

THE CAMPUS RESIDENT

DECEMBER 7, 2023
VOLUME 13, ISSUE 2



Police, UNA and UBC Renew Focus on Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is back in the spotlight after a senior was struck by a youth on a scooter on a Wesbrook sidewalk. **Page 2**

UNA and UBC Clash Over University's Land Use Plan

Directors say UNA sidelined during consultation process.

BY WARREN CARAGATA

The UNA pointedly refused to formally participate in a recent UBC-run public hearing on its ambitious and controversial land use plan.

The UNA board directed Richard Watson, its chair, to refuse to participate in the Nov. 7 hearing on UBC's Campus Vision 2050 land use plan because of the university's decision to "explicitly and unaccountably prohibit the adjustment of neighbourhood densities", along with

other aspects of the plan.

The decision follows a longstanding concern of the association of being sidelined by the university during high-level decision-making.

"We fail," the board said in a Oct. 25 submission to the hearing, "to see the point of a public hearing that precludes changes based on public input. Residents want and deserve governance that gives them opportunities to question policy makers and hold them politically accountable."

During their Oct. 16 meeting, UBC's Board of Governors referred the plan to a

public hearing as mandated under provincial law.

The board is expected to discuss the plan during a Dec. 5 meeting in light of what was said at the public hearing. The board will then have the option to send the plan to the provincial government for adoption, or it can decline to endorse it.

While UNA's board took issue with the procedural rules for the public hearing, UBC officials say the Board of Governors is allowed to change proposed neighbourhood densities, up or down. But that would require another public hearing, which would necessitate a review of the results of that second hearing by the board. Only then and upon approval would the provincial government—led by Premier David Eby—Point Grey MLA and Wesbrook resident—weigh in.

The majority of submissions sent to the public hearing were critical of the plan. The proposed population densities and the proportion of rental units to leasehold sales have been a major concern of critics, who have called on the provincial government to reject it.

While the UNA did not formally participate in the hearing, director Murray McCutcheon made a verbal submission, where he said the plan is premised on "profits over priorities that serve the public interest". He also criticized the university's "lack of accountability" and said the UNA has been "marginalized" during the consultation process.

Jen McCutcheon, the elected representative on Metro Vancouver council for the UBC and endowment lands, told the hearing the plan would see population densities in the university neighbourhoods that would be nearly double the density in downtown Vancouver—37,000 people per square kilometre compared to the current downtown density of 18,832 people per square kilometre.

The plan foresees a 2050 population of some 37,000 people, more than double the current population of 15,000.

See pages 4 and 5 for the UNA's full submission to the public hearing, as well as text of director McCutcheon's speech.

WARREN CARAGATA IS A MEMBER OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT NEWSPAPER COMMITTEE.

Christmas Trees: The Rules in the University Neighbourhoods

Real Christmas trees, regulations, and eco-friendly disposal methods for campus residents. **Page 3**



Police Staffing Lags Population Growth, RCMP Says

The number of police officers on campus hasn't changed since 2005. Does UBC need a stronger police presence? **Page 6**



Confronting the Climate Emergency in UBC Neighbourhoods

The Campus Resident talks to UNA and university experts in an effort to learn more about UBC's plans to address climate change. **Page 8**



Holidays In The University Neighbourhoods



With Christmas lights up in Wesbrook Village and throughout campus, residents are getting ready to celebrate the holidays in the university neighbourhoods. Inside this edition of *The Campus Resident* you'll find a story on the rules regarding real Christmas trees on page 3, and our holiday events guide on Page 11. Happy Holidays! (Photo: Ada Bucur)

Family of Victim in Scooter Collision Calls for Pedestrian Safety Awareness

BY EMMANUEL SAMOGLU

The family of a Wesbrook senior who was struck by a non-motorized scooter on a sidewalk has appealed to the UNA for help in enforcing rules to prevent similar incidents from occurring.

Wesbrook Place resident Lena Bella-

my, 87, was struck by a 10-year-old youth on a non-motorized scooter on Oct. 16 while returning to her home at Tapestry Retirement Residence after her daily walk.

Hannah Tregidgo, Bellamy's granddaughter, said she was taken by ambulance to Vancouver General Hospital after the

incident and treated for a fractured kneecap and a head injury, receiving stitches to her forehead. She may also need surgery.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

"Lena didn't even stumble. She was hit right to the ground and the impact was serious."

Police, UNA and Campus Officials Renew Focus on Pedestrian Safety

The RCMP is exploring options to reign in speeding motorists on campus, while the UNA has expressed its support for the installation of a pedestrian signal at a busy crossing used by students and parents.

BY AMIE BERNAERDT

For residents of the university neighbourhoods, traffic and pedestrian safety has always been a concern.

That concern was sadly heightened after a 10-year-old child riding a non-motorized scooter collided with a senior on the sidewalk near the Tapestry retirement residence on Wesbrook Mall in mid-October.

The senior sustained a fractured kneecap and stitches to the head, and may have to undergo surgery, a Tapestry official said after the incident, adding there have also recently been numerous “close calls.”

On November 17, Staff Sgt. Chuck Lan, the RCMP UBC’s detachment’s commanding officer, told The Campus Resident that the incident wasn’t reported to police at the time and the incident is under investigation.

The incident prompted the University Neighbourhoods Association to ask strata chairs to remind residents about the need to walk bicycles, scooters, and other wheeled forms of transport on sidewalks.

In addition to that incident, residents have often complained of close calls between cars and pedestrians on the roundabouts at West 16th, and frequent cases of speeding on West 16th and Southwest Marine Drive.

In response to those concerns, UNA operations manager Wegland Sit wrote to the B.C. Ministry of Transportation calling for a pedestrian signal at the pedestrian crossing at West 16th and Binning Road. The crossing links Wesbrook with Hampton Place and is heavily used by residents, many of them students attending Norma Rose Point School, north of 16th.

“This crosswalk is one of the key corridors for students and parents to travel to and from school during the school year,”

Sit said in the Oct. 26 letter.

The crossing is used by 900 pedestrians a day. “Our community has been voicing their concerns about this crossing for a very long time,” he said. “There is no controlled crossing across the busy 16th Avenue corridor at all.”

The RCMP raised the issue of traffic safety in a presentation to the UNA board of directors during their October meeting.

“We’ve been in and around schools, being really visible issuing tickets and also warnings,” Lan told the meeting.

Speeding has been a major concern for police, he said. “We’ve been really focusing on speeds on 16th Avenue, Chancellor Boulevard, and Southwest Marine Drive.”

Since July, police have issued more than 80 speeding tickets, 18 of which involved motorists travelling at excessive speeds, which is any speed 40 km/h or more above the posted limit.

The RCMP recently dealt with two notable instances. RCMP stopped a driver on West 16th going 144 km/h in a 50 km/h zone. In the other case, RCMP arrested a driver travelling 132 km/h in a 60 km/h zone on Chancellor Boulevard.

Drivers stopped at such speeds are fined up to \$468 (depending on the speed) and have their vehicles impounded for seven days, Lan says. ICBC can levy additional financial penalties.



The roundabout at West 16th and Wesbrook Mall, where there have been numerous reports of close calls between motorists and pedestrians. (Photo: Wegland Sit)

There have also been discussions, Lan says, with the transportation ministry about creating traffic calming measures along West 16th and posting speed limit reminders.

The City of Vancouver says traffic calming measures—including speed bumps, traffic circles, and curb bulges—can encourage safer driving by reducing speeds and traffic volumes.

UBC officials say they’ve made the issue a top priority, especially since walking, biking, and rolling - using scooters, skateboards, mobility aids and more - are the most common ways of getting around on campus.

In October, speed bumps were set up on Iona Drive in Chancellor Place and pedestrian priority zones have also been expanded.

On the Point Grey peninsula, jurisdiction is always complicated. The responsibility for traffic calming depends on where the jurisdiction lies, says Krista Falkner, the transportation engineering manager with UBC’s planning unit.

Roads and spaces within campus boundaries are managed and maintained by UBC. Others have a mixed ownership, which might include the transportation ministry and the University Endowment Lands.

In the university neighbourhoods, the UNA is responsible for monitoring traffic issues and collecting community feedback.

Falkner says the first steps in implementing calming measures would involve collecting traffic information, assessing the site, and completing an engineering analysis. After that, changes would be made.

Main Mall is a perhaps the most prominent pedestrian priority zone on campus. It was converted to a car-free corridor a decade ago.

Falkner says residents of the university neighbourhoods should share any traffic concerns with the UNA, and for traffic issues within campus, they should contact UBC Campus and Community Planning.

AMIE BERNAERDT IS A SECOND-YEAR STUDENT AT UBC WITH PLANS TO MAJOR IN CREATIVE WRITING OR ANTHROPOLOGY. SHE LIVES IN WESBROOK PLACE.

Q&A WITH KRISTA FALKNER, MANAGER OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING, UBC CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY PLANNING.

What can be done to make campus safer for pedestrian traffic? Are there any current safety concerns being addressed, or that should be addressed?

Pedestrian safety is a top priority because walking/rolling is our most popular mode of transportation on campus and pedestrians can be more vulnerable. Our commitment to pedestrian safety can be seen in the expansion of pedestrian priority zones on campus.

In these areas we have stencils and signage to indicate it is a slow zone for all micro-mobility modes (biking, rolling). We also run education and awareness programs to help the entire campus community learn about the importance of sharing the space.

Are there any current plans in motion to make campus safer?

Campus Vision 2050’s Connected Campus big idea sets the long-term vision for a future campus that prioritizes sustainable modes of transportation through an expanded pedestrian priority zone, an efficient cycling and micro-mobility network and a network of zero-emission local transit-shuttle routes.

In the near-term, we review and update our transpor-

tation plans regularly to respond to changes in the way people are getting around campus. At the building scale, new building and public realm projects are being designed to make sure there is enough space allocated to moving people around safely and comfortably. This means building sidewalks that are wide enough for the number of people using them, for example.

Which authority is responsible for changes? For example, if a crosswalk were to be made into a traffic light, or other safety measures were implemented, who would look after that?

Roads within the campus boundaries are operated and maintained by UBC while all other roads have a mixed ownership that might include the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and the University Endowment Lands. Changes or requests for changes, regardless of road jurisdiction, typically follow a similar approach which is to first collect information, assess the site and complete an engineering analysis. This is followed by working with the appropriate road owner to implement the changes.

For implementing new safety measures, what would the process look like?

On the UBC campus, we would review safety enhancement opportunities and identify if there are mitigation and/or enhancement measures possible to address the safety concern or opportunity. In some instances, there may be behaviour issues to address, in other instances it

may be a physical change that is necessary like a sign or pavement marking.

What role does the UNA play in traffic management and safety?

The UNA is responsible for managing roads within the university neighbourhoods, so they are involved in monitoring and collecting feedback from the community. When an issue or concern is identified that might require a change, the UNA follows standard engineering practices and works closely with UBC to review potential changes and opportunities for improvements.

If residents have any questions or concerns they would want to raise, who can they speak to?

Campus residents can contact the UNA to share safety feedback regarding neighbourhood roadways. If campus residents have questions or concerns about roads outside the neighbourhoods, they can contact Campus and Community Planning.

What can drivers and pedestrians do to keep campus safe for everyone?

The most important thing people can do is be aware of and considerate of all road users. Drivers should always follow general traffic rules, avoid speeding, and be on the lookout for vulnerable road users. Pedestrians should use marked crosswalks, and make sure they are visible, particularly as the winter season approaches.

Christmas Trees: The Rules

Real Christmas trees, regulations, and eco-friendly disposal methods in the university neighbourhoods.

BY ADA BUCUR

For many of us, the arrival of Christmas is synonymous with decorating a tree. We embellish it with baubles, stars, lights, even candies, and place gifts for the whole family beneath it.

For some, it's a tradition; for others, simply another reason for celebration. Undoubtedly, it's a moment we cherish. Without a tree, Christmas seems to lose its charm.

However, in some university neighbourhood buildings, residents are not allowed to have real trees. The regulations aren't standardized, and there's no list showing buildings where residents cannot have a natural tree. People might discover this restriction even after buying a tree.

"UNA does not have jurisdiction over private space," says Wegland Sit, the UNA's operations manager.

The prohibition of real Christmas trees in some residential buildings, especially high-rises, has been a long-standing issue in Vancouver and across Canada. The UBC campus area is no exception.

But who prohibits real Christmas trees and why?

"Communities with restrictions on live Christmas trees have specifically requested changes to their bylaws to suit

their needs. Bylaws are set by each strata and can only be voted on and changed at a general meeting," says Christine Locke, a property manager at one of the neighbourhood's residential buildings.

Lawyer Lisa Mackie, writing on the blog of Vancouver's Alexander Holburn law firm, writes that, "Communities may wish to prohibit live trees for various reasons, including avoiding potential fire hazards they present to the building and dodging the damage that can be sustained to the common area hallways during transportation."

Tony Gioventu, executive director of the Condominium Home Owners Association, writes that, "Live trees still capture our nostalgic celebration of Christmas, yet they also come with the dangers of increased fire risk, damaging building common areas, pest infestations (always a treat when the bugs hatch), and increased maintenance."

Although the risk of fire seems to be the primary motivation for such bylaws, it doesn't necessarily hold true. In a 2009 CBC article on Christmas trees and fire



hazards, then-Vancouver fire chief Gabe Roder agreed that natural trees are no more risky than artificial ones. "We don't feel they cause a tremendous fire hazard," he said.

So the primary issue seems to be the mess and damage caused by transporting natural trees into buildings, which could be resolved if everyone used a tree bag before dragging the tree through the communal area.

While artificial trees are an option, natural trees are preferred for many reasons, especially because they are seen as environmentally friendly and recyclable. But how environmentally friendly seems to depend on keeping an artificial tree for at least a few years.

On the UNA website, residents can learn about free recycling services provided by the Green Depot at Wesbrook Community Centre. Recently, an online

tool called the Waste Wizard was implemented on the Green Depot's website, letting residents enter the item they wish to recycle before receiving the best disposal options.

Entering "Christmas Tree" will display the available options. "Residents can adopt a pay-to-reuse service locally at UBC Botanical Garden, where real Christmas trees can be recycled by donation. Or dispose of them at the transfer station," the UNA's Sit says.

So, to avoid any unpleasant surprises before buying the perfect tree for Christmas and dragging it upstairs, check your bylaws.

ADA BUCUR IS A CAMPUS RESIDENT, POSSESSES A GRAPHIC DESIGN DIPLOMA, A PHOTOGRAPHY CERTIFICATE, AND OVER TWO DECADES OF JOURNALISM EXPERTISE GAINED IN HER NATIVE ROMANIA.

WESBROOK LAW

Wesbrook Village resident and UBC law alumni providing estate law services at UBC.

- Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Representation Agreements
- Probate and Administration Applications
- Estate Planning
- Notarizations

In-person meetings are via appointment in Wesbrook Village. Available for home visits to clients whose circumstances require it.

Please contact us for an appointment or for more information.

Email: info@wesbrooklaw.ca

Phone: 778-522-8480

WesbrookLaw.ca

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Addressing UNA directors and other attendees at the November board meeting, Tregidgo said the youth on the scooter fled the scene without assisting Bellamy.

"Lena didn't even stumble. She was hit right to the ground and the impact was serious," she said.

"Our family's shock and concern about the accident and Lena's injuries were multiplied when we learned that the young person who hit her and their family did not stop and help her in any way after the incident."

Since the Oct. 16 incident, Tregidgo and acquaintances of Bellamy said they have witnessed several instances of youth riding their scooters on sidewalks. In one instance, a youth was riding while their parent was distracted on their phone.

Staff Sgt. Chuck Lan, the RCMP UBC's detachment's commanding officer, told The Campus Resident police are investigating the incident, but no further details have been provided.

While Tregido acknowledged that Provincial law lays out the regulations that apply to sidewalks, she asked the UNA to

raise awareness of the incident and to help enforce rules that generally prohibit the use of scooters, bicycles, and other modes of non-motorized wheeled transportation on sidewalks.

In response, UNA director Murray McCutcheon said, "You likely know we have very limited powers at the UNA, and so we have the practice of moral persuasion and ability to convene stakeholders and agitate and that sort of thing."

Carole Jolly, director at UBC community development and transportation, said the university can help raise awareness around pedestrian safety on campus.

"There are some joint programs and initiatives that we have in place already, particularly a Walk and Roll to School program," she added.

"I would like to take this back to those programs and make sure that we're communicating, providing adequate information to the community and through the school programs that we have in place right now."

EMMANUEL SAMOGLU IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT.

DECEMBER 7,
2023

Volume 13
Issue 2

MANAGING EDITOR, EMMANUEL SAMOGLOU
DESIGN AND PRODUCTION, REBECCA IND

NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
EAGLE GLASSHEIM, CHAIR AND UNA DIRECTOR
FEI LIU, UNA DIRECTOR
WARREN CARAGATA, UNA RESIDENT MEMBER
ROBYN STARKEY, UNA RESIDENT MEMBER
VIVIAN SU, UNA RESIDENT MEMBER
SOFIA NGIENG, UNA RESIDENT MEMBER
JENNIFER CHEN, UNA RESIDENT MEMBER

THE CAMPUS RESIDENT
EDITOR@THECAMPUSRESIDENT.CA

The Campus Resident is printed
quarterly and can be accessed online
at **THECAMPUSRESIDENT.CA**.

Published by the University
Neighbourhoods Association
#202-5923 Berton Avenue,
Vancouver BC, V6S 0B3.

© 2023, The Campus Resident

We acknowledge that The Campus
Resident is published on the ancestral,
unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm
(Musqueam), skwxwú7mesh (Squamish)
and selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.

UNA director Murray
McCutcheon was present at the
Nov. 7 public hearing to speak
against UBC’s proposed land
use plan for the Point Grey
campus. The entirety of his
speech is reprinted here.

BY MURRAY MCCUTCHEON

My name is Murray McCutcheon. I have been a resident of the UNA since 2016. I have undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees from UBC. My father has been a professor (now emeritus) for more than 50 years. I work for a UBC spinoff company. And I have been an elected director representing residents on the board of the UNA since 2019.

Profit Over Priorities: UNA Official Says BC Government Should Kill UBC’s Land Use Plan

Needless to say, I have strong ties to this university and I care deeply about its future. It is from this connection that I feel a sense of responsibility, of stewardship, for this public institution.

And I feel compelled to speak against a plan that is based on a failing model of development, is not accountable to community concerns, and ultimately does not serve the long-term needs of the university or this

burgeoning municipality. To understand the driving force behind Campus Vision 2050, you just need to look at where we’re gathered for this public hearing—in the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre. Robert Lee was profiled in a March 2019 article in the Vancouver Sun entitled, “UBC Turns Land into a River of Gold.” As the pioneer of UBC’s land development model, Robert Lee’s goal was to create an income stream for the university that would flow, like a river of gold, in perpetuity. If the measure of success for this model is building up the endowment, then it is mission accomplished. However, by other measures, it falls seriously short.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Future Housing at UBC Should be 100 per cent Affordable and Sustainable

Imagine a 39-storey spire in Wesbrook Place, nearly twice the height of any existing building on campus and visible across Pacific Spirit Park. Imagine a phalanx of 30-plus storey luxury condo towers in Acadia Park (now a student neighbourhood) looking down on families queued up at the Commons Block for the weekly food bank. Imagine the proportion of future housing at UBC that is affordable topping out at 25 per cent.

And keep in mind that, according to UBC’s grade scale, anything below 49 per cent is an F.

What you have just imagined is UBC’s most ambitious housing plan of the 21st century. UBC’s Board of Governors and the Provincial Government must now decide whether or not to set that plan in concrete. If the current Campus Vision 2050 goes forward, the one truth it would make visible far and wide is this: that UBC’s loftiest

This article is adapted from an open letter by UBC professor Christopher Rea, sent in November to Premier David Eby, UBC President and Vice-Chancellor Benoit-Antoine Bacon, and UBC Board of Governors Chair Nancy McKenzie.

BY CHRISTOPHER REA

ambition for its land is to turn that land into money.

Now imagine an alternative future. UBC’s new president and the Provincial Government collaborate to ensure that all future housing here is affordable, forever. That new housing respects and enhances the environment. That students, staff, teachers, and others who want to work here are all housed—and housed well. That the land is not exhausted.

The Provincial Government has a decision to make. Along with Campus Vision 2050, UBC is proposing revisions to its Land Use Plan. If the Province accedes to these revisions, UBC will proceed to increase density while decreasing affordability and livability. UBC’s proposal is so terrible because it is the product of an unresolved conflict of interest.

UBC and the Province need to develop a new financing model that eliminates the incentive to commoditize university lands that has led UBC, again and again, to neglect the need for affordable housing. If the province permits UBC to continue its resource-extraction approach, the university will continue to fail in its stewardship of the land. Given the opportunity, UBC will always dig another oil well.

In addition to creating irreversible harm locally, UBC’s current plan would set negative precedents for Canada. The plan must be revised to achieve better outcomes on housing affordability, access, community, environmental sustainability, and reconciliation.

The table on this page explains a partial comparison of the outcomes of current UBC proposals, compared with superior outcomes of a revised plan.

It also provides sufficient reasons for the Province to take these steps:

1. Deny UBC’s requested revisions to the Land Use Plan, including the dramatic proposed increase to allowable building heights;
2. Work with UBC’s new leadership to formulate a new plan for financing affordable housing on UBC lands, including government loans and loan guarantees; and
3. Revise the University Act to mandate that all housing constructed on university lands be affordable and environmentally sustainable.

- Positive outcomes would include:
- Creation of a much greater volume of affordable housing that is affordable in perpetuity;
 - Holding UBC accountable to measurable Provincial targets on housing affordability and environmental sustainability;
 - Enhancing the local community by making UBC livable to middle- and lower-income people, including not just UBC students and employees but also local teachers and workers;
 - Avoiding the irreversible blight on the region that would be created by the construction of multiple 30+-story towers on high ground;
 - Demonstrating the Province’s proactive commitment to getting housing policy right, and ushering in a new era of government-university cooperation.

All of these points have been made before by people who care deeply about this place – by UBC students, faculty, and staff; by campus residents and community members; by organizations such as the UNA; and by many scientists, including the head of the UBC Sustainability Hub.

All of us believe that UBC can and should do better with its land.

The Premier of British Columbia can ensure that it does.
Tuum est. 🌿

CHRISTOPHER REA IS A CAMPUS RESIDENT, A UBC PROFESSOR, AND A 2023 RECIPIENT OF A UBC KILLAM FACULTY RESEARCH PRIZE.

UBC Draft Plan	Outcome	Revised Plan	Outcome
UBC student and employee rentals funded through market leases	More UBC land unaffordable for 99-year lease period; smaller proportion of lands used for UBC people; reduction of green space (total and per capita); less residential land kept in reserve for future generations	Rental housing funded with loans and loan guarantees from provincial government; shared equity and co-development programs enable affordable ownership for UBC workforce	Faster construction of more student housing; faster construction of more employee housing; more green space per capita; more land reserved for future generations
75% market housing; 25% affordable housing	Worse affordability and sustainability; longer commutes for displaced UBC people; more investor-owners; other schools learn to treat housing as a commodity	Mandate that all future UBC housing be affordable	Greater volume of affordable housing in perpetuity; shorter commutes; better sustainability and social fabric; positive precedent for other parts of Canada
Few measurable sustainability commitments	Greater carbon footprint; more embodied carbon in buildings; less mass timber and wood-frame construction	Commitment to clearly-defined, measurable environmental sustainability commitments	Lower carbon footprint; more mass timber and wood-frame construction
Many concrete towers up to 39 storeys (117 metres), most or all market leasehold	Worse ecology; more exclusivity; ruin environment of UBC, neighbourhoods, Pacific Spirit Park, and region; social isolation and community division; more towers in future	Emphasize ground-oriented and mid-rise units; tower heights not to exceed tree canopy	Achieve housing goals at lower cost to landscape and environment; social cohesion and community; less encroachment on Pacific Spirit Park

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

This plan is premised on profit over priorities that serve the public interest—namely providing security of housing for UBC faculty, staff, students, and neighbourhood employees; creating an environmentally responsible plan that befits a leading academic institution in the midst of a climate emergency; and building livable neighbourhoods, with ample green space, services, child care, and schools that are the basis of thriving communities.

The problem with the plan is that it is based on an outmoded land development model. Let me ask some questions:

If the development model has been so successful, why are my UBC faculty friends so worried about being able to recruit great colleagues into their departments?

Why are so many postdocs and students struggling to find places to live?

Why is it that UBC has the highest proportion of non-owner-occupied market housing units—49 per cent—in Metro Vancouver, as reported by Andy Yan

of Simon Fraser? In other words, half of the units are investor owned. What a lost opportunity!

If UBC believes there is a climate emergency, which it declared in 2019, why is this plan being rushed through before a Neighbourhood Climate Action Plan is in place?

Why are the development planners not accountable to elected representatives?

The lack of meaningful accountability to the public has been evident throughout this planning process. The number that really matters can be found buried in Table 2 on page 17 of the land use plan. The total area of planned development: 16,483,000 square feet. This is a 50 per cent increase above the current plan and will create a residential density greater than downtown. The information was revealed only at the end of the consultation period in May 2022. Since then, it has not changed, but it is now dressed up in a 66-page glossy report.

Let's call it what it is. UBC set a revenue goal and the rest of the plan is solving for this. There has been no meaningful consultation or accountability for concerns about

affordability, about the scale of the development, over the financing objectives, the constraints or opportunities.

The lack of accountability has been evident in how the UNA has been marginalized in this process. Before I was a UNA director, I became involved in land use planning issues as a concerned resident, and I and other residents were given time to address the board of governors directly and to meet with the university president. Our concerns were taken seriously and incorporated into revisions to the Stadium Road plan.

What has been my experience on the board of the UNA, which is the only elected board representing the 15,000 residents? We are “managed” via a liaison committee of the board. Our request to meet with the board of governors was denied. We have repeatedly expressed concerns that represent the feedback from residents. And these concerns have not been addressed.

So you can forgive me for being cynical about this process. Why do I bother? I bother because I feel a sense of responsibility for

this place. My fear is that in 2050, people will look back and say, whatever were they thinking?

What would Robert Lee have done? He was an entrepreneur. I think he would have realized that version 1.0 of UBC's land development model from the 1990s is not suitable for the complex challenges facing the university in the 2020s. He would say, as he told the Vancouver Sun in 2019, “you need an entrepreneur to get it done.” In these times, we need outside-the-box thinking. We need to be creative, to establish a new development model that solves for the problems today and for the future ahead, not double down on an outmoded model that is failing.

You can do better. You have to do better. And that is why I think the province should reject this plan and send UBC back to the drawing board. 🍷

MURRAY MCCUTCHEON IS A DIRECTOR OF THE UNA AND A UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENT.

Upon review of UBC's amended land use plan, the UNA drafted the following submission for the university's Nov. 7 public hearing.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The UNA represents 15,000 UBC residents who will be directly impacted by UBC's revised Land Use Plan. Throughout UBC's Campus Vision 2050 planning process, the UNA has advocated for prioritizing sustainable, affordable, and livable neighbourhood development. These goals align with the University's own stated commitments on climate, housing availability and affordability, and the quality of its urban form. In spite of these shared goals, UBC has advanced a Land Use Plan that prioritizes the sale of land leases for market housing, much of which would come in the form of unaffordable, high-rise housing at twice the density of current neighbourhoods. The UNA, along with other representatives of UBC residents, faculty, staff, and students, have registered their profound disagreement with this order of priorities, but these calls have gone unheeded. We urge the Board of Governors to require the following revisions to the Land Use Plan before its final adoption.

1. Before setting the parameters of development in a revised Land Use Plan, UBC should complete its comprehensive revision of the Neighbourhood Climate Action Plan. The LUP currently under consideration offers to “work towards the targets and policies” of the as-yet unfinished NCAP. Instead of this vague and non-committal formulation, the Land Use Plan should draw on the NCAP to set clear and measurable targets for greenhouse gas emissions, waste, and ecosystem services, and commit UBC to achieving them. Given our current climate emergency, the Neighbourhood Climate Action Plan should be foundational to the Land Use Plan, not an afterthought.
2. In the face of the unprecedented shortage of local housing for UBC's faculty, staff, students, and area employees, UBC should increase the proportion of neighbourhood rental to 50per cent of total housing. Rental housing on campus addresses several priorities of the University, including attracting and retaining employees, decreasing the social and environmental costs of commuting, and generating revenue (through rents) for the endowment. In spite of these benefits to the University and its people, the proposed Land Use Plan sets a target of only 30per cent rental, reserving 70per cent of neighbourhood housing for market developments. We call on the Board of Governors and the provincial government to prioritize the long-term financial, social, and educational interests of the University, rather than the short-term cash infusions derived from leasehold sales.
3. The Land Use Plan should establish parameters for the design of world-class residential neighbourhoods, with ample green/open space and community amenities.



UNA Submission to UBC Land Use Plan Public Hearing

The proposed Land Use Plan promises only 1.1 hectares of open/green space per 1000 residents, which is at the lower end of the World Health Organization's recommended range of .9 to 5 ha. But the LUP reduces this to .5 ha in the case of “appropriate resident access to UBC-owned open space and facilities.” This is both vague and very low, and would seriously compromise livability and the University's commitment to ecological and climate goals for the neighbourhoods.

4. Above all else, the Land Use Plan should reflect UBC's values and commitments to sustainability, housing affordability and availability, and leadership in urban design. The proposed Land Use Plan would sharply increase densities on UBC's remaining land endowment by enabling construction of at least twenty new towers, many over thirty stories tall. These new developments would be twice as dense as current neighbourhoods, with substantial, but under-studied, environmental and social impacts. UNA residents are accustomed to dense urban living, but they are concerned that the scale of the planned developments is far out of proportion to that of existing neighbourhoods.

We also want to express our disappointment with the Board of Governors Public Hearing Procedural Rules adopted at the Board's October 16 meeting. Any Land Use Plan amendments, current or future, should provide residents and other stakeholders meaningful opportunities for public comment and avenues for demanding public accountability. As mandated by provincial legislation, on October 16 the Board of Governors referred the Land Use Plan to a public

hearing. Yet the Board's referral explicitly and unaccountably prohibits the Board from amending the Plan to lower neighbourhood densities following the public hearing. We fail to see the point of a public hearing that precludes changes based on public input. Residents want and deserve governance that gives them opportunities to question policy makers and hold them politically accountable.

Since early in the Campus Vision process, the UNA has supported calls for neighbourhoods that would be models of low carbon, sustainable, socially responsible, community-oriented urban planning. These priorities reflect UBC goals and values, as articulated in key documents such as the UBC Strategic Plan, the Declaration of Climate Emergency, and the Campus Vision 2050 Terms of Reference. In other words, UNA residents and UBC share an interest in vital, sustainable, and human-scaled neighbourhoods. The proposed Land Use Plan instead perpetuates a development strategy prioritizing leasehold condo sales. While leasehold market housing has a place in the mix of housing types, it should not comprise 70per cent of all housing in UBC neighbourhoods. We call on the Board of Governors to realign the Land Use Plan to a different set of priorities and values: sustainability, climate urgency, rental housing availability, and the long-term stewardship of UBC's land endowment.

Sincerely,

Richard Watson
Chair, Board of Directors
University Neighbourhoods Association



Police Staffing in University Neighbourhoods Lags Population Growth, RCMP Says

Number of police officers on campus hasn't changed since 2005, UBC detachment commanding officer says.

BY WARREN CARAGATA

Back in the mid-2000s, before there was a Wesbrook Place and before UBC had dreams of 50,000 people in its residential villages, the RCMP detachment was happy to get additional staff bringing its numbers to 18 officers. But 2005 was the last staffing increase the RCMP detachment saw, back when there were about 1,500 people living in Hawthorn Place, Chancellor Place, Hampton Place, back when the East Campus was brand new.

Staff Sgt. Chuck Lan, the detachment's commanding officer, is reluctant to say how many extra officers he needs to deal with the current population, which has increased tenfold since that last staffing increase. But, "if we had 10 more officers, that would certainly help us."

Unfortunately, it is not as simple as adding more officers. The detachment building on Wesbrook Mall is too small even for the current staff. To accommodate more officers and administrative staff would require either extensive renovations or a new building.

There could be some help on the way. Last year, the B.C. government announced a plan to provide \$230 million over three years to fill vacancies in rural detachments and hire more officers in specialized police units such as major crimes.

"We're certainly hopeful that some of that funding announced last year will be coming our way," Lan told The Campus Resident. "Our senior-level management is working with the province to increase resources."

And Jen McCutcheon, who represents the campus lands on Metro Vancouver council, says the province is aware of the problems, even if the solutions aren't simple.

The detachment provides services to the UBC campus, the university neighbourhoods, the University Endowment Lands, and Pacific Spirit Park.

Forces stretched thin

There are now about 15,000 people living in the university neighbourhoods and about 3,200 in the endowment lands. Public safety in those areas is an RCMP responsibility, as it is in Pacific Regional Spirit Park, which gets some 4 million visit a year, making it the busiest park in Metro Vancouver.

But the detachment's role doesn't end there. Lan notes that the RCMP spends about 40 percent of its time dealing with issues on the campus. There is UBC campus security, but it is not a police force and isn't intended to be a police force.

The UBC Campus Vision 2050 plan estimates the campus daytime population at 80,000. By some estimates, counting neighbourhood residents, there are perhaps 100,000 people on the campus lands during the day. That's about the population of the City of Victoria or Maple Ridge.

The Victoria Police Department, which also serves Esquimalt, has 241 officers for a population across the two municipalities of about 115,000 people. That compares to 18 officers at the university detachment.

Back in 2009, when the campus lands were much less populous, the RCMP, even then, was publicly making the point that, "This commensurate growth has led to an increased demand for police services."

And below the seemingly tranquil nature of the university neighbourhoods is an undercurrent of criminal activity that keeps the understaffed force busy.

"We border Vancouver and we have similar problems," Lan says. "We have a myriad of crimes."

Campus Crime and an Increasing Caseload

In 2022, there were 198 cases of violent criminal code offences against persons, including 30 violent sex offences, 35 cases of extortion, and two kidnappings. Plus a targeted gangland hit at the University Golf Club with three people now facing trial for first-degree murder. Plus 725 property crimes, including 84 fraud cases and 71 cases of break and enter.

The RCMP is also responsible for traffic enforcement, which Lan says can be a serious business. In July and August this year, there were 35 instances with cars impounded and heavy fines for drivers stopped for excess speeds of more than 40 km/hr over the limit. That included one case of someone doing 140 km/hr

on Chancellor Boulevard.

Wreck Beach places an extra demand on the force during the warmer months with issues around drug and alcohol use, and violations of the absolute ban on campfires.

In all, Lan says, the detachment's crime caseload is 44 percent higher than in similarly sized detachments, which are normally rural.

That comparison between the UBC lands and rural areas of the province is part of the problem, for there is little that is rural on the Point Grey peninsula save perhaps the UBC farm. "We get put in the queue with other rural areas," McCutcheon says.

Governance on the peninsula is complex, and shared between UBC, the UNA, the endowment lands, the province, and Metro Vancouver.

There is, however, no police commission, no elected mayor and council, no formal process to discuss or set policing policy or staffing levels. Nor is there a regular forum for such discussions among the various governance councils on the campus lands — UBC, the UNA, the endowment lands administration, the province, and Metro Vancouver. Issues are discussed separately by the stakeholders on the peninsula and that information is passed on to senior management at E Division, the provincial RCMP headquarters.

Growing Pains

Richard Watson, the UNA chair, says the UNA board receives a quarterly report from the RCMP on the policing situation and there are informal discussions when the UNA thinks a situation needs to be addressed. There are also quarterly meetings with UBC's community and campus planning administration where the UNA has raised policing issues.

But there's nothing formal, nothing regular, and Watson says he is not sure how effective it would be.

The UNA has supported the detachment's request for increasing the number of officers. "They do a remarkably good job but there are times when they could have an increase in presence," Watson said.

McCutcheon says the increasing population adds to the complications. "As the UNA grows, and grows at the rate planned, there are a number of issues that would be handled by a municipality," she says.

"That's something we're all going to have to keep an eye on."

However, for residents of the campus lands going about their lives and confronted with an emergency, a crime in progress or

an imminent danger, it's simple: call 9-1-1.

WARREN CARAGATA IS A MEMBER OF THE CAMPUS RESIDENT NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.



Even with the current shortage of officers, police say the headquarters of the RCMP's UBC detachment is too small for current staff. (Photo: Emmanuel Samoglou)



The commanding officer of UBC's RCMP detachment says its caseload is 44 percent higher than in similarly sized detachments. (Photo: Elena_Alex)

Although reading is considered a solitary pursuit, talking about books can create community and connection between people.

Book communities online and on social media are hubs of active discussions and book recommendations. The rise of Booktok might make you think that the majority of this discussion has moved away from in-person discussion, but local in-person book clubs remain popular. Active clubs can be found in Vancouver’s libraries, or even nearer to home, in the Wesbrook and Old Barn Book Clubs.

Both of these local book clubs provide a gathering place for community members, bringing readers together to share diverse views, knowledge, and culture. They can also provide inspiration for people who want to read more widely, but don’t know where to start.

Discussing the array of emotions and messages in books also gives space for club members to see how our life experiences have formed perspectives, an outlook on life, and how those can differ from one another.

Alice Bradley, the coordinator of the Wesbrook Book Club, says she believes in fostering a “kind, respectful, and non-judgemental atmosphere where members express their candid opinions.”

I am the coordinator of the Old Barn

Local Book Clubs Bridge Generations and Cultures

Wesbrook and Old Barn book clubs bring together local bibliophiles.

BY SAIGE PARK



Saige Park, coordinator of the Old Barn Book club, says its goal is to gather people from different generations for meaningful discussions and enrich their reading experience.

Book club. Founded in 2022, its goal is to gather people from different generations in the UNA community to facilitate meaningful discussions that are enriched with life experiences and a variety of perspectives.

For me, book clubs not only foster relationships within the community, but also enhance my understanding of books, characters, and their authors. Sometimes an author’s biography, and thus understanding their lives, helps us

understand their motives for engaging in certain narratives. Book clubs provide an opportunity to learn more about authors and their context, as well as allowing for discussion and sharing of views about the work.

Alice Wu, the instructor of the Wesbrook Book Club says, “some take away different themes and messages from the same book”. She says her life has been enriched by her book club experience.

For those who have wandered around a bookstore, hesitating which title to choose among the myriad of books, or have hoped to engage in discussions to analyse or understand the plot, or even those who are just curious about reading, book clubs might offer a place to enrich their reading experience.

For both book clubs here in the university neighbourhoods, book selections are announced at the beginning of each term, and discussions are hosted once a month at both Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres.

To get involved, visit the UNA’s website at myuna.ca.

SAIGE PARK IS PURSUING HER BACHELOR’S IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AT UBC.

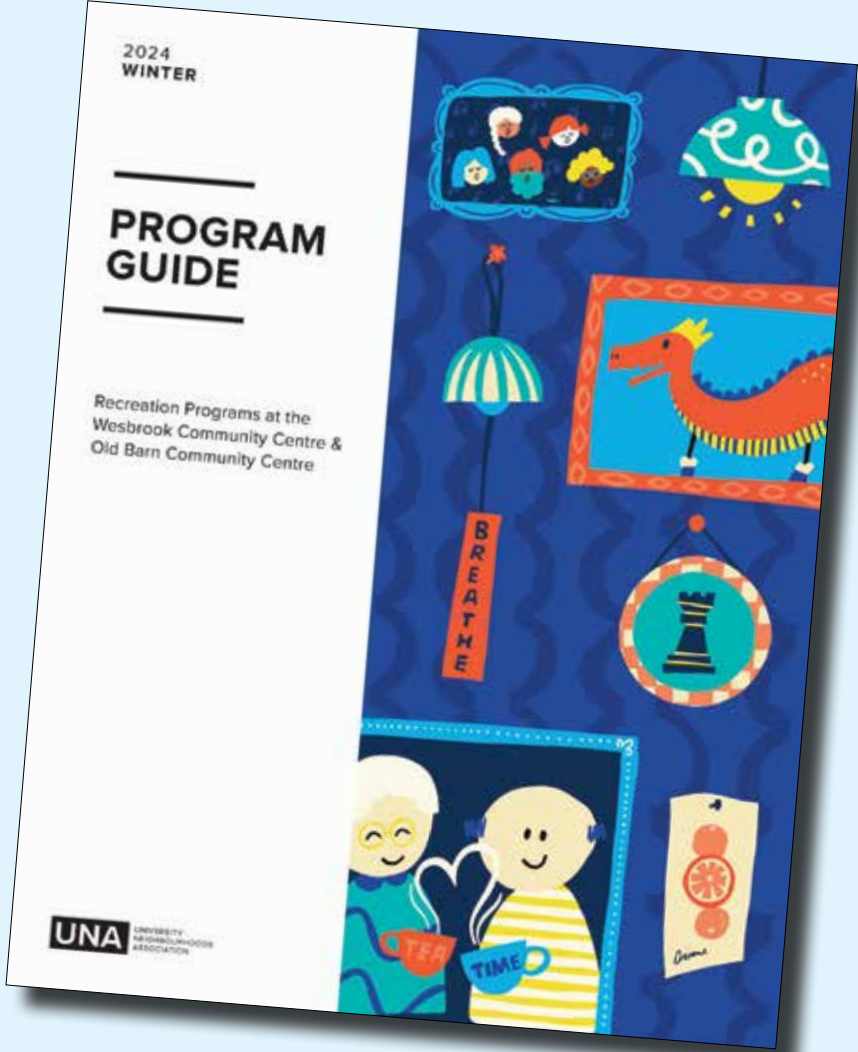
UNA UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOODS ASSOCIATION

REGISTER NOW OVER 200 PROGRAMS OFFERED

Try a new fitness class, learn a new musical instrument or drop in to play a sport with your friends! There’s something for everyone at the UNA community centres.

Registration for Winter recreation programs is ongoing. Spots are limited, so sign up soon!

For more information, visit myuna.ca/programs or drop by the **Wesbrook Community Centre** (3335 Webber Ln.) or the **Old Barn Community Centre** (6308 Thunderbird Blvd.).





Confronting the Climate Emergency in UBC Neighbourhoods

Are we ready? The Campus Resident reached out to UNA and university experts in an effort to learn more about UBC’s plans to address climate change.

BY EAGLE GLASSHEIM

As heat waves intensify, wildfires multiply and sea levels rise, cities around the world are committing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and adapting their infrastructures for a climate resilient future.

UBC adopted a declaration on the climate emergency in 2019, followed in 2021 by an ambitious climate action plan for its academic campus. The plan sets baselines and targets for construction materials, heating and cooling of buildings, transportation, and waste management.

The university has now begun work on a climate action plan for its current and future neighbourhoods. Known as the neighbourhood climate action plan (NCAP), it will involve consultation with residents, the UNA and climate and sustainability experts on campus and beyond. The neighbourhood plan will, according to UBC, serve as a “roadmap of strategies and actions to meet ... ambitious emissions reduction targets and adaptation goals.”

Once the plan is complete in the spring of 2024, UBC will revise neighbourhood development regulations to implement the plan’s recommendations.

The process, however, has its critics. They say the university is prioritizing its controversial land use plan in Campus Vision 2050 over climate action, and that NCAP should serve as a foundation for land use planning, and not the reverse. UBC planners, they say, have it backwards.

In October, Claire England - co-founder of activist group University Communities for Sustainable Development - wrote in The Campus Resident: “Campus Vision 2050 currently lacks any climate action plan covering the university neighbourhoods, where most development will occur.”

“It is crucial that the land use plan proceed only under the direction of a neighbourhood climate action plan (NCAP) based on publicly accessible expert research to effectively mitigate environmental impacts,” England wrote.

After a contentious public hearing in November, the UBC Board of Governors will review the land use plan this month, after which they can ask the provincial government to approve it – well before NCAP is completed.

As high-level planning continues, The Campus Resident asked representatives from the UNA, the UNA’s land use advisory committee, and UBC to discuss the climate action plan’s goals and ways of achieving them.

Robyn Chan is the UNA’s sustainability specialist.

Matthew Mitchell is a research associate with UBC’s faculty of land and food



Robyn Chan

systems and a member of the UNA’s land use advisory committee.

Kerry Shaw is UBC’s senior neighbourhood climate action planner with the campus and community planning unit. She is leading the project with Ralph Wells, UBC’s community climate and energy manager.

Q: Broadly speaking, what goals should the neighbourhood climate action plan aim to achieve?

A: Robyn Chan

My hope is that the neighbourhood climate action plan will set a clear course of action at three levels.

First, the plan should clearly articulate direction for future policies that will have an immediate impact on lowering emissions.

It also needs to provide details on the necessary funding and staff resources required to implement the plan across UBC, the UNA, and UBC Properties Trust, and create a framework for a climate action relationship between the three parties—who is doing what, when, and what are the supports or ways we can work together.

Lastly, the plan should create opportunities and pathways for residents to be involved at an individual and collective level.

A: Matthew Mitchell

First, it should aim to reduce as quickly as possible greenhouse gas emissions from the UBC residential neighbourhoods. While UBC’s emissions on a provincial, national or global level are relatively small, we have the responsibility and ability to be a leader in this respect and demonstrate how to create sustainable and net-zero communities.

Second, an equally important goal is to ensure that the UBC neighbourhood infrastructures can withstand an increasingly extreme climate, both now and into the future. For me, this means improving



Matthew Mitchell

the built infrastructure (buildings, roads, storm sewers), natural infrastructure (trees, green spaces, ecosystems), and perhaps most importantly the social infrastructure (community connections, neighbourhood resilience, institutional governance).

A: Kerry Shaw

To help address climate change and meet the commitments of UBC’s declaration on the climate emergency, UBC’s neighbourhood climate action plan should update the existing neighbourhood community energy and emissions plan and define our pathway to a net-zero, climate resilient community. The plan will address both climate mitigation and adaptation to achieve this goal.

This includes actions to achieve net-zero community greenhouse gas emissions before 2050 and adaptation strategies to ensure our community is prepared for

and resilient to the coming climactic changes. The plan is also a vital tool for communicating with neighbourhood residents on climate action.

The plan will integrate regular reporting to highlight work that has been done and show what actions will help drive progress. We see sharing information and involving residents in climate

action as an opportunity to build and strengthen communities.

Q: How would you design a neighbourhood climate action plan that can achieve these goals?

A: Robyn Chan

I think that the plan is the first step in creating meaningful climate action. If it sets out clear enough targets and acknowledges the hard work that is needed in order to achieve those targets, then crafting policies and programs is the fun stuff. I hope to see a plan that reflects all of the input from residents and other stakeholders, and to see residents from every UNA



Kerry Shaw

neighbourhood get engaged, regardless of their level of climate knowledge.

A: Matthew Mitchell

There are three main things that I would do to try and leverage some of the strengths and unique characteristics of UBC. First, I would make sure to engage with, and ask for ideas from, world-leading UBC faculty and researchers in the areas of climate adaptation and climate justice.

Second, in order to directly address the need to improve social infrastructure, I would, from the beginning, involve representatives from the UBC community (students, residents, UNA) in the action plan development process to ensure that their interests and ideas are included.

Third, I would work hard to integrate ecological ideas of connectivity, landscape, and scale into the plan so that it isn’t solely focused on individual buildings, sites, or neighbourhoods but provides an integrated broad-scale approach to climate action on campus that links with wider UBC, Vancouver and Metro Vancouver policies and actions.

A: Kerry Shaw

Central to our approach is identifying key partners with deep interests in this work and establishing a process for collaboration. These partners include the University Neighbourhoods Association, UBC staff and researchers, regional partners, other technical experts, and neighbourhood residents.

A comprehensive scope and guiding principles are important to set the project boundaries and direction. Overall targets set the scale of ambition, and baseline analysis shows the magnitude of effort needed to realize these targets.

With this foundation, plan development in collaboration with our partners is underway. This is an iterative process evolving based on feedback, refined information and direction from the guiding principles.

The final plan will be informed by and make recommendations to other UBC plans and policies, such as Campus Vision 2050, ensuring the neighbourhood plan is aligned, complementary and implementable. The final plan will highlight high impact actions and prioritize them for implementation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Community Effort Brings Diwali to Wesbrook Community Centre

Hundreds attend ‘festival of lights’ celebration in Wesbrook Village.

BY AMIE BERNAERDT



Diwali 2023 organisers (L-R) Nidhi Raina, Jayshree Basivireddy, Manali Yadav, Nicky Foxhall and Angie Datt. (Photos: Michael Chen)

A grand celebration for Diwali was held at Wesbrook Community Centre on Nov. 12, 2023.

Diwali, known as the ‘festival of lights,’ is one of the biggest and most important festivals in India, and has been celebrated for thousands of years. It signifies light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance, which is symbolized by clay lamps that people in India will light outside their homes.

Here in Wesbrook, Diwali celebrations have been organized and held annually. First held in 2018, the celebration drew around 200 people. And this year - five years later – approximately 700 people showed up.

Attendees were first welcomed with a bindi, before having the opportunity to take part in various activities. People could participate in making a traditional form of Indian art called a Rangoli, get henna art, and even learn how to wear a sari - all while sipping on chai or nibbling on delicious samosas.

There was also a performance of classical Indian and Bollywood dances, with

a grand finale flash-mob style dance that many danced along with.

This event could not have been put on without UNA grants and the generous love and care from the volunteers and organizers, said Nidhi Raina, lead organizer of the event.

“They put so much work into it,” Raina told The Campus Resident. “They do everything, design the sets, do all the outlines, make all the chai and samosas.”

“People turn up and say ‘how can we help?’” she added.

At its core, Wesbrook’s Diwali is truly a community-led event.



AMIE BERNAERDT IS A SECOND-YEAR STUDENT AT UBC WITH PLANS TO MAJOR IN CREATIVE WRITING OR ANTHROPOLOGY. SHE LIVES IN WESBROOK PLACE.

Peering into Tiny Minds: Measuring the Infant Brain

In the second part of our series on research carried out at UBC’s Early Development Research Group, we look at the challenges of studying the brains of restless babies.

BY OLA DOPIERALA

Exploring the minds of infants is a fascinating journey, made even more thrilling by today’s sophisticated neuroimaging techniques. But how do we choose which technique to use, what exactly are these techniques capturing, and how do they work?

Babies mostly learn about the world with their eyes wide open. And this is where things can get a bit tricky. See, babies aren’t exactly known for sitting still. That’s why it’s super important for our tools to be resistant to what scientists call “movement artifacts.”

Basically, even if a baby wiggles or turns, our equipment has to keep on accurately measuring brain activity.

So, let’s look at two tools used at the early development research group at UBC.

Electroencephalography (EEG)

Picture this: a soft, net-like cap fitted with sponge-like sensors that gently adhere to the scalp. This unique cap reads the minuscule electrical signals produced by the brain’s activities. That’s EEG for you. We use it to understand how the baby’s brain reacts to sounds, images or



other stimuli, and compare responses to different stimuli.

For example, in one of my early studies, we found that babies as young as 5 to 7 months could tell the difference between the sounds ‘ba’ and ‘ga.’ Not only that, but they could even recognize the voice of the person saying those sounds!

Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS)

Now, envision a lightweight headband equipped with emitters that send safe, low-level beams of light into the brain. fNIRS functions like a special camera, capturing the flow of blood within the brain’s tissues. Active brain regions require more oxygen, directing more blood flow toward them. These light beams enable us to visualize this blood flow and, in turn, identify what areas of the brain are engaged during specific tasks. The beauty of fNIRS is its flexibility; babies are free to move a bit, making it ideal for observing the brain in more natural scenarios. For instance, one of our pilot studies explored infants’ brain

activities while they played with toys, and discovered that handling the toys activated their left temporal cortex, a region around the temples.

The Road Ahead

Understanding the tools we use is the first step in grasping the complex journey of infant brain development. Each method offers us a unique lens to peek into this mysterious world. At UBC’s early development research group, we use EEG and fNIRS to uncover the secrets of the young mind, inching us closer to a fuller understanding of early development.

And so, our thrilling adventure in the field of infant cognitive neuroscience continues.

OLA DOPIERALA IS A POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AT UBC.

The Campus Resident values a diversity of voices and views.

Submit your letter to the editor to:
editor@thecampusresident.ca

Youth Organize ASL Workshops for Local Elementary Students

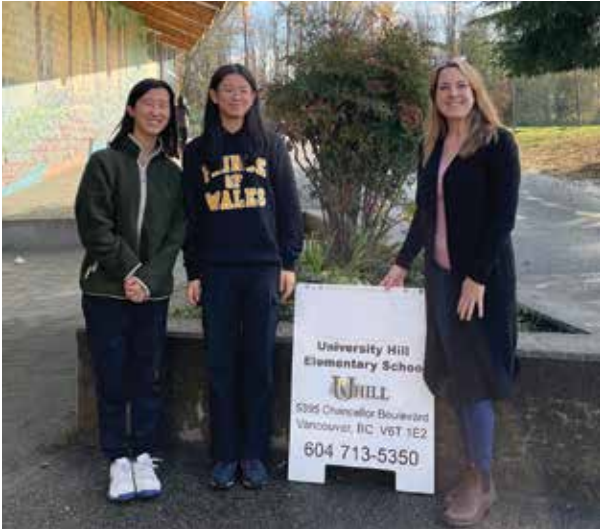
Three students, including a Hampton Place resident, seek to address the lack of sign language instruction in Vancouver’s schools.

BY ANNE ZHANG

American Sign Language workshops (ASL) are being given to elementary students in the university neighborhoods in an effort to address the lack of ASL education in local schools.

ASL is a visual language mainly used by those who are deaf and hard of hearing. The need for ASL is universal and learning it is a simple way to make an environment more inclusive. This is especially important in elementary schools, where the formative years of youth allow for better integration of new topics.

As a part of our social action project, three students from Prince of Wales Mini School - including myself and my colleagues Ann Wang and Caroline Anson - have created a plan to expand the accessibility of ASL education by developing



ASL workshop organizers (L-R) Ann Wang and Anne Zhang, with University Hill Elementary School teacher Carolyn Andres. (Photo: Supplied)

information packages, ASL-integrated curricula, and making presentations to various elementary schools.

Thus far, we’ve spoken to multiple classes at University Hill Elementary School and many Girl Guide groups.

Grade 4 teacher Carolyn Andres finds it especially impactful to introduce ASL to young students, saying “I had a student in my

class last year who was deaf and had limited expressive and receptive language. It’s great to have another language that can be used with children that have special needs.”

The workshops are designed to present the basics of ASL in an interactive and engaging manner, and foster inclusivity among students.

A couple of upcoming workshops will include Grades 6/7 classes and a Grade 3 class at UHill elementary school. We also plan on contacting other elementary schools such as Norma Rose Point.

“We want to teach these students enough sign language to get by, and enough for them to use if they ever need to,” says Caroline Anson, one of the social action project members.

Besides delivering workshops, the ultimate goal of the project is to integrate ASL-focused curricula into the Vancouver School Board. For example, younger chil-

dren can learn the ASL alphabet alongside the written alphabet for a kinesthetic approach to education. Building this curricula would allow children in the neighborhood to acquire the benefits of learning a new language with less complication. With time, the integration of ASL in learning will hopefully spread across Vancouver.

Overall, the aims of our project can be summarized with its mission statement: With the understanding that there is a systematic lack of sign language education in elementary school curricula, we are committed to expanding the accessibility of ASL education through the development of information packages, ASL-integrated curricula, speaking to classes, and through ‘sign of the week’ initiatives.

ANNE ZHANG IS A GRADE 11 STUDENT AT PRINCE OF WALES MINI SCHOOL AND LIVES IN HAMPTON PLACE.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Q: Describe one particular challenge the neighbourhood climate action plan should address, and your proposed actions to meet that challenge.

A: Robyn Chan

My background is in community engagement and collective action, so I always focus on how to get people involved and empowered in their communities. I think one challenge for the plan is that many people feel that they don’t have the knowledge or skill sets to engage in discussions about climate change. But climate change is something that we are all experiencing, and that lived experience is valuable and powerful.

My hope is that through the rest of the planning process and during policy and program development, we can engage and communicate with UNA residents so that they feel empowered to take climate action and have their voices heard.

A: Matthew Mitchell

My background and expertise are around ecology, so I’ll focus on that. The big challenge that I see here is creating connected natural spaces on campus that are resilient to the future climate change we know is coming.

I would do this by placing considerations of ecology near the top of the priority list—identifying critical corridors and green spaces based on their ability to cool the campus, retain stormwater, store carbon, and conserve biodiversity, and then working to fit in the built infrastructure and residential buildings that we need

around this natural infrastructure.

I think that if we can do this, we will be much closer to creating a resilient and sustainable campus that can contribute positively to the mental and physical well-being of the UBC community in the face of climate change.

A: Kerry Shaw

There are a wide range of challenges the plan must address. Examples include finding ways to drive low-carbon resilient retrofits in existing buildings and working with our partners to develop leading embodied carbon requirements for new buildings.

They also include exploring the ecosystem services our natural assets provide, systematically identifying risks to UBC from our changing climate, and many others. All of these examples and more, along with involving campus residents in climate action, are essential to a holistic approach to climate action in UBC’s residential neighbourhoods. Beyond these, it’s important that NCAP centres climate justice and equity in our response.

This means many things including seeking to understand how people are impacted by climate change today, identifying and then addressing, barriers to action, prioritizing health and well-being, considering affordability impacts, and defining a process for continued dialogue after the plan is complete.

EAGLE GLASSHEIM IS A PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT UBC AND A UNA DIRECTOR. HE CHAIRS THE UNA’S LAND USE ADVISORY AND NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMMITTEES.



MAKE AN IMPACT ON LAND USE ISSUES

Join the Land Use Advisory Committee

The UNA Board of Directors is recruiting new members for the Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC).

You are encouraged to apply if you are a UNA resident and society member motivated to help build community and have specific knowledge in one or more of the following areas:

- Accessibility • Active Transportation • Agriculture •
- Architectural Design • Children and Youth •
- Community Planning •
- Construction and Land Development •
- Education • Environmental Matters • Landscape Design •
- Recreation • Sustainability • Urban Planning •

The LUAC serves as an advisory committee to the UNA Board regarding land use planning and development on the UBC Campus, as well as a facilitator of discussions with residents on land use planning and development. It serves with an appointed chair from the UNA Board and members are appointed for a two-year term. Members are volunteers who serve without compensation.

For more information on the work of the Land Use Advisory Committee, visit: myuna.ca/campusvision2050.

For more information on the committee’s Terms of Reference, please visit: myuna.ca/una-committees.

Please submit a resume and cover letter addressed to the UNA Board of Directors to communications@myuna.ca by December 12, 2023.

The Smiles are Worth It

Plenty of opportunities - and rewards - await those who choose to volunteer on campus.

BY OLIVIA HAILAIJIAO

Why volunteer? A bonus about living on a university campus is the wide variety of volunteering opportunities.

Volunteering can help both a person and their community. Contributing to the community is a rite of passage to improve individual mental health, work environments, build better social connections and opportunities for personal growth.

There are many volunteering opportunities at community centres on campus, ranging from Neighbours Day and Halloween events to movie nights and birthday parties. Yearly, the Apple Festival at UBC Botanical Garden is a go-to place for volunteers who enjoy the autumn festivities. There are also opportunities for university students with UBC’s Alma Mater Society.

Volunteering in the community can provide valuable experience in fields such as education, art, and journalism—for example, The Campus Resident. At Vancouver Public Library, groups of teen volunteers advise librarians on services and promote library benefits.

Many people also volunteer to create a positive impact on society and the environment by fostering a sense of community and organizing collective efforts toward change.

Canadians who have committed to helping others have made a significant difference in assisting communities devel-



“Volunteering sometimes can be gruelling—long hours selling pies, cutting apples or face-painting. At this point, I’ve painted hundreds of unicorns on kids’ faces. But yet in the endless repetition, the result is ever satisfying to see the smiles that light up kids’ eyes when they look in the mirror and see their faces.”

Volunteering during a community event. (Photo: UNA)

op, while along the way learning valuable lessons and new skills. Without volunteers, many events and services wouldn’t happen.

Volunteering sometimes can be gruelling—long hours selling pies, cutting apples or face-painting. At this point, I’ve painted hundreds of unicorns on kids’ faces. But yet in the endless repetition, the result is ever satisfying to see the smiles that light up kids’ eyes when they look in the mirror and see their faces. I volunteer for the things that I care about and am will-

ing to put effort into it, considering what I give back to the community.

I can participate in volunteering to bring the neighbourhood together, fostering belonging. So the next time you’re at a community or local event, say hello to the working volunteers and think about trying it for yourself! Consider how many new faces you might meet. ✍

OLIVIA HAILAIJIAO IS A STUDENT AT UNIVERSITY HILL SECONDARY SCHOOL.

Celebrate the Holidays in the University Neighbourhoods

A range of events on campus and beyond aim to bring cheer to residents spending the holidays on campus.

BY ELINA HAILAIJIAO

Every December, the winter arrives as frigid air wraps itself around anyone who steps outside. The trees have lost their glorious leaves, and the seasonal spirit lights and warms the town.

In the UBC neighbourhoods, the time has come to gather with friends and family, enjoy the seasonal events and open your holiday spirit!

There are two events taking place in the UBC community in December to help you get into the holiday season, including the Winter Festival and a family movie night.

Winter Festival—Dec. 16, 10–1 p.m.

Indulge the holiday season by dropping in at the Old Barn

community centre to take pictures with Santa, craft ornaments to take home with you, and make yourself a nice hot chocolate which you can enjoy in your own mug. Donations are welcomed for the Vancouver food bank.



Christmas lights in Wesbrook Village. (Photo: Ada Bucur)

Family movie night—Dec. 16, 6–8 p.m.

Warm up after Winter Festival at the Old Barn community centre by watching “Lyle, Lyle Crocodile.” Seating will be provided, but everyone is welcome to bring pillows and blankets. Admission is \$2 per person. For those who are wondering, yes, there will be popcorn, snacks and drinks on sale (cash) to munch on during the movie. A reminder that

parents must accompany their children. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m. but the movie will start at 6.

And for families looking for options off-campus, explore

the following events in and around Vancouver.

Capilano Canyon Lights

Ready, set, glow! Jump-start the festive season, bundle up the family and prepare to be amazed. Canyon Lights returns to Capilano Suspension Bridge Park and runs until Sunday, January 22. It’s closed December 25.

Peak of Christmas at Grouse Mountain

A magical story awaits you and your family at The Peak of Christmas. You can meet Santa in his workshop, see the reindeers Dancer and Vixen, experience the enchanting Light Walk, glide across the Mountaintop Skating Pond, and more. All activities are included with a Mountain Admission Ticket, Annual Pass, Winter Season Pass or Lift Ticket.

Burnaby Village Museum

Experience a Heritage Christmas at the Burnaby Village Museum. The museum’s 4-hectare site will welcome the season with traditional decorations and seasonal entertainment. ✍

ELINA HAILAIJIAO IS A STUDENT AT UNIVERSITY HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

UBC Vancouver’s Snow Removal Team Prepares for Action

BY UBC NEWS

Put away your sandals, and make sure your winter tires are installed. It’s nearly time to welcome the annual chaos, confusion, and calamitous clogging of roads known as snowfall in Vancouver.

“I don’t think it would be news to anyone if I was to say the Greater Vancouver region is just not good at snow,” said Jen Sheel, Director of Municipal Services, UBC Facilities. “Our freeze-thaw conditions make it very challenging to plan and, in Metro Vancouver, drivers are not required to use winter tires in many areas. The local municipalities see the same problems on the roads with unprepared drivers and the same complaints about road clearing and sidewalk safety.”

The main difference between UBC Vancouver and local municipalities is the scope of work, says Sheel.

“In all other municipalities, residents and businesses are required to clear their respective sidewalks while the municipality focuses on clearing arterial roads,” she says. “But at UBC, our small crew is responsible for clearing the entire campus.”

Preparations for snow on UBC’s Vancouver campus are already well underway.

Starting in late October, UBC’s Municipal Services crew starts switching over leaf collection and removal attachments on its fleet of vehicles in exchange for salting, plowing, and brining gear. The team lead for snow is the Streets and Operations Support (SOS) group, which clears all campus roads, building pathways and accessibility routes, and afterhours response. The team receives support from Soft Landscape, Waste Management, and Custodial Services, which are responsible for clearing building entrances.

In total, Municipal Services has 26 vehicles to deploy during snowfall. These include everything from dump trucks to snow blowers. UBC stores more than 160 tonnes of road salt, 80 tonnes of salt/sand combo, 80 tonnes of sand, 500 bags of de-icing salt, four pallets of ice-melter, 432 ice melt shaker cans and two tanks of brine. Supplies are refilled as needed and depending on supplier availability.

Snow days for Municipal Services start at 4 a.m. (sometimes earlier) when the manager of SOS gets the latest localized forecast, and then checks in with the crew head on the ground for the most up to date list of issues.

By 5 a.m., the Lead Assessment Group (LAG) conference call begins. Sheel, along with with representatives from the Provost Office, Office of the Vice-President, Students, Associate Vice-President, Facilities, Registrar, Campus Security, Housing, and Media Relations convene to discuss the forecast and determine if the weather conditions warrant curtailing or suspending in-person classes activities that day. Factors that are considered include the current and future road conditions as well as information provided by TransLink regarding impacts on transit service to campus.

“Those LAG discussions are lively

despite the early hour,” says Sheel. “There’s a lot at stake for students and employees if we’re telling them not to come to campus, especially when exams are in progress. We don’t always agree 100 per cent, but ultimately, under the Extreme Environmental Conditions Policy, it’s the Provost Office that makes the final call after considering all the information. From that point, it’s up to individual faculty members to decide if they’re going to shift class online, postpone or cancel.”

The Provost Office’s decision is announced on ubc.ca and shared through the university’s social media channels by 6 a.m., and updated throughout the day as needed.

Meanwhile, clearing efforts have been ongoing for hours as the

“When we anticipate that there might be a major snow event coming, or we’re in the middle of one, we offer to put up crew members at West Coast Suites so they can start their 3 a.m. shift without having to worry about commuting to campus in challenging conditions,” says Sheel. “Sometimes, staff will stay on campus for days just to get the job done. We have the resources, and great people, and we prioritize what needs to be cleared first.”

The first priority includes emergency response routes, public transit routes, primary roads and sidewalks, and major pathways and access to critical services. This includes access routes to emergency services, such as the UBC Hospital and roads required by first responders, including RCMP, fire, and ambulance.

Other high priority snow-clearing areas include animal care facilities, areas of refuge, such as Koerner Library and the AMS Nest, transit hubs and bus stops, childcare facilities, and emergency and extreme weather response operations, such as the water pump station, Campus Energy Centre, Bioenergy Research and Demon-

stration Facility, Campus and Community Planning, the Life Building, Campus Security, and South Campus works yard access roads.

The second priority includes access to academic buildings; main and accessible entrances with connecting pathways, and emergency exits; and access to student housing and student services.

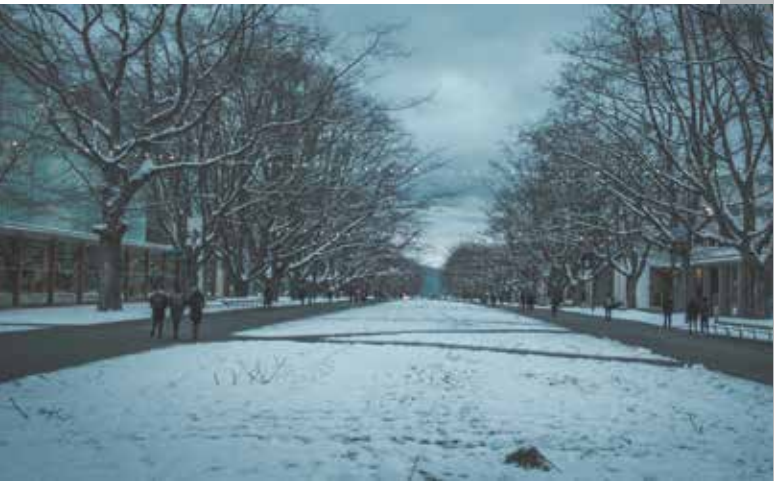
The third priority includes access to back of house areas, where loading, receiving, waste and other services take place, along with secondary roads, sidewalks and pathways, and select roads within UNA neighbourhood areas.

Finally, the fourth priority includes

other building entrances, tertiary pathways, and special event needs.

“We know expectations are high, but our first priority is safety,” says Sheel. “This means we don’t try and remove every single flake of snow, but we do make it safer to drive and walk on campus. Our combined team of over 300 people covers a massive area of four square kilometres, with over 17,000 staff on site, over 58,000 students on site, 211 buildings, 13 student residences, and 106 retail outlets in our jurisdiction.”

THIS ARTICLE WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY UBC NEWS AND IS REPRINTED HERE WITH PERMISSION.



Undated photo of a snowy Main Mall in winter.

Snow Removal in the University Neighbourhoods

BY TCR STAFF

While coordinating efforts with UBC Building Operations and UBC Facilities, the UNA has its own snow removal plan for the university neighbourhoods.

Snow removal crews managed by the UNA focus on one neighbourhood at a time, beginning in Wesbrook Place and Hawthorn Place, and then move on to other neighbourhoods.

Snow and ice removal service begins when two to three inches of snow have accumulated, prioritizing sidewalks around essential services such as bus stops, schools and community centres. Crews will also focus on major crosswalks, school routes, and high traffic sidewalks connected to major UBC walkways.

For major roads, the UNA works closely with UBC.

Areas within residential buildings such a courtyards are managed separately, either by strata or individuals designated by buildings themselves.

When the snow falls, residents can report icy sidewalks to UNA snow removal crews by submitting an email to snow@myuna.ca.

UNA UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOODS ASSOCIATION

Lunar New Year Celebration 2024

Come celebrate the Year of the Dragon with us!

Wesbrook Community Centre
February 11, 2024 | 1-4 p.m.

Join us in welcoming the Year of the Dragon during this free annual event that promises an afternoon of fun, games and food.

Lion dancing • Korean drumming
Calligraphy • Cultural performances
Bamboo weaving • Arts & crafts
Traditional flower arrangements
Dragon-themed art exhibit + more!

