

APPENDIX B

BUDGET 2024 SURVEY COMMENTS

Please find below the list of the comments received via the Budget 2024 Survey. Where possible, comments have been grouped by topic. The text and grammar are as typed by the respondent(s).

Bylaw

A number of new buildings are not adequately built. We need to ensure that "our" inspectors are well managed, funded and work after the fact with Bylaw Maintenance Officers.

Noise by laws are not being adhered to or policed. Consider getting electronic surveillance and electronic ticketing on Marine Drive.

Development/Permits

Also stop all the permits to tear down good houses just to put up bigger house that look terrible. Where is the character.

Please push for building! Bring more developments and require funding for infrastructure and recreation that can come with this kind of investment. 30 story high rise should be minimal height for our downtown core

should have a moratorium on high rises as they simply don't address the need for affordable living in WR. Many empty places that could be used to house people but those are holding property ready for the present council to give them what they want in regard to building heights, etc. As an already dense area give the citizens a break since there has been no improvements to infrastructure just adding more density!

Make sure developers pay cost of utilities, park space and road use.

No more 26 story buildings! (2 of the same comment)

New condo buildings should take a larger hit on infrastructure costs

get building permits complete fast as there are way too many business trying to open.

Emergency Services

I would like to see emergency services be at the level it needs to be for a growing city in 2023

Police & Fire remains a priority both for services, equipment and staffing.

Police & Fire equipment, services and staffing needs to remain a priority

Emergency services as a single bucket doesn't capture the diversity of services offered by both the fire dept and the RCMP. As with many cities and towns across the country, I'd like to see White Rock start to examine community safety models that prioritize community-led crisis intervention - as oppose to RCMP

response. Equally, can we be investing in our fire department so they have the tools and resources they need to connect our community's most vulnerable with the correct social services. I.e. they respond to a drug overdose, but can they provide the family or impacted people with tools for safe housing, detox, naloxone etc? They respond to a vulnerable senior citizen who is experiencing mental distress - do they have the tool for de-escalation and to connect that senior with the appropriate services?

Environment

I would like to see that city ensure we have a say when facilities are being built near us that will contaminate our land, water and air quality. We need to make sure that this is a priority.

We need to have money put aside to be able to fight any corporations coming in our surrounding area that wants to pollute our land, water and air

Climate action and creating a sea barrier for climate events with an increased tree canopy is Imperative not essential anymore. Don't ignore climate change. Have an old agenda.

Garbage & Recycling

Why do we have such an archaic recycle and garbage program. Why are we not part of Surrey/or a Surrey like single stream recycling program that is far tidier and more efficient. I would venture to guess if we were able to join Surrey the economy of scale would make it substantially cheaper as well. Every recycle or garbage day, there are copious amounts of litter all over my street from the wind and careless collection. Also a question of budget that is supported mainly by resident tax dollars: as the city becomes more vertical, clearly there is far more revenue per sq meter of land. Why are the taxes continually rising when there should be a large overage based on Miramar/Foster Martin/Avra etc? Are developers paying their share into capital projects to make their projects happen?

Garbage collection for all via a municipal contract to a company.

It is appealing that condo owners are not given city garbage and recycling services

The garbage and recycling system is outdated why are we so behind our neighbors in terms of collection and bins.

Homelessness

Please don't open up a permanent drop in shelter in White Rock. My last neighborhood was completely ruined when that happened. I had to take my family and leave due to the constant break-ins and drug paraphernalia that resulted from a shelter opening up a block away.

Don't spend money on homelessness, drug prevention, drug addicts. Increase food bank availability.

City of White Rock should add 1-2 Warming Station(s) to the Budget to ensure the homeless in White Rock (17 at last count) have somewhere to go during frigid temperatures.

We have a serious, and growing homeless population that needs attention, services, and somewhere safe to go and be looked after. (2 of the same comment)

Provide a warming/cooling day shelter and permanent housing for homeless.

I don't think we have a large enough community to support or attract homelessness initiatives. A smarter idea would be to support an existing program in a neighboring community

Work with various levels of government, Surrey and non-profits to provide a permanent, attractive shelter with transitional housing.

Housing

The pressure to build more rental locations? Planners use the CMHC "purpose built rentals" as their definition of rental. Create a White Rock -- definition that reflects the true number of rental homes. Oceana Parc as an example is a full rental seniors home. It is not included in the CMHC / Planners definition. Folks.....get the rental inventory numbers correct !

Affordable housing is also a key issue and should be carefully considered when approving new development. (2 of the same comment)

Museum

More funds need to be allocated to the running of the Museum. The city also needs to have signs along the promenade indicating where public restrooms are located.

The White Rock Museum and Archives is a cultural gem and a major part of the White Rock identity, educating residents and visitors alike.

One of the most interesting sites in White Rock is the White Rock Museum and Archives. Not only is it of interest to the many tourists who visit White Rock, but it's a welcome beacon to newcomers, and a site of endearing interest to established White Rock citizens. The White Rock Museum and Archives is in such an important location, a location that attracts so many visitors, but also a location that is thoroughly embedded in White Rock's history and future. The unique exhibits, the exquisite shop, the formidable archival work and collections, all enhance - and dare I say are fundamental to - White Rock's wonderful character as a City. The White Rock Museum and Archives is currently not at all adequately funded and that's a real shame. I therefore beseech the City of White Rock to assure that the White Rock Museum and Archives be generously funded so that it can continue its good work in building of pride in, and knowledge of, this beautiful City, its ongoing connection to the original and continuing peoples of this land, and the promotion of tourism, a key to White Rock's economic success. (2 of same comment)

I would like to see the City of White Rock give more financial support to the White Rock Museum. Most cities and towns in B.C. support their museums with more than 35% of their operating costs. Many support them 100%.

More money is required to adequately fund the White Rock Museum and Archives, whose job it is to preserve and make accessible the history and heritage of the community.

Parks

I'm concerned that there is only one park on the West end of White Rock, and it is very small.

Expanded support for volunteer programs to help with litter pick up and removal of invasive species in our parks. Better biking options maybe a biking lane down thrift and some other main streets. I'd love to feel safer biking in our city.

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Recreation, Culture and Programming

Drop the special interest programs which accomplish nothing but increased debt. Go back to servicing the community at large, rather than special interest programs that add so much to our budget requirements.

I would like to see a focus on growing our recreation opportunities outdoors. More playgrounds and courts around the city.

Add indoor pickle ball courts in white rock

Rec.Services are important but not at the expense of high priority items.

Library, Cultural &

Rec.Services must be maintained.

More public art. And replace the hideous mural on the parkade with good art. Thank you for all you do.

Many activities are available for seniors. White Rock community is now shifting with younger families would be nice to have activities for toddlers and young children. Swimming lessons are impossible to get would be nice to have programs set up for White Rock residents.

Roads and Sidewalks

Road surface repairs and more sidewalks are needed all over White Rock. Not more curbs.

City needs to focus on fixing roads and sidewalks. Also making the waterfront more accessible

please pave the lane between fir and centre, royal and columbia. been waiting 10 yrs. it's like driving in Beirut

City needs proper roads and sidewalks ! This is a city not some town in the sticks ... we need TRAFFIC lights and or roundabouts on russell and thrift .. ridiculous.. flashing lights at intersections .. especially uptown by the theatre.. im 33 and have almost lost my life many times because of road safety in this so called "city"

Every morning I see dozens of children walking up Kent Street to Peace Arch Elementary and EMS. The cars speed by and with no sidewalks to separate the children or speed bumps to slow down the cars it is only a matter of time until a student is struck.

I would like more sidewalks and not spend money on "social equity" stuff

Should have a multi-year plan for sidewalk.

Road surface maintenance and lack of sidewalks all over White Rock remains an issue. Some priority is needed to correct this.

Better biking options maybe a biking lane down thrift and some other main streets. I'd love to feel safer biking in our city.

Maple Street road coming off of 16th is bumpy enough to give you whiplash at speeds over 30km/h needs some repaving as other streets have received in WR.

Improve and expand pathway systems.

Specifically, the sidewalk from Five Corner Cafe, to Foster St. is in very bad condition and it is one of the most used to get to the beach. We live at 1100 Johnston Rd. and we see a lot of people walking down the hill. It is very dangerous!

Other Infrastructure

Eng. Infrastructure is being handled very well

The City of White Rock is a enclosed piece of land on a peninsula. Without adequate infrastructure, it will not be able to support the proposed population density with the numerous high rises already being built.

Street light budget needs to be increased. Streets are too dark for walking, more lights need to be installed

Just moved here and while I love the view and the waterfront, the water coming out of my tap is not drinkable. It tastes awful. Can we not just get our water from the GVRD? I'm tired of filtering my water and trying to clean off the water spots on the taps and I've only lived here two months. We plan to live in White Rock long term and are very disappointed in the water quality. Either filter it at the source or switch to the GVRD water like the rest of the lower mainland.

where can i find the list of 250 projects that were mentioned as COMMITTED between 2024-27 ?? 88 million dollars in little white rock must mean some very major projects that us taxpayers can expect to be completed in the next 36 months please advise where i can find the list of projects referred to in this survey

Staffing

I would like the City to find ways to reduce the number of people working for the City including using technology to replace office staff, and have volunteers or low wage workers replace City staff where possible. Businesses have to do such things to survive and can't pass on all cost increases to customers. The City shouldn't assume it's OK to increase taxes every year. Our City is too small to be all things to all people, and shouldn't waste any money trying to do that.

reduce staffing levels as services is poor and overstaffed with high property taxes. would rather have have less staff to be able to afford to continue to live here

Budget Survey

Q 7 difficult to answer as "Programs and Services" is too broad a category.

This is a very poor and confusing survey. It leave many opportunities to share thoughts on the city and services unavailable

Question 4 has a ridiculous rating system

Question #8 of this survey should have included an option to reduce spending and/or cut services in order to balance the budget. Why is that an option?

(Property) Tax

Need to cut costs. Find funding in the existing budget. Taxation growth is out of control.

I am far from being a wealthy senior, but I own a condo and have more than enough to live on. I CAN PAY MORE TAXES! I understand that not all seniors in White Rock are property owners or can easily afford more taxes. The polarization of wealth level in WR is quite high. However, there are many of us boomers who have the resources to pay more - simply to get us to the level of municipal taxation that many pay in this country. It is unrealistic and unjust for us to keep expecting more services without paying our fair share. One of the easiest way to get more tax dollars is to limit or eliminate the seniors' home owner grant. Either we pay more outright or we can look at deferring taxes. Many of my neighbours in the complex I live in would complain about higher taxes, but feel quite fine using their disposable income on lengthy trips and expensive renovations. They don't have a shortage of resources; they simply don't want to put their resources toward asset management in the community. Thanks for considering my opinion.

The Province generates tax revenue on out of province / Country home / condo ownership. Like Vancouver, with a charter, we need to find a way to receive the tax generated in White Rock.

Taxes should not increase. All these high rises built were supposed to offset tax costs. Use this.

Please ensure the property tax increase is no more than 5 percent as this is the current inflation rate.

Increase the developer rates such that this could offset loss of revenue for winter parking at the beach. le bring back free winter parking at the beach. Thanks

I urge council to consider the economic climate before increasing any taxation or fees. If we all have to tighten our belts so should the city.

Revenue for a small city is always a challenge, but increasing taxes during times of inflation is wrong. We all have to manage our money during tough times and the City Of White Rock is no exception. Does the City have a Rainy day fund to cover during times of recession or like during Covid?

The list if tax exempt businesses and organizations was excessive. All of the budgetary pressure is on individuals who own homes. This is unfair. I would recommend establishment of partial tax exemptions not the current system that allow these groups to benefit from the programs, emergency services, and transportation services which they utilize for free!

Unsure why you might have to increase taxes and utility fees to increase services considering the massive amount of new housing /condo developments and population growth in WR not to mention increase in property values which should bring in considerable tax dollars to fund some of these projects necessary to keep up with the growth in density.

I do not agree with raising property taxes at this point. I am pro new high rise development due to the density and views. The city has new development Tax revenue coming in from all of these projects. Use the property tax contributions wisely. Before the council makes any descions to make significant changes they need to discuss this with the locals first for their input and then hold a public vote. I've lived in White Rock for 23 years.

PLEASE do not raise property taxes!

Taxpayers are already over-taxed by all levels of government and have limited or no way to increase income to pay ever increasing taxes. All levels of government must find ways to cut spending and stop raising taxes. Examples of easy spending cuts - Stop paying bonuses to gov't employees - Track and measure results of gov't programs and stop funding programs that don't meet goals - Stop spending money on things that are nice to have (eg. rainbow cross-walks and EID training) but not necessary (eg. policing and health care).

We pay the second highest property taxes in BC and I don't see how we are benefiting from this.

Budget/Affordability

All budget line items must be given to Council and taxpayers for approval and not cherry-picked by Staff
“Programs and Services” must each be listed individually showing cost and revenue for each separately where applicable, not where possible!

White rock is too expensive as is.

There MUST be places to cut costs in the city hall operations. And DO NOT build a new city hall. Retrofit. Charge churches. Recoup the costs of the 5 Corners fire from the parents and the adult who committed the crime, even if only a few hundred a month for the years to come.

We need to run the city on a strict budget, pls do not look at taxes as the only option to fund your Opex - need to keep your costs strictly within your means

stop funding or spending money where there is no benefit

Making available the prior year estimates for "operating surplus" and "cash and cash equivalents early in the budget planning process is critical to understanding how the funds raised from taxes in the previous operating year have been allocated and spent. In 2022 there was an 18 million dollar operating surplus which was not revealed publicly until late May of 2023. Very difficult to do appropriate planning for the current year when the information from the previous year is not available.

In the budget process, when the financial plan is updated during the budget planning stages, is it possible to provide a "track changes" version rather than a complete reproduction of the entire 200 page document without the necessity of manual cross checks between the original and the revision?

The finance and audit committee should be re-established and community experts should be active participants on the committee. There needs to be significantly more transparency to the budget planning process and the city council should facilitate the opportunity for the following two things:

- a) A detailed annual review of the quarterly financial reports in October of the current fiscal year.
- b) A community forum whereby a "participatory budget process" discussion would culminate in two or three community members being appointed to the finance and planning committee for the budget planning term.

Waterfront

I would like to see improvements to the beach esplanade. The Memorial Park area is great but the walk is too narrow and in many places the grassed areas are overrun and eroding.

Linking the waterfront to city center (escalator, funicular, etc).

Go after unoccupied business locations i.e. some locations on the waterfront have been empty for 10 years, maybe a tax will push owners to rent the space.

Review beach spending. Provide for a professional, unbiased cost - benefit of the current ice cream based beach economy versus alternatives such as increased residential and more focus on benefits to residents. I believe we should stop trying to attract 1-3 hour visits.

Clean up the beach. Restaurants are terrible. Messy and dirty. Needs an overhaul

General

The survey question asked how do you find or view White Rock ? It's very busy crowded and too many cars and trucks wizzing around at fast speed!

I don't want money spent on virtue signaling and expensive culture events.

Focus on city priorities and not provincial or federal area of responsibility

Overall, very happy with the city. Love living here.

Fix and upgrade what is currently most affected by so much new development. Overloaded hospital, traffic congestion, access to beach area, relocate homeless and provide appropriate services (ie, bathroom facilities, mental health needs).

I am very happy with the services I use,

None

The city wastes money on Marine Drive and Johnson road. They don't care about any other spaces. They don't care about residents. They have no police presence on Marine and don't care about the people who pay taxes in this city. They need a full overhaul and major change. It's a disgrace. Also tired of their serving particular interest groups only.

The city should explore private partnerships

Do your research. Any good project can be mitigated by poor planning and execution as well as taking too long to get started and reaching a conclusion.

Develop more tourism options that require an admission/user pay--much of our tourism does nothing to support the local economy--paid parking only for non residents would be a start

A little pet peeve of mine is trees that are overgrown on the sidewalk, get the owners to trim their trees

Reconciliation with Semiahmoo First Nations with real action and support: Make the theme of Canada Day "We Together" and acknowledge Semiahmoo First Nations

Kent works very hard to help and please

I also believe that the bulk of tax dollars should be spent on maintaining the White Rock everyone knows and loves, without trying too hard to rebrand it to attract visitors. White Rock sells itself as a destination, with a long standing history, beautiful scenery, and vibrant businesses.

Publish / increase promotion of annual work plans (e.g. project purpose, scope, risks, budget, project status, outcomes)

Thanks for educating and asking for feedback! Clear and concise survey!

Your City of White Rock website does not contain a single email address, nor any means of sending an enquiry through it, nor does it have any means of feedback. If there is, it certainly isn't very prominent.

Longer opportunities to present and obtain feedback at City Council meetings. The current time limit of 2 minutes does not facilitate effective exchange of ideas.