

# DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER RE - UNIFICATION STUDY THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER CALLS IT AMALGAMATION

By: Kerry Morris - July 28, 2015



Nearly a year ago, the District of North Vancouver approved a fast-track analysis regarding the possibility and benefits of uniting the District and City once again into a single municipal entity. A Blue-ribbon panel of 'experts' was assembled to consider the issues and merits of proceeding with what the District has characterized as 'Re-Unification'.

The City of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver were both invited to participate, and both declined involvement in a process they described as 'Amalgamation'. The District, bent on proceeding with the process anyway, appointed persons from all three jurisdictions to consider the issues.

The 'Blue-Ribbon' panel completed its work back in October of 2014, just before the election. Due to politics the District decided to 'kick the can' down the road for a new council to consider. The only decision made at the time was to deliver a copy of the Report to both the City of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver. Negative responses from both were eventually received.

We're now 8 months into the new District council's mandate, and the 'Re-Unification' study is being revisited by a 'Committee-Of-The-Whole' meeting held Monday July 27. The purpose of that meeting, to allow each member of council to air his or her position on 'Re-Unification' and the Blue-Ribbon-Panel Report. They appear united in their resolve to continue the push toward Re-Unification / Amalgamation.

The evenings discussion turns to next steps. Much of that discussion identifies that City and District residents both speak favourably about amalgamation, but the problem seems to rest with objections from City politicians and senior staff. Bluntly put, how do you work toward Amalgamation when your prospective mate wants no part of the proposed relationship. The answer: 'Go around them!'

The balance of the evenings discussion seems to focus on going around the uncooperative City council and administration, by seeking direct opinions and support from City residents. The strategy now seems to be to engage North Vancouver City residents directly by perfecting a question regarding their appetite for amalgamation. Council members suggest a direct contact survey. An even better idea may be a non-binding plebiscite on the subject of 'Re-unification'. Success will lie in the formulation of the question.

I can almost see from my perch on 15th Street, smoke rising from the Mayor's office as he fumes over the possibility of direct engagement of City residents by the Districts political apparatus. Mayor Mussatto calls the RCMP, instructing them to erect a concrete wall around the City's parameter to ensure no one with a survey pad gets within a 100 feet of a City doorway. Scud water balloons have been ordered and Mussatto ups the aunty by threatening to hold his breath until Mayor Walton agrees to apologize.

Just kidding, but I think you get the point. Any decision by District council to circumvent the City will likely cause Darrell to lose his cookies and will undoubtedly result in some form of retaliation by the City. We'll do something huge like rounding up all the wayward racoons in the City, issuing them Starbucks cards and busing them to Edgemont for green tea. We'll allege the Racoons pleaded for new diggs. Yes, your right. The whole affair will likely degenerate into a very adolescent political dispute. I'm just gobsmacked!