

**Mayor Darryl Walker's State of the City Address**  
**Nov. 6, 2019**  
**Oceana PARC, 1575 George St.**

- Thank you for that introduction
- Thank you to the South Surrey & White Rock Chamber of Commerce for the invitation to speak today
- It is my great pleasure and honour to be here as your Mayor, the Mayor of Canada's prettiest city, White Rock, B.C., home to Canada's longest Pier
- I would like to recognize that we are standing on the traditional unceded territory of the Semiahmoo First Nation, and also wish to acknowledge the broader territory of the Coast Salish peoples
- I would like to recognize my colleagues on City Council who are here this morning
- Although she could not be here today, congratulations to the Honourable Kerry-Lynne Findlay, MP for South Surrey-White Rock, on your success in the October twenty-first federal election
- I'd like to welcome the Honourable Stephanie Cadieux, MLA for Surrey South. Thank you for coming
- Here on behalf of the Honourable Tracy Redies, MLA for Surrey-White Rock, is Debbie Ward. Welcome, Debbie

- We are in esteemed company today, surrounded by business owners and operators, managers, directors, entrepreneurs, branch managers, restaurateurs, food vendors, chefs, artists, photographers, performers, marketers, builders, contractors, utilities and all of the dedicated business people who give White Rock such vitality
- When local residents and visitors come to White Rock—as thousands of people a year do, you give them somewhere to go, something exciting to do, great things to eat, items to buy, and when they decide to move here, places to rent and live in
- Thank you

WHITE  
ROCK  
*City by the Sea!*

## MAYOR AND STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

- In a State of the City Address, a leader talks about the challenges, the triumphs and a vision for the future. I will do all of that today, and I am very excited to do so
- At the same time, I would like to reflect on a monumental event in White Rock's history
- I need only say December 20th, 2018, and a cold chill will go down the spine of most people in this room
- And you will remember where you were, and what you were doing, when you heard about the storm, the king tide and the one-hundred-kilometre-an-hour winds that ripped through our beloved White Rock Pier

### ***VIDEO: Something to Celebrate***

- Thank you to FlinnWest Solutions for allowing us to show this video. I think we are all very thankful that our Pier, and our community, are whole again

### **FUTURE OF THE PIER**

- It was all hands on deck to get the Pier reconstructed
- City Council, with insurance proceeds, money from reserves and \$1 million of provincial funding, hired expert contractors to reconstruct the Pier

- Following design completion and permit approvals, construction began in May, the Pier reopened to the public on August 27<sup>th</sup> and the Pier officially reopened on September 21<sup>st</sup>
- The staff of the City of White Rock deserves a lot of the credit for the reopening of the Pier, ahead of time and below budget
- The Pier was reconstructed with a new, high-quality mid-section designed by a marine engineer, delivered within budget and on time—even ahead of schedule
- We couldn't be happier about that
- But there is the matter of the long-term future of the Pier and the fundraising that is still ongoing
- Author Margaret Wheatley said: "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about"
- Seeing the Pier split in two inspired us all
- Businesses rallied together to raise money for the next important part of the Pier reconstruction: preparing the Pier for the future, making it weather-proof, as much as possible, and ready to meet the conditions of a changing world climate
- Individuals and groups have come forward. We are not done

- The effort continues to raise money for the next stages of the Pier reconstruction
  
- I want to recognize the entire Friends of the Pier Committee:
  - Bob Bezubiak, the founder – formerly of TD Bank, White Rock
  - Norman Stowe – Landmark Premiere Properties
  - Tony Baena – Parc Retirement Living
  - Ritu Khanna – South Surrey/White Rock Chamber of Commerce
  - Alex Nixon – White Rock BIA
  - Al Hipsley – Remax Colonial Pacific
  - Gord Schoberg – Fortis BC
  - Stewart Peddemors – Remax Colonial Pacific/Semiahmoo Rotary
  - Morley Myron – Remax Colonial Pacific
  - Tyson Blume – Uli's Restaurant
  - Maureen Annable
  - Steve Scott – Peace Arch News
  - Debbie Ward – White Rock Museum
  - Vikram Vij – My Shanti Restaurant
  - Peter Hu – Maple Country Realty
  
- Your efforts to raise funds for the future reconstruction of the White Rock Pier are so greatly appreciated
  
- Friends of the Pier has led fundraisers that include Concerts for the Pier, Dancing for the Pier, Chefs for the Pier, Beers for the Pier, Prints for the Pier and now Planks for the Pier

- The fundraising is still an important part of the Pier's future. Make no mistake. We have not stopped fundraising for the Pier and we will not stop until the entire Pier is completed
- How the Pier was reconstructed and reopened is a great success story. How our community came together is perhaps more important
- I'm thrilled to share some of the many successes the City of White Rock has had in 2019

## **SEMIAHMOO FIRST NATION**

**I am proud to report that the City of White Rock and the Semiahmoo First Nation are not only meeting on a regular basis, we are rebuilding an important relationship**

### **Reconciliation**

- The City of White Rock's relationship with the people of the Semiahmoo First Nation is an important one, and together we are building a solid friendship that is growing and moving us forward
- We are doing the important work involved with reconciliation that becomes meaningful action
- In 2019 there were five Council-to-Council meetings with our fellow Council members of the Semiahmoo First Nation. Two of the meetings have been held with a facilitator hired through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

## Discussing Services

- The two groups are working on items related to services, including drainage, water and sanitary sewer
- Representatives working on behalf of the Semiahmoo First Nation are working with City staff to create a Communication Protocol and Memorandum of Understanding

## National Indigenous Peoples Day Ceremony

- The City of White Rock held a ceremony to recognize the Semiahmoo First Nation on National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21st

## Sea Festival Planning

- The City worked closely with the Semiahmoo First Nation to present a three-day combined Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days that connected Semiahmoo Park with the White Rock Promenade
- From Semiahmoo Park to West Beach, we celebrated and played together for the first time in decades
- You'll hear more about the Sea Festival in a few moments

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

**There are a number of significant capital projects that were completed in 2019. Among those are projects related to the White Rock Pier, and the storm of December 20<sup>th</sup>**

### **Beach Reconstruction**

- The East Beach was significantly damaged during the storm, and was closed as a result
- During the reconstruction, the City replaced storm-damaged picnic tables, benches, lawns, irrigation, tree lights and walkways
- The City worked closely with BNSF to remove more than 60 truckloads of logs and debris and constructed a new rip-rap sea wall
- The new Promenade features a stamped asphalt walkway, lawns, benches and picnic tables. In addition to being a well-used walkway, it is a popular picnic area for families
- Both the East Beach and West Beach suffered damages as a result of the storm. The City opened both beaches for public use as soon as possible

### **Accessible access to the beach**

- Still talking about the beach, the City consulted with the Self-Advocates of Semiahmoo and the Semiahmoo First Nation to create accessible access points to the beach, including to the popular White Rock, or P'Quals

- The City installed a concrete panel ramp at the Cypress pedestrian railway crossing, making that and other improvements on the East Beach in consultation with the Semiahmoo First Nation
- We hope to create three access points along the beach where rugged wheelchairs can access the sand. Everyone should be able to feel the sand and maybe dip a toe into the water

### **West Beach Parkade**

- The West Beach Parkade opened in the spring of 2019. This four-level parkade includes 186 parking spaces, seven electrical vehicle parking spaces and five spaces for people with disabilities to park
- When the Waterfront parking gets full, this, along with Montecito Parkade, are options for people visiting the waterfront

### **Memorial Park**

- The Memorial Park revitalization was completed in April 2019
- Memorial Park now has new washrooms, a splash zone water feature, plaza space for concerts, added light and a sloped, green lawn

## **Railway Pedestrian Crossings**

- In 2019, the City made grade rail crossing improvements at Finlay Street, Ash Street, Balsam Street, Cypress Street, Memorial Park, Oxford Street, Anderson Street and Bay Street. The funding came mostly from a federal grant and from the BNSF
- The City and BNSF partnered on the construction of the eight new railway crossings. The improvements include signals, crossing arms, walkways, retaining walls, signage, crossing surface specifications and a warning system
- This project provides much-needed rail crossing infrastructure improvements and allows the City and BNSF to meet the requirements to apply for whistle cessation

## **Generations Playground-New Surface**

- In 2019, the City installed a rubberized, asphalt surface in the accessible, all-ages Generations Playground in Ruth Johnson Park

## **PLANNING AND ZONING**

**Planning our City involves a number of key players, including City Council, City planners, community members, landowners, businesses and other levels of government**

### **Official Community Plan Review public engagement**

- The Community Official Plan Review was no exception
- The City of White Rock started collecting feedback on our Official Community Plan review in 2019
- We want to ensure community views are understood and shared with Council so any updates made to the Official Community Plan reflect the long-term needs of our community while balancing the needs of residents, local businesses, and property owners
- As part of the Official Community Plan Review, we look at transit, affordable housing, greening the city, the waterfront, Peace Arch Hospital, future development in the Town Centre and building heights outside of the Town Centre
- In June and July, we held open houses, workshops and a community forum where people shared their ideas and solutions related to these topics
- There was also an online survey for those who couldn't attend the events

- The next phase of public engagement will focus on evaluating options that build on the input received in the summer. This will be starting at the end of November, with several sessions related to the waterfront and the Town Centre, as well as an online community survey

### **Zoning Bylaw Review**

- City Council will also be doing a Zoning Bylaw Review to look at topics like coach houses, secondary suites and single family home zones
- An update to the West Beach waterfront commercial zone is already underway to encourage small-scale redevelopment on larger lots
- Some of these topics are likely to be discussed by the newly created Housing Advisory Committee, with work expected to begin in the Summer or Fall of 2020, with the completion of the Official Community Plan Review

### **Council Policy and Bylaw Review**

- There are more than one-hundred Council-endorsed policies to support the operations and governance of the City
- Since November 2018, some 41 of those policies have been reviewed and endorsed by City Council with more to come

## Rail Relocation

- White Rock has a railway that runs through the waterfront within metres of thousands of people who visit us each year. In addition, there are businesses and residential properties that border, or are across the street from, the rail line
- Rail traffic increased by 1,000 per cent between 2004 and 2013, with the associated volume of dangerous and hazardous goods transported through the waterfront communities in White Rock and Surrey's Crescent Beach
- At the September UBCM Convention in Vancouver, members of White Rock City Council met with the B.C.'s Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to ask for support in relocating White Rock's rail line. At this time, this does not fit in with the Province's plans
- The City of White Rock remains committed to looking at future long-term plans for rail traffic relocation in order to protect the public and our ecosystems
- We are hopeful that the City of Surrey can partner with us on this important undertaking

## **ECONOMIC UPDATE**

**Economic development continues to be an important focus for this Council, and we are moving forward with our economic development strategies**

### **Residential and Commercial Growth**

- Growth is vital to a community's economic health. At the same time, growth should be manageable and fit within the character of the city we wish to build together
- That said, we have had successes, with solid growth in both retail floor space and office floor space in buildings currently under construction or recently completed
- The location where we are today contributes to the total retail growth at 24,000 square feet. Other projects with new retail space are the Soleil, Foster Martin, Miramar Village Phase 2, Verve, Solterra, Altus, Beachborough and Newport
- Office floor space supporting jobs here in our community will be growing by more than 66,000 square feet, thanks to the Soleil, Foster Martin, Verve and Altus

### **Marine Drive Task Force**

- Another Council priority that has made significant progress is the Marine Drive Task Force
- This Task Force is making recommendations to Council about the Waterfront Enhancement Strategy and the Official Community Plan

- The Marine Drive Task Force will also provide comments on the City's Zoning Bylaw as it relates to parking and loading requirements for small lots on Marine Drive as well as making comments on bylaw, such as the City's sign bylaw

### **Parking Task Force**

- Among Council's strategic priorities was to form a parking task force
- The task force reviewed and recommended waterfront parking rates in May, and in July, reviewed permit parking and the pay parking decal programs
- Also in July, the task force reviewed and recommended policy changes to manage construction contractor parking
- Parking prices are now set to encourage visitors to White Rock in all seasons, including from November 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> when weekday parking is free

### **Economic Development Strategies**

- The City is looking at updates to White Rock's Economic Development Strategy. This may include hiring an economic development consultant to update the City's economic development work plan, and follow the revised Economic Strategy

## **Business Forum**

- We will be looking to the business community for your valuable input
- To that end, we are organizing a business forum for the first quarter of 2020 in partnership with the South Surrey & White Rock Chamber of Commerce and the White Rock BIA
- I look forward to connecting with you on an ongoing basis, hearing your thoughts and how we can create the right conditions for your success

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Public safety is extremely important to a community. In White Rock, we are fortunate to have an excellent fire and rescue service and the White Rock Detachment of the RCMP ensuring public safety**

## **White Rock Fire Rescue**

- White Rock Fire Rescue serves our community to prevent and minimize the loss from fire, to protect life, property and the environment from fire and natural or man-made emergencies. The department is staffed by 22 career members and up to 20 paid on-call members
- The department has responded to 1,400 calls so far this year with 220 callouts for auxiliary members

- White Rock Fire Rescue continues to focus on its inspection program related to commercial and multi-family buildings and the review of new projects and requirements for buildings as they are completed
- Training is always a high priority. So far this year, there have been 636 staff training sessions equalling 5,800 staff hours. The training includes aspects of operations and mental wellness
- White Rock Fire Rescue trained and equipped staff and put a new aerial truck into service in early 2019. This aerial truck replaces one from 1995 and has new capabilities
- Thank you, White Rock Fire Rescue, for all you do for our protection

### **White Rock Detachment of the RCMP**

- In the past year, the White Rock Detachment of the RCMP has focused on crime prevention, community engagement and enforcement in the waterfront area
- From June to September, police were involved in foot patrols on the beach, Promenade and Marine Drive on Friday and Saturday nights, doing about 435 kilometres of foot patrols this past summer
- Noise complaints, assaults, beach fires, rail safety and traffic enforcement were the most common investigations dealt with by the RCMP

- Police heard positive comments from the public about the patrols
- Volunteers put in 784.75 hours between July 1st and October 1<sup>st</sup>. Speed Watch recorded 6,265 vehicles; and Stop Watch recorded 508 vehicles at stop signs
- Police also provided support for the Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days, Canada Day and the TD Concert Series
- I had the good fortune to go on a ride-about with the White Rock RCMP this summer
- I was impressed with the care, concern and consideration the RCMP gave to the community
- Thank you for protecting White Rock

## **WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**And speaking of safety, everyone can agree that there is nothing more important than safe, clean drinking water and a healthy environment**

### **Water Treatment Plant**

- The City of White Rock's Water Treatment Plant became operational in April and was fully commissioned by the beginning of May

- Funding from our federal and provincial partners made this possible. The project came in under budget and the water quality test results continue to be excellent

## **Water Community Advisory Panel**

- City Council created the Water Quality Panel as one of Council's strategic priorities
- The panel received a presentation about the new water treatment plant in June, a presentation on the City's water distribution system in July and, in September, made recommendations to Council regarding the City's current water rate structure
- Next, the Panel will review Water System Masterplan Update and the water infrastructure projects in the City's Financial Plan
- The City of White Rock's water continues to be of excellent quality, with a strong supply for all users

## **Waste collection study**

- A consultant was retained in August 2019 to conduct a review and analysis and conduct a waste audit of multi-family and business waste needs in White Rock
- Public consultation has been scheduled for early in the New Year

## **Tree Planting**

- Trees are an important feature for a city, and a valuable resource. They generate oxygen, maintain our environment, have a natural cooling effect and beautify our city
- The City of White Rock, with its community partners, has planted 500 trees in Ruth Johnson Park in addition to tree plantings on city boulevards. We are taking a good look at more plantings, including a future tree canopy strategy

## **FESTIVALS AND EVENTS**

**There's no doubt that we are a beautiful city. Festivals and events give residents and visitors more reasons to come to our City by the Sea**

### **Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days**

- The City of White Rock presented the Sea Festival in 2019, August second to fourth
- This year marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the festival. The City partnered with the Semiahmoo First Nation, expanding the festival to incorporate Semiahmoo Park, East Beach, West Beach and Bayview Park
- Thanks to sponsors and partners Semiahmoo First Nation, Coast Capital Savings, Oceana PARC and BNSF

## Canada Day

- Canada Day 2019 was a big success with music, fireworks and Pirates in the Park. The City added a community stage and kids' zone at Bayview Park, and officially opened Memorial Park and the West Beach Parkade
- Thank you to all the event partners and sponsors, including the White Rock BIA, Amica White Rock, Budget Blinds and many others

## Tour de White Rock

- The Tour de White Rock celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary the weekend of July 13 and 14. A TD Concerts for the Pier concert and a public market were incorporated into the Saturday night
- The 5 Corners was hopping the Saturday night after Tour de White Rock. The event finished with a special 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary free concert on Sunday afternoon at Memorial Park

## 5 Corners Buskers and Comedy Festival

- The 5 Corners Buskers and Comedy Festival took place in September to a sold-out crowd
- Visitors enjoyed street performers and comedy acts, including Charlie Demers of CBC's The Debaters and local talent Lizzie Allen

## Concerts for the Pier (City and BIA)

- This summer's Concerts for the Pier series was bigger and better than ever, thanks to so many community sponsors and the hard work of City staff and our event-producing partner, the White Rock BIA
- A special thank you to the title sponsor, TD Canada Trust
- Thank you to
  - Edward Jones Investment Advisors of White Rock-South Surrey
  - Oceana PARC
  - Re/Max Colonial Pacific Realty
  - Foster Martin-Landmark
  - 107.7 Pulse FM, *and*
  - Peace Arch News

## ART AND CULTURE

International art collector, and business person, **Victor Pinchuk** said: “Art, freedom and creativity will change society faster than politics.” People express their ideas, thoughts and aspirations through their art

## Pop-Uptown Gallery

- The City of White Rock, partnering with Landmark Properties, supports local artists through the Pop-Uptown Gallery program

- The gallery had another fabulous year, allowing local artists to use the gallery to create art and share their artwork with the community

## **Public Art**

- White Rock unveiled two new pieces of public art in 2019
- Stande, by Illarion Gallant, was commissioned by the City to honour the 70th anniversary of the Peace Arch Hospital Auxiliary
- This piece is located in a lovely garden area—the McCracken Courtyard—just north of the main entrance to the hospital
- Coastal Cradle by artist Andy Davies was installed at Memorial Park as part of the park’s redevelopment
- I encourage everyone to check out the many galleries that are around town in White Rock

## **Museum collections**

- With Remembrance Day approaching, I encourage everyone to visit the White Rock Museum and Archives for the Lest We Forget—White Rock During the War Years exhibit
- Learn how Memorial Park came about and how it was named
- Thousands of fathers, husbands, sons, mothers and daughters served our country on the front lines

- Those who stayed home in White Rock also served in the work force, in convalescence, in voluntary organizations—wherever they were needed
- We are so fortunate to have the former rail station on the waterfront, a fitting location for our residents and visitors to learn about, or remember White Rock’s history

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

**There is no greater tribute to democracy than to engage the community in decision-making. That is very important to this Council. We want to, and need to, hear your voices**

### **Community Forums**

- City Council promised to host Community Forums on a variety of topics, and we have delivered
- Community forums are open to the public, they include subject matter experts, and they encourage the community to stay engaged
- The first Community Forum was held in June to review Council Accomplishments; Council Strategic Priorities for 2018 to 2022; Capital Works Projects; and the Water Treatment Plant and Water Quality
- In July, the City hosted a Forum on Affordable Housing

- The City hosted a forum with TransLink in October to talk about changes to Route 351

## **Let's Talk**

- Seven Let's Talk sessions were booked with Council and the community in April, May, June and July and again in September, October and November
- White Rock City Council members each month host an informal community meeting, inviting residents to the White Rock Library to discuss how together we can make White Rock even better
- The next session takes place on Saturday, December 7th in the White Rock Library

## **Dogs on the Promenade pilot program**

- Based on community input, the City of White Rock launched the Dogs on the Promenade pilot program
- The City surveyed residents earlier in 2019
- Of the 1,388 people who responded—63 per cent said they have a dog and 37 per cent do not—nearly 76 per cent said they support dogs being on White Rock's Promenade during the off-season, October 1st to March 31<sup>st</sup>

- The Dogs on the Promenade Task Force is responsible for creating the measurements of success and will report back to Council with the task force's recommendations after the pilot finishes in April

## WHAT'S NEXT

- In White Rock, we have accomplished so much. Together
- So where do we go from here?
- I can say on behalf of my peers on City Council that we seven will continue to serve you, to ask your opinions, to listen to you and to make this great city even better

## CAPITAL OPPORTUNITY

- As Mayor, I hear a lot of personal stories and great ideas. I am approached at the supermarket, on the street, at public events by people who want to tell me how much they love this city—our city
- I listen to each and every story, and hear each and every voice
- I know my colleagues on City Council can say the same
- That is why we are engaging the community on our biggest decision yet

## COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTION

- As you know, developers pay cities like White Rock fees such as development cost charges to assist with utilities like water, sewage and roads. They also pay community amenity contributions
- So we have an opportunity to spend these funds. We'd like to talk to you about where we should make our capital investments, which can include \$7.78 million to potentially \$14 million in capital funding
- We will be looking for public input starting December 4<sup>th</sup>
- We will provide opportunities to get involved in a number of ways and will have an update on our website soon
- Some of the options City Council is considering are:
  - Updates to White's Rock Pier
  - Affordable housing opportunities
  - Community Campus--administrative and public space
  - Waterfront parks
  - Park Improvements
  - McCaud Park Plan, Centre Street Walkway
  - Funicular
  - Theatre Facility or Convention Centre with community access

- What an exciting time to be your Mayor, working with my colleagues on City Council, with staff, engaging other levels of government, the Semiahmoo First Nation, businesses and residents
- Documentary filmmaker and author Michael Moore said “Democracy is not a spectator sport, it's a participatory event. If we don't participate in it, it ceases to be a democracy.”
- In White Rock, we participate. In White Rock, we are making this city even better—together
- I would like to leave you with this short video, produced for the State of the City Address by FlinnWest Solutions Inc. Thank you, Jamie Carson, Grady Flinn and your entire team
- Thank you, City of White Rock staff, the White Rock and South Surrey Chamber of Commerce, sponsor FortisBC, Oceana PARC and all of the guests here today
- I am so proud to serve as your Mayor. I can't wait to see where we choose to go next—together.

***VIDEO: Together We're White Rock***

**/END**