 th
Shavuot.....	June 4 th
Father's Day.....	June 15 th

Please celebrate with one & all.

Items include:

- Current Cyclists & Future Cyclists Wanted to Help Update Victoria's Bicycle Master Plan
- Share Your Thoughts in the "Harbour Dialogue"
- National Emergency Preparedness Week is May 4 -10
- Also, Remember your Pets in Earthquake Preparedness
- New Left Turn on West Side of Johnson St Bridge Opened Last Thursday Morning
- Kudos to Staff In Dog Rescue
- Pilot Program Aims to Keep Cigarette Butts off Victoria Streets & Beaches
- More Ways to Connect With Your City
- Council Gives First Reading to 2014 Tax Bylaw
- Congratulations to Tourism Victoria

- Recent Activity at Your Victoria Conference Centre

Current Cyclists and Future Cyclists Invited to Help Plan City's Bike Network

The City of Victoria is inviting cyclists and future cyclists to share their ideas about how to get more people biking, more often. Residents can share their ideas at an evening workshop, at community open houses or through an online survey.

One workshop will focus specifically on engaging non-cyclists in identifying what could be done to make cycling more inviting. The other two workshops are for residents that already cycle in Victoria and will explore ways to improve the cycling network. Residents can email bike@victoria.ca to register for the workshops.

Workshops for residents that already cycle:

- Monday, May 12, Victoria Conference Centre, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 14, Da Vinci Centre, 195 Bay Street, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Workshop for residents that rarely cycle:

- Monday, May 26, Fairfield United Church, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Over the next three weeks, City staff will be hosting *Time to Ride* open houses at the following locations:

- Fairfield Thrifty's, Thursday, May 8, from 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
- Quadra Village Days, Saturday, May 10, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Selkirk Waterfront Festival, Saturday, May 24, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Bike to Work Week, at Dockside Green, Monday, May 26, 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Over 800 people have already completed the online survey and it will remain open until May 30 at www.haveyoursayvictoria.com.

Victoria's first Bicycle Master Plan was created almost 20 years ago, in 1995. Since then the City has introduced 41 km of bike lanes, 2.6 km of multi-use trails, two km of buffered bike lanes, 18 km of signed bike routes and over 1,000 bike parking spots downtown. Bicycle infrastructure projects that are already planned or proposed for the next two years include bike lanes on Skinner and Cook streets, upgrades to the Wilson Street intersection and connections to E& N Rail Trail, and on-street bike lanes and a multi-use path on the new Johnson Street Bridge. Two separated cycle tracks, one along Dallas Road and one along Pandora Avenue are also planned.

The updated Bicycle Master Plan will guide the next phase of cycling infrastructure in Victoria.

Share Your Thoughts on “Harbour Dialogue”

The City of Victoria is inviting the public to share their ideas for enhancing and revitalizing three strategic sites along the Inner Harbour:

1. Belleville Terminal site
2. Ship Point site
3. Lower Wharf Street site

Public feedback will be used to help develop guiding principles and development concepts for each site. The resulting guiding principles will be used to evaluate future development. These principles will also help to better position the City of Victoria and other Inner Harbour land owners for potential capital funding, grants and development opportunities which may arise.

The overall process will be framed and informed by existing City plans, policies, regulations and related technical studies.

Background: The City of Victoria is undertaking this public engagement process to identify opportunities for improving the vitality of the Inner Harbour, which is a key objective of several Council-approved policies and plans. These policies and plans share several common objectives that will guide dialogue with the public and the overall process:

The three strategic sites which are being discussed have two owners: Ship Point lands are owned by the City of Victoria; the Lower Wharf Street Parking and Belleville Ferry Terminal lands are owned by the Province of British Columbia.

While this project will identify opportunities for each strategic site, it should be noted there is currently no significant capital funding allocated by either property owner. Implementation of the revitalization opportunities will be contingent on access to existing or new Provincial or Federal government funding, other related capital grant programs or other financial/development opportunities which may emerge.

Engagement Opportunities: Three events are planned for key stakeholders and the interested public to provide input and share ideas.

- 1) Harbour Dialogue Open House Friday, May 9 - 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Ship Point Lands

The open house provides an initial opportunity to view project information, talk to City staff and provide ideas for improving Belleville Terminal, Ship Point and the

lower Wharf Street site. Representatives from Tourism Victoria, Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, Downtown Victoria Business Association and the Royal BC Museum will also be in attendance.

2) Ideas Forum

Sat, May 10- 10: 00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Victoria Conference Centre Carson Hall, Sal. C

All members of the public are invited to attend the Ideas Forum to discuss revitalization opportunities for the three strategic sites. To accommodate anticipated demand, two separate two hour sessions (with the possibility of adding more sessions if demand warrants) will be held throughout the day.

Session One: 10:00a.m. to 12:00p.m.

Session Two: 1:00p.m. to 3:00p.m.

3) Technical Workshop June 5 and 6

Location TBD

All feedback collected at the previous two events will inform a third event, where the technical experts will advance land use opportunities based on their knowledge of the Harbour, feedback collected from the public, existing City plans, background documents and feasibility studies. Recommendations from the technical workshop will be displayed and shared with the public later that evening.

National Emergency Preparedness Week is

May 4 – 10: *What to Know (and Do) to Protect Your Family*

With *National Emergency Preparedness Week* starting on Sunday, now is the time to make sure your family and pets are prepared to cope after a damaging earthquake, tsunami or even a power outage. The recent earthquake off Vancouver Island is a reminder that we live in an earthquake zone with a one in three probability of a major earthquake in the next 50 years.

Below is what you need to know and do to protect your family in the event of a damaging earthquake:

- "Drop, Cover and Hold On!" is the most appropriate action to reduce injury and death until the shaking stops.

- Tsunamis are rare, but if an earthquake lasts for 60 seconds or more, or is so strong that it is difficult to stand, “Drop, Cover and Hold On!” until the shaking stops, then move away from beaches and low-lying areas to higher ground immediately. Monitor local media outlets and your municipality for updates.
- Twitter, Facebook and email are ways for you to communicate with loved ones and others in a disaster when phone lines may be over-loaded.
- Your family and pets need an emergency kit with enough food, fresh water, medication and supplies to cope up to seven days or more without outside assistance. Ready-made kits are available at local retailers or you can assemble your own using the City of Victoria’s *Recipe for Disaster* series which is available at City Hall and online at www.PrepareVictoria.ca.
- Learn more on how to be “emergency prepared” by registering for a free workshop in May offered by the Victoria Emergency Management Agency by emailing vema@victoria.ca or calling 250.920.3373. Free workshops will be offered on:

Wednesday, May 14, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Oaklands Community Centre, 2827 Belmont Avenue

Monday, May 26, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Victoria City Hall Antechamber, Douglas Street and Pandora Avenue

Wednesday, May 28, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m., Burnside Gorge Community Centre, 471 Cecelia Road

National Emergency Preparedness Week is held annually the first week of May and is designed to raise awareness of the importance of having an emergency kit and making an emergency plan.

Also, Remember Family Pets in Earthquake Preparedness Planning

Your pet needs to be considered in your family’s earthquake preparedness planning (whether you have a furry, scaled or feathered friend). Having a pet emergency kit on hand with enough supplies to last seven or more days could help save your pet’s life after a major earthquake. Families can purchase ready-made kits or assemble their own.

Victoria Animal Control Services will also talk about its cage donation program. The public can call to arrange an appointment to drop off their clean, used pet cage, which will be distributed to local municipalities in the event of a large-scale disaster.

Reuniting with a lost pet can be difficult after an earthquake. It's important to keep pet vaccinations and licence tags up to date. Families should consider engraving a cell phone number and their pet's name on a pet ID tag, or having a vet implant a microchip or tattoo their pet for easy identification.

This week is *National Emergency Preparedness Week* (May 4 – 10, 2014). Held annually the first week of May, it's designed to raise awareness of the importance of having an emergency kit and making an emergency plan.

For More Information:

Rob Johns, Emergency Coordinator
Victoria Emergency Management Agency
Office: 250.920.3355 Cellular: 250.888.3594

Ian Fraser, Senior Animal Control Officer
Victoria Animal Control
Office: 250.414.0233

Maegan Thompson, Emergency Program Manager
Township of Esquimalt Emergency Program
250.414.7120

Eileen Grant, Manager
District of Oak Bay Emergency Program (OBEP)
250.592.9121

New Left Turn on West Side of Johnson Street Bridge Opened Last Thursday

Beginning May 1st, a new left-hand turn into the Delta Ocean Pointe Resort was opened on the west side of the Johnson Street Bridge. With the new entrance in place, the old entrance off the Johnson Street Bridge will close to make way for the next stage of bridge construction on the west side.

Originally anticipated to be complete by mid-May, this work has been completed ahead of schedule.

The new left-hand turn will be for vehicles arriving at the hotel from downtown. Bus traffic, vehicles travelling east and exiting the hotel parking lot will use Tyeer Road. The two westbound lanes off the bridge will remain in place.

Westbound traffic will be reduced to one lane after 6 p.m. Wednesday evening as crews prepare final traffic changes. The bridge will remain open while work is underway.

The E&N Trail connection at Tyee Road that was closed to accommodate the work is now open to pedestrians and eastbound cyclists. Westbound cyclists wishing to connect to Kimta Road from the Johnson Street Bridge will be rerouted along Esquimalt Road to turn left at Tyee Road. Once the new bridge is complete, the E&N Trail will connect with the new multi-use trail over the new Johnson Street Bridge.

Eventually, the new hotel entrance will connect with a new four-way signalled intersection at Harbour and Esquimalt Roads connecting to the new Johnson Street Bridge. Once the new intersection is complete and the bridge is open, there will be a two-way road access to the hotel and future waterfront green space.

Traffic impacts are also expected this week and next week along Wharf and Store Streets as crews complete work related to the new Janion development and finish paving and remarking roads as the final stage of the replacement of 100-year-old water, sewer, and storm water utilities.

The public's continued patience is appreciated.

For the latest information on the project, visit www.JohnsonStreetBridge.com

Kudos: A postal worker + two garbage men + an engaged citizen = Dog reunited

Jim Warwick and Dwayne Costello were recognized via twitter and a heartfelt 'thank you' email from one of our citizens after they assisted in rescuing a lost dog on last week. Our two crew members noticed the confused pooch wandering back and forth a busy intersection and quickly stepped up to help. They were able to catch the dog and with the help of a postal worker, and an engaged citizen, ensured that he was reunited with his family. A huge kudos to Dwayne and Jim!



Pilot Program Aims to Keep Cigarette Butts off Victoria Streets and Beaches

Surfrider Foundation, the Downtown Victoria Business Association and the City of Victoria are teaming up for a pilot program to keep cigarette butts off our streets, out of the stormwater system and off beaches. This spring 20 easily identifiable cigarette disposal canisters are being installed in downtown Victoria, offering the public a responsible cigarette disposal option.

Cigarette butts make up a large percentage of litter on city streets. Having cleaner streets is the most direct goal of this program, but the beaches will also benefit. The journey of cigarette butts from the streets, through the stormwater system and out to Victoria's beaches isn't top of mind for many people, but when the butts are blown or flushed into the over 5,700 catchbasins and storm drains throughout Victoria, the shoreline is where they end up. Beyond littering the beaches, the toxins in cigarettes leach out when wet and pose a threat to marine life.

The pilot project involves the purchase and installation of 20 cigarette butt canisters in targeted areas throughout downtown Victoria. Six businesses have already offered to host a canister at the front of their property. The goal is to have 20 canisters installed before World Oceans Day on June 8. Businesses that are interested in having a canister installed on their property can call Gillian Montgomery at 250.885.0464 or email chair@vancouverisland.surfrider.org

The Downtown Victoria Business Association (DVBA) and the City of Victoria are sponsoring the purchase of the canisters and the DVBA's Clean Team will empty the canisters as part of their daily rounds throughout the downtown. This pilot program has been led by members of the Vancouver Island chapter of the Surfrider Foundation. They saw the cigarette butt receptacles in use while attending a Surfrider conference in California and were inspired by how the simple program kept cigarette butts contained and off urban streets and beaches. For more information visit: <http://vancouverisland.surfrider.org>

More Ways to Connect with Your City

The City of Victoria has launched a new blog and online consultation portal aimed at improving customer service and engaging citizens in civic matters.

“Our residents are interested in City issues, and we want information and ways to participate made as easy as possible,” noted Mayor Dean Fortin. “We have an important role in creating meaningful opportunities for the community to engage with the City, and with each other, on issues that are important to them.”

The new *City Blog* at www.victoria.ca/blog will be used to share information that is interesting and value-added for citizens. This week the blog highlight’s one mom’s quest to be better prepared for an earthquake.

Launched with opportunities to provide input on the City’s cycling network, *Have Your Say Victoria* is an online consultation forum that offers the community improved ways to engage on City initiatives. In less than two weeks, over 650 residents have provided input online.

From transportation improvements, changes in service delivery, urban design or land use, the public can expect to see a variety of topics for discussion. Citizens can learn more about specific projects, provide feedback through surveys and engage in two-way dialogue with City staff and residents through online discussion forums. The community will be able to collaborate on ideas that will help shape the future of Victoria.

Have Your Say Victoria is responsive to the community’s desire for improved online opportunities, as noted in the 2013 Citizen and Business Surveys. Users can provide feedback without having to visit City Hall and can access the site at www.HaveYourSayVictoria.com or directly from the City’s website at www.victoria.ca.

Online tools designed to make it easier engage on City matters have been well-received by the community, consistently resulting in high participation. In 2013, the City introduced a personalized garbage collection reminder service in which residents receive an email, text or tweet prior to collection day. Over 5,000 households now utilize this reminder service every two weeks.

Social media channels continue to grow as essential customer service and engagement tools. The City’s Twitter following is now 13,500 and Facebook is 8,500.

The City's recent online mapping system, known as "VicMap" has moved City mapping information to one of the top 10 pages each month, on the City's website www.victoria.ca

Online application tracking, a searchable document library for City reports and documents, e-billing for utilities and property taxes are also being introduced this year.

Council Gives First Reading to 2014 Tax Bylaw and Amends Financial Plan to Increase Funding for Cycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure

On Monday, City Council gave first reading of the tax bylaw and amended the preliminary 2014-2018 Financial Plan, increasing investment in cycling infrastructure by \$50,000 per year for the next five years, and investing an additional \$121,639 in cycling and pedestrian improvements in 2014. Over the past three weeks, the City sought public feedback on the draft financial plan. For the first time, budget open house presentations were webcast live and questions solicited by Twitter at #vicbudget.

For 2014, Council has given preliminary approval to an overall tax increase of 2.51%. This results in a 2.75% increase, or \$60 increase for average residential properties, and a 2.3% increase, or \$150 increase for typical business properties. This is the lowest tax increase in 14 years.

The 2014 Operating Budget is \$209.8 million, a \$2.81 million increase over 2013. The budget focuses on maintaining high quality services while keeping taxes affordable. The 2014 operating budget maintains high service levels, focuses on improved customer service, growing the economy, public safety and community well-being. There are a number of new initiatives and enhancements planned, responsive to community needs and input.

The 2014 Budget continues to invest in critical infrastructure for the future. Nearly 20 cents of every dollar the City collects is invested in public infrastructure. Typically, annual capital investments are \$30 to \$35 million; in 2014 the capital budget is \$89.9 million due to significant investment in building a new Johnson Street Bridge with improved amenities for cyclists and pedestrians. Over one third (\$14 million) of the City's typical capital investment is in underground

systems such as water, sewer and stormwater. The additional funding for cycling infrastructure increases the 2014 budget to \$520,000.

A budget-in-brief is available here: http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Finance/Documents/Budget_In_Brief%202014_Final.pdf

City Council will give second and third readings to the 2014-2018 financial plan and tax bylaws on Thursday, May 8 and final consideration will be given Monday, May 12, 2014.

Budget Consultations Brought Forth Many Questions

We did receive lots of comments and questions in the City's Budgetary discussions from both organizations & individuals. I thought you might find the following questions (& answers, provided by both the City & me, are written in blue)

From the organization, "Open Victoria", came the following 10 Questions:

1. *The 2014 police services budget of \$48 million is 2.7% higher than 2013. The Greater Victoria Public Library budget of \$4.4 million is 3.8% higher. Why are these two agencies being allowed to exceed the 2% budget cap guideline?*

The police budget includes an increase to pension premiums that is partially offset by a reduction in pension premiums for the rest of the City. Excluding the impact of this pension change, the police budget did meet the 2% target. When the Police Chief presented the budget to Council, he asked them to give him time to assess the department and to streamline operations. Council agreed.

Ten municipalities have a joint agreement with the Greater Victoria Library Board to provide library services for those municipalities. Under the operating agreement, each municipality pays a share of the total operating costs based on a combination of assessed values and population. In addition, since the main library is the City's branch, the majority of the building maintenance costs are paid by the City. The GVPL was unable to meet the City's request for a maximum 2% target.

2. *There are two collective agreements currently being negotiated by the city, one with the Victoria Firefighters and the other with CUPE 50. If either are concluded prior to November 15, 2014, will the City commit to publishing the key financial terms (wage/benefit increases) before election day?*

Yes

3. *Utility tax revenue and expenditures are projected to rise 6.96% this year. Why are utilities not subject to the 3.25% tax cap?*

Water and Sewer Utility Revenue is a function of water consumed by customers.

Consumption volumes for a budget year are estimated based on previous years consumption. A 4% decrease in consumption is anticipated in 2014.

On average, consumers will use 4% less water in 2014. The impact to the customer of rate increases will depend on their consumption relative to the average.

For water and sewer combined, the budgeted revenue increased by 2.9%, which is consistent with the 3.25% tax cap.

Water Utility The budgeted revenue in 2014 increased by 2.6% over 2013. Expenditures, including funds allocated to reserve, increased by the same amount.

Sewer Utility The budgeted revenue in 2014 increased by 3.4% over 2013. Expenditures, including funds allocated to reserve, increased by the same amount.

The majority of the increases relate to continued investment in aging infrastructure.

In addition, the City purchases bulk water from the CRD. The CRD increase the bulk water rate by 1.8% for 2014. This increase is part of the overall increase to the water utility fee.

4. *Capital projects at the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre in 2014 include \$825,000 for infrastructure replacement, \$70,000 for equipment and \$184,000 for capital planning. How do these expenditures mesh with a long-term plan for the Pool?*

The \$70,000 is an annual expenditure for the replacement or refurbishment of fitness, cardio and pool equipment.

The infrastructure replacement and capital planning budgets are part of the long-term solution to replace and/or upgrade the major pool and facility systems. These funds form part of the project budgets over the coming years once the appropriate bundling and sequencing of projects are determined.

5. *60% of the City's existing infrastructure is past its useful life. Where are the 10, 20 and 50-year capital plans to replace this infrastructure? It is now five years since those plans were promised; where are they?*

The City has a number of 20-year asset management plans in place: Water Master Plan, Stormwater Master Plan (draft), Pavement Management Plan (draft). A high-level overview of these plans was presented to Council on December 9, 2013.

The Sanitary Sewer Master Plan is currently being developed with estimated completion in 2015.

6. *What is the city's budgeted contribution to the MacPherson Theatre for 2014? What is the projected operating deficit of the Mac for 2014?*

The McPherson is managed by the Royal and McPherson Theatres Society and their budget is presented and approved by the CRD. The total levy approved by the CRD for 2014 was \$750,000. According to CRD records, there is no projected operating deficit and \$344,300 is planned to be transferred to capital

reserves. Only City of Victoria taxpayers fund the McPherson, but it does not form part of the City of Victoria's budget.

7. *The Crystal Gardens does not have a strong history of yielding financial returns. Why are we buying it? How many days was it utilized for conventions over the past 12 months? Where is the Victoria Conference Centre consultant's report that was due last year?*

The City leased the Crystal Gardens from PCC and was paying approximately \$385,000 annually to do so. As owner of the facility, the City no longer makes lease payments, but will pay for operations and maintenance for the entire building, not just the leased space. Additional retail spaces are generating approximately \$170,000 in revenues. This has allowed the property tax subsidy to be reduced by approximately \$100,000 for 2014.

It was utilized for conventions for 101 days in 2013.

The consultant's report has two parts. The findings were posted online today and the recommendations are being analyzed by staff and will be reported to Council in late May.

8. *\$2.23 million seems like a lot of money for vehicle replacement. Why don't we defer this for a year?*

The City has approximately 230 vehicles in its fleet. They are replaced based on a number of factor including age, mileage, type of use, physical condition, mechanical condition and operational suitability. A reserve specific for vehicle and heavy equipment funds the replacements. Deferring any replacements would simply mean that the funding remains in that reserve.

9. *The Maximus Report recommended that the protocol and twin cities programs be cancelled. Has this been acted on?*

Council chose not to implement this recommendation.

10. *The Maximus Report recommended that the payroll department be streamlined. Has this been acted on?*

Maximus was unaware that an extensive evaluation of the City's payroll function was completed in 2009 when the City looked at contracting it out. This review concluded that contracting out would not result in any savings. However, continued streamlining of the payroll operations throughout the City continues and improvements are made incrementally.

There were also a number of other questions posed individuals; the most common 3 were:

- *The infrastructure reserve fund, a long-term fund set aside to fund ongoing facility updates, yields a 1.74% return which barely meets inflation surely we can do better?*

The City's investment portfolio is governed by the City's Investment Policy which is designated to invest public funds in a prudent manner, to yield the highest returns within the limits prescribed by Community Charter s. 183, Investment of Municipal Funds. Interestingly, the Provincial legislation does not allow municipalities to "play the stock market" as we might with our personal portfolios. So we have a much higher "risk-aversion/avoidance" ratio than individuals do.

The City's portfolio returned \$2.3M in 2013, an increase of \$95,000 from 2012.

The actual investment portfolio return was 1.74% (compared to a 1.09% return if the monies had been placed in the Municipal Finance Authority's money market fund, or a 1.25% return we saw with the City's average bank interest rate). This bears a direct relationship to the reality that we are not allowed to invest in stocks.....the down side is that the City will never hit the same rates of return that individuals have seen in the last couple of years; the plus side is that the taxpayer won't see the City's portfolio diminished at the rates seen in the 2008 recession.

- *The budget for economic development needs to be rationalized and probably reduced. Victoria cannot and should to continue to do the heavy lifting on behalf of the CRD. Perhaps support for the Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Victoria Development Agency, the city's protocol office and the sister city program need a fresh look.*

We should never be afraid of bringing "fresh eyes" to any issue or programme. You make a logic jump however when you move from rationalizing to automatically assuming contributions should be reduced. What if the "fresh eyes" analysis suggested an increase in support for the Economic Development function?

I took enormous grief in the James Bay Neighbourhood (my neighbourhood liaison role for Council) when the City contracted an Economic Development Officer for \$300,000 for 2 years (no bonuses, no expenses). Within 9 months, however, that position had negotiated the Harbour land swap that saw the Province, the City & the private sector (Point Hope Shipyards) all come out as "winners"with the City increasing its asset portfolio, reducing its annual rental rates to the Province, increasing its future opportunity for development along the Harbour & reducing its long term financial risk. Even in the James Bay neighbourhood, folks were approaching me to suggest we offer the Economic Development Officer a permanent posting!

We should also not try to emulate the "Rob Ford-esque" notion that suggests cuts don't need to be analysed (because there are usually associated, but unintended, consequences)

- *And finally, the recent land swap involving the purchase of the Crystal Garden defies economic logic. After speaking with some of you in recent days I am perplexed :*

- "Think of all the money we save on rent" (for a building we never use?)

- "It was a one time limited offer from the province" (still a bad deal no matter the time constraints)

- "Point Hope Maritime now has land security and can proceed with ambitious expansion plans" (great, sell them the shipyard land, no need to involve the province and the Crystal Garden)

- "The province has promised to put the profits from the Point Hope land sale back into local projects" (don't think so, the funds from the province wide assets sale were to help balance the budget)

The Crystal Garden does not have a strong history of yielding financial returns. Over the past 60 years neither the CPR, the City, the PCC, the BC Experience, nor the Victoria Conference Centre have been able to make it work. But now it is ours, for what purpose no one seems to know. A little more consultation and engagement on this file would have been appreciated.

I've partially addressed this question in the previous response. The fact is we didn't just "get the Crystal Gardens" as a one-off deal; it was part of a bundled opportunity that saw the Province, the private sector & the City all come out feeling they had achieved a "winning position". These lands have all been subject to on-again/off-again, often intense discussion/negotiations for at least 4 decades.

The question now is what do we use the Crystal Gardens facility for? I think that discussion is one that will have to be embraced in fairly short order. There are a number of options that have already been offered up (including a Business incubator/pollinator function, the much talked of "Downtown Campus for UVic", perhaps even the location for the Faculty of Public Administration, as well as the notion of re-tooled convention trade show space). I suspect there will be many more creative options that will come forth as Council turns its mind to this aspect.

I hope these responses prove to be helpful (perhaps as a base of understanding for future budget discussions).



Tourism Victoria Tops the list for BCAMA Marketer of the Year

The BC chapter of the American Marketing Association (BCAMA) announced this week that Tourism Victoria is one of three finalists for the BCAMA Marketer of the Year Award. Tourism Victoria did not apply for this award, but was nominated by others in the marketing field. “It is a huge honour to be recognized by this organization and be a finalist for this award,” says Trina Mousseau, Director of Destination Marketing at Tourism Victoria. “Our marketing efforts are so much more than just the campaigns we do. By working together – from our valued members to our teams on the road – we strive to inspire travel influencers to visit our beautiful destination.”

Destination Marketing is Tourism Victoria’s core business. Tourism Victoria has chosen to be dynamic, unique and stand out with its marketing communications style. Key elements of the 2013 marketing program included a dynamic meetings campaign, Victoria Calling and Find Christmas Here.

The BCAMA Marketer of the Year award does not award one specific campaign but rather an outstanding marketing strategy over a sustained period. The organization has been rewarding excellence in marketing for 44 years. Recent winners of this award include Vancity, Rocky Mountaineer and BC Hydro.

“It is absolutely amazing for the marketing efforts of a small organization like ours to be recognized amongst that prestigious group,” says Paul Nurse, President & CEO of Tourism Victoria. “This nomination is a reflection that our distinctive work is being noticed by others in the marketing field.”

Tourism Victoria would like to recognize the Victoria Hotel Destination Marketing Association (VHDMA) for their continued support that allows the organization to execute their marketing strategy to such a high level. The nomination for this award represents VHDMA’s vision, and their partnership with Tourism Victoria allows the organization to showcase Greater Victoria to the world.

The BC Chapter of the American Marketing Association has been the province’s leading marketing source since 1955. As one of the most highly regarded chapters in North America, BCAMA was awarded with the “Chapter of the Year” Award from 1994-1997. The BCAMA is made up of over 500 members, and has

a contact database of over 3,000 B.C. marketing, advertising, and communications professionals.

About Tourism Victoria The Greater Victoria Visitors & Convention Bureau (Tourism Victoria), is the official not-for-profit destination marketing organization that works in partnership with over 700 business members and municipalities in Greater Victoria and surrounding communities in British Columbia, Canada. Tourism Victoria's vision is to be internationally recognized as a leader in sustainable tourism development, ensuring Greater Victoria remains one of the top destinations in the world.

Recent Activity at Your Victoria Conference Centre

April 23	2014 Victoria Minor Hockey Association Awards Night
April 25	9th Annual Professional Biology Conference
April 26	2014 TC 10K Expo
April 28	British Columbia Real Estate Association
April 28-29	Insurance Brokers Association of BC, IBABC Executive
April 30	Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Tuna Advisory Board
April 30	Uncork Your Palate
May 1	Victoria Guest Services Network
May 2-3	Social Media Camp
May 4-9	Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Annual Conference
May 4-6	Canadian Institute for Health Research
May 5	Resolve Collaboration Services
May 9-10	City of Victoria - Harbour Dialogue