

City Council of White Rock - Question and Answer period – July 25, 2022

My question is:

What is it about Exhibition and Decorative Lighting that does not warrant a detailed analysis of the benefits associated with the expenditure of nearly **1 million dollars of tax payer money over the past four years**? It is proven in communities around the world that Exhibition and Decorative lighting is a significant driver of economic development particularly in the shoulder and winter seasons when the businesses in our community so desperately need help.

According to the recently approved 5 year financial plan, **an additional half a million dollars** is planned to be spent and yet there is no willingness to review the impact of the funds spent to date. There is also a reticence to consider a proactive and positive community collaboration that would coordinate an impactful approach to attracting people to see our lights. Millions of dollars in potential revenue for businesses in White Rock, especially along Marine Drive, are being lost because there is no economic development vision for this initiative.

My Question:

Would City Council please ask City Staff to provide a report for this council in September that provides an analysis of the impact on economic development derived by our community from the funds spent on Exhibition and Decorative lighting since 2018? The report could review the corporate report provided in October of 2019 which initially recommended approval of the original White Rock Festival of Lights. In addition, the report could outline ways to build momentum in the coming years that will leverage the power of Exhibition and Decorative Lighting as a powerful economic development driver for our community.