

The question was common for mayoral candidates to hear back in the October municipal election : what do you think of ride - hailing and should it come to Metro Vancouver

? " I was clear when I was mayor - I do n't support Uber at all , " then - Surrey mayor candidate Doug McCallum responded at one debate . It was an odd thing to say :

McCallum 's last term as Surrey mayor ended in 2005 , while Uber as a company began in 2009 , briefly entering the Vancouver market only in 2012 . There was no Uber not to support in 2005 . Rival candidate Bruce Hayne joked in his turn to answer the question , " It was a twinkle in some engineer 's eye some years ago . " . McCallum did n't correct himself . But the strange remark may have foreshadowed a growing number of curious statements from the returning mayor of B.C. 's second - largest , rapidly growing city , which

is wrestling with big changes after his come - from - behind election win . CTV News has analyzed about three weeks ' worth of McCallum 's speeches , statements at public meetings , and press conferences to find the mayor 's claims , in some cases , do n't stand up to inspection . Sometimes , his claims seem to further his political agenda , such as exaggerating a drop in the children participating in ice sports , which was part of his argument to cut the previous administration 's projects , including a \$ 44.5 million Cloverdale Sport and Ice Complex . A claim the city 's debt is higher than

city reports say it is could support a total of \$ 135 million in proposed cuts to the previous administration 's projects , including the \$ 58 million Grandview Heights Community Centre and Library . A claim the costs of building a SkyTrain extension to Langley are lower than

TransLink says they are could make one of McCallum 's two big - ticket promises . SkyTrain and a municipal police force , more attractive . But other times , the claims , such as what he said about Uber , do not seem to advance any particular political agenda . To make our list , the claims had to be on camera , at a public meeting or addressed to the

press , and not be corrected as a one - off error . Some voters say he is already losing their trust . " Mayor McCallum 's statements vary greatly from truth , " Cindy Dalglish told Surrey 's councillors at Tuesday 's finance committee meeting . But observers say there may be a method to McCallum 's messages . " There 's a tried - and - true method in

Canadian politics : after an election a new government takes office and says , ' Oh my gosh , the cupboards are bare . ' Or , ' We 're much deeper in debt than I thought we were , and now I 've seen the real books . ' So I think there 's an element of that kind of gamesmanship going on , " University of the Fraser Valley political scientist Hamish

Telford said . " Then there 's the fact that McCallum has been out of office for quite some time , thinking he knew the job , but some things have changed , " Telford said . McCallum did n't respond to interview requests on these topics through City of Surrey staff , so CTV News caught up with him at Thursday 's Mayors ' Council meeting . The mayor did n't respond directly to questions about whether there 's a pattern to advancing these claims , but CTV News has included the response he did give in each section below . . .

Citing a nonexistent TransLink study . " If you take Fraser Highway SkyTrain and if we 're building that seven days a week around the clock , we probably can save , and this is TransLink 's figures , we can probably save \$ 2 - 300 million , " McCallum told the Mayors Council on Nov. 15 . McCallum 's speech to fellow municipal leaders was a

crucial part of getting the region on board with his plan to switch from the Newton - Surrey - Guildford LRT to a SkyTrain extension to Langley . Mayors were understandably concerned about the cost of the move to a Langley SkyTrain , which a TransLink study in 2017 concluded would cost between \$ 2.6 billion and \$ 2.9 billion — almost twice the \$ 1.65 billion cost of the LRT line .

McCallum claimed in that speech the cost could be reduced if the construction was done 24/7 , which may be possible , though it could lead to substantial disruptions along the route for the public . But the mayor claimed a study had been done to confirm this by TransLink . The agency told CTV News it is has not done any such study . " TransLink has not conducted any detailed study on potential construction methods for a SkyTrain route from Surrey to Langley . The most recent cost

estimate (2017 Hatch report) did not consider construction schedules , " a spokesperson said . On Dec. 13 , the mayor brought up the 24/7 construction plan up again while speaking to the media . " We 've also said in the past if we let large construction jobs build seven days a week , around the clock , we can reduce costs considerably , " he said . When told of TransLink 's statement they had never done a study , he said , " I 've never said there 's a study . " . Tap the image above to read more about the cost of a SkyTrain line , and who could be on the hook for the switch from LRT . (Photo : City of Surrey) SkyTrain vs. Evergreen Line : inaccurate comparisons . " The Evergreen Line

that was recently built , same distance , elevated all the way , actually goes through a tunnel , completed a year and a half ago , for only \$ 1.4 billion . " McCallum told reporters on Oct. 23 . It 's true the Evergreen Line was built for \$ 1.41 billion , opening in 2016 . Its length is 10.9 kilometres , and does include a tunnel . But the Evergreen Line is about two - thirds the length of a line that would run from King George Station along Fraser Highway to Langley City . The SkyTrain extension would be about 16 kilometres long .

McCallum has said the Fraser Highway extension could be built affordably for the funding envelope that had already been approved for the LRT , at \$ 1.65 billion . That 's a claim B.C. 's premier did n't buy . " I care not about the technology . If Surrey wants to change to SkyTrain , that 's fine , but they 're going to get half as far as they would have with LRT , " John Horgan told reporters on Thursday . TransLink staff are currently doing design and development work on the SkyTrain extension . TransLink CEO Kevin

Desmond said Thursday one of McCallum 's suggestions , to find places where the line could not be elevated , could save money . While the agency does n't have a final cost estimate for the SkyTrain line , the Mayors ' Council has heard it ca n't be built for the \$ 1.6 billion left after \$ 56 million was spent on pre - construction and design for the LRT . The Mayors ' Council heard Thursday that TransLink was at least \$ 1 billion short for the cost of the full line , and it may have to terminate in Fleetwood or Clayton Heights . But coming up with lower lengths , and therefore lower costs , could be part of the mayor 's attempts to make the SkyTrain extension seem more attractive , said Telford . " I think he

's trying to present the best possible case that he can fulfill his promises without too much financial pain , and to put it generously , he 's reading the spreadsheets optimistically , " Telford said . Click the image above to view details of the plan discussed at the Dec. 13 Mayors ' Council meeting Overstating Surrey 's debt . A press release , issued just after midnight on Nov. 27 , McCallum expressed serious concern about the Surrey 's debt . " When the books were shown to me , I was deeply dismayed and

shaken to the core to see how much debt the City of Surrey has been carrying , " he was quoted as saying in the press release . " The fact that the debt load is at \$ 514 million is simply untenable and frankly irresponsible . " . City financial records from December 2017 indicated the debt load was \$ 267 million , or just over half that amount . And in the city 's proposed budget , issued under McCallum 's council for a Dec. 11 , 2018 meeting , the " previously approved " internal and external debt is \$ 316 million — only about 60 per cent of the mayor 's claim .

McCallum 's staff later said the \$ 514 million figure he was referring to was the debt load the city is expected to take on over five years of building projects , which by definition is money that has n't been spent yet . In the proposed budget , the \$ 514 million figure includes " previously approved " debt and \$ 198 million of " internal debt approved for the 2018 - 2022 General Capital Program . " . When asked on Dec. 13 whether he was overstating the city 's debt ,

McCallum said , " The city 's debt as far as the City of Surrey is \$ 514 million , that 's in the financial statements , in the public documents that have gone out . I 've never misstated that debt . So that 's there . We 've passed a draft budget . It takes into consideration the very large debt that we need to bring down . " . McCallum 's council narrowly approved a plan to slash \$ 136 million that has n't been spent yet on proposed capital projects , including upgrades to RCMP facilities , a part , the Grandview Heights Library and Community Centre and a new sport and ice complex in Cloverdale Overstating the number of Surrey 's rinks . One of the projects McCallum 's Safe Surrey council plans to pull the plug on is the \$ 44.5 million Cloverdale Sport and Ice Complex . In a media availability shortly after the proposed budget was made public , McCallum was upbeat about the rinks the city still had for its citizens . " We have one ice rink in South Surrey , we have one in Cloverdale , we have three in Fleetwood which is only 10 minutes from Cloverdale . We have one in Newton , and we have two in our city centre . We have three opening brand new in the middle of next year in Bridgeview , the Patullo Bridge . We have the three

new ones coming along with the current ones , " he said . The new Bridgeview complex will indeed have three new rinks . But the project is slated to replace the North Surrey Arena , which has two rinks , according to the city , and that rink is slated to close shortly after the Bridgeview complex opens . It may be possible to keep both rinks open , but city staff confirmed there are no plans to do this at this point . " We found that a little bit misleading , they were talking about all the new arenas , but in reality we wo

n't be gaining three . Two of the arenas will be taken away . You 're only getting one new rink , " Cloverdale Minor Hockey Association president Marty Jones told CTV News . Tap the image above to read the city 's plans for the Cloverdale Sport and Ice Complex , initially expected to open in 2020 Claims about the Cloverdale complex costs .

McCallum also claimed of the Cloverdale Sport and Ice Complex , " The land underneath is very unstable . Our engineering department says we would not be able to build this on unstable ground unless we used pile driving techniques to build it . Pile driving if anyone knows construction is very expensive construction . Originally it was planned to be \$ 45 million , but that would increase considerably if we had to pile drive it . " . In fact , the original cost of the Cloverdale complex was \$ 35 million , city documents say . In January 2018 , reports indicated there were problems with the soil and the estimated cost was hiked to \$ 44.5 million . Attempts by CTV News to confirm with the city 's engineering department that there were even more problems with the soil on top of the previously discovered issues , which could increase costs even further , were stymied as city staff said they could not talk during the budget process . In the city 's preliminary budget in December , the cost of the arena is still listed at \$ 44.5 million . The above chart from the City of Surrey suggests a dip in registration for youth ice sports Exaggerating a drop in youth ice sports . The mayor also claimed that the enrolment of young people in ice sports was dropping — another justification for cutting the construction of the Cloverdale complex . " We have in the last eight to nine years had a declining use of ice for hockey . Each year it 's declining in participation and usage . We have a chart of that to show you , " the mayor told reporters . CTV News has analyzed the chart , which seemed to show a decline in enrolment of around 50 per cent . But the axes of the chart exaggerated this drop . When the axes were changed , the decline the numbers represented appeared closer to 15 per cent . There was another problem . For every year before 2018 - 19 , the chart reflected the number of children playing ice sports for the whole year . But for the 2018 - 19 year , staff used the figures for October . The result , according to a survey of listed clubs by CTV News , is 352 missing children . When those members are included in the chart , it 's clear that there are more children enrolled in 2018 - 19 than the past two years — and the alleged drop is actually an increase . On top of that , the chart did not include bantam or midget teams — another 100 children — anyone in the city 's ice lessons , which includes 17,040 registrations , or anyone on the waitlist , whose estimates run from the city claim of 974 to the city 's Ice Allocation Committee estimate of 1,400 . " I know that our arenas are used more than what 's listed in that graph , " said Cindy Secord , who sits on the Ice Allocation Committee . " That graph should go in the other direction . " . Secord told CTV News that two minor ice hockey leagues have spent \$ 450,000 buying 1,000 hours of ice time in neighbouring communities like Richmond or Delta . " We could not supply one sheet of ice for them for any games all year , " she said . " We 're turning away potential users because there 's nothing there . " . Surrey staff explained the numbers this way : " There are many possible reasons why the 2018 numbers appear low which may include waitlist accommodation , adding teaching stations , waitlist management . The numbers are being run from our stored data is not being modified . " . Several of the clubs are now writing Surrey City Council as it proceeds to its final approval of its budget on Monday night , asking the city to correct its figures . Viewing this article on our beta mobile site ? Click here for a compatible version with embedded elements . A Superior Court of Ontario judge chastised JAZZ.FM91 on Friday morning , saying the not - for - profit Toronto radio station had been " playing games " to prevent a dissident shareholder group from lobbying members for changes in the organization 's board of directors . Justice Sean Dunphy directed the station to provide the e - mail addresses of its approximately 2,200 member - donors to Brian Hemming , a Toronto - investment relations consultant and founder of Save Jazz FM . The group was founded in the summer after an eruption of discontent among supporters . The station had provided Mr. Hemming with names and addresses of members , but refused to include e - mail addresses or phone numbers , citing privacy concerns . Mr. Hemming argued that the move disadvantaged his group in its dispute , noting the station 's board frequently lobbies its members through e - mails . Story continues below advertisement . Justice Dunphy said the station 's defiant stand " was clearly adopted to frustrate the applicants and not — as suggested — out of concern to maintain privacy . " Still , he denied Mr. Hemming 's request for phone numbers , characterizing that method of contact as intrusive . " This has degenerated into an acrimonious fight , " he wrote in his decision . " It need n't be so adversarial . " . A statement e - mailed to The Globe by Reagan Ruslim , who joined the board last month , said " JAZZ.FM91 will respect the order of the Court . " When asked for comment about the judge 's criticisms , he replied the station would " have a further statement next week . Stay tuned ! " . During an interview outside the small courtroom , which had been packed with supporters , Mr. Hemming said he and his group were " very pleased with the decision . This really just levels the playing field and gives us an opportunity to talk to members about what our proposals are — and that 's all we ever wanted . " . In a statement issued later , Mr. Hemming said his group intended to use the e - mail addresses to press for a special meeting of members . " The purpose of the meeting would be to vote out the incumbent board and then vote in a new board of directors proposed by Save JAZZ.FM91 . " . JAZZ.FM91 has been in turmoil since the spring , when its president and CEO , Ross Porter , departed in the wake of an investigation into allegations of workplace bullying , harassment , and sexual harassment . (In a statement to the Globe at the time , Mr. Porter denied his departure was connected to the investigation . When he stepped down , he was given the title of president emeritus and he retained his position as host of his own Saturday morning radio program .) . As news of the allegations began to surface , members complained about what they said was a lack of transparency . Their discontent escalated after the station laid off a number of popular on - air personalities in June , leaving many time slots without a host . At the annual general meeting in late August , dozens of members turned out to voice anger and disappointment with the station 's board and management . Story continues below advertisement . Story continues below advertisement . The disarray appears to be affecting the station 's financial picture : The most recent fundraising drive , held last month , raised only \$ 186,000 of its \$ 350,000 goal . The fight over e - mail addresses will cost the station approximately \$ 50,000 , after the judge ordered it to pay \$ 20,000 of Mr. Hemming 's estimated \$ 50,000 costs in addition to its own \$ 30,000 of incurred costs . Though Justice Dunphy said he was loath to penalize a not - for - profit , he believed the station had acted improperly by " tossing roadblocks in the way of democracy , " and " it would be sending the wrong message " to not charge it some share of Mr. Hemming 's costs . One former director indicated on Friday that he would be pleased to return as part of a proposed overhaul . Joseph Manzoli told the Globe he left the board last winter , after serving three years , " because of the lack of good governance and transparency . I 'm coming back because change is in sight , and if I can assist in bringing that positive change , I 'm in with both feet . " . Security experts believe Thursday 's emailed bomb threats can be traced back to the same group responsible for the " sextortion " scam this past October . While investigators still do not know who is responsible , Cisco System 's Talos cybersecurity unit said in a statement on Friday that the threats came from the same group of fraudsters responsible for sending emails a few months back that claimed to have videos showing the recipients having sex . READ MORE : Sextortion scam uses old passwords to extort money from victims . " Cisco Talos discovered that this campaign is actually an evolution of sextortion and extortion attacks that we reported on in October . The claims in the emails we 've seen from this actor are completely false , yet they have caused untold amounts of damage as organizations have evacuated buildings and called upon law enforcement to investigate , " the security firm wrote in its statement . In the " sextortion " case , the senders threatened to release these videos , recorded through the webcams on recipients ' computers , unless they were paid a ransom . Jason Schultz , technical researcher at Talos , stated in the company 's blog post that some of the bomb threats that took place this week came from the same addresses used in those campaigns . WATCH : Bomb threats demanding Bitcoin investigated across Canada , U.S . " Multiple IPs involved in sending these bomb threats also sent various types of sextortion email that we saw in the previous campaign . In those cases , the attackers sent out emails claiming to have compromising videos of the victim and (threatened to) release them to the public unless the attacker (received) a bitcoin payment , " the post read . According to the post , the bomb threat had morphed once again by late Thursday , as the attackers now threatened to throw acid on the victims . Director , security response at cybersecurity firm Symantec , Kevin Haley , agreed with this finding . WATCH : Authorities outline ' sextortion ' string involving inmates , military service members . " We believe it 's the same group , " he confirmed . To determine this , Haley explained that Symantec looked at where the threats where coming from , the characteristics of the emails and whether or not the same spam servers were being used in this case as were used in October . " We 're looking for similarities in the attack and when you see those similarities you pretty much know it 's the same group , " he said . According to Haley , the bomb threats were an " innovation " on October 's " sextortion " scam , and the threat will likely continue to evolve until the perpetrators stumble upon one that sticks . WATCH : Burnaby RCMP warns of rise in " sextortion " cases . " This game is all about getting a certain percentage of people to respond , " he said . " The sextortion spam is not new . What 's new is they had a new twist that they thought could increase the amount of money they could make , " Haley explained . " While this caused chaos , it does n't look like it made them any money so they 've moved on . " . He states however , that the increased frequency of these kinds of threats has less to do with access to technology and more to do with the option to demand ransom payments in bitcoin . " What 's different here is that there is an easy way to exploit people , and that 's cryptocurrency . It 's fast , it 's virtual and it 's almost risk - free for the bad guys to do that , " he said . READ MORE : ' It becomes a nightmare ' : the rise of the viral bomb threat and how it makes the job of police harder . Haley said that though the attackers did n't make any money this time , we 're likely to see more of this style of attack containing different threats until one prompts enough people to pay the ransom . And when it does , he warns that it 's going to " explode . " . " They 're going to continue to throw things up against the wall and see what sticks until , eventually , when they hit at something that motivates people to actually pay that ransom , we 'll see that explode , " Haley said . " We 'll see hundreds of thousands , millions of these emails . Everybody will start getting them in their mailbox . " . Ford and Trudeau trade shots on climate change plans , Dec. 8 We are now in crisis mode with the environment . Our government 's pathetic attempt at reducing global warming has not been of any use . Justin Trudeau and the Liberals should pay attention to the riots happening in France . The people are revolting against carbon taxes , open immigration and the arrogance of the progressive socialist government , " Earl Hyde of Ontario writes . (JEAN - PHILIPPE KSIAZEK / AFP / GETTY IMAGES) . Punishing people with taxes because they need to get around or want to keep themselves warm in the winter is no solution at all . Good riddance to the cap and trade — or " pay up and pollute all you want " — initiative . We need real scientific solutions , such as forcing builders to make homes and buildings more energy efficient and sustainable . We need clean energy for transportation and home heating . Also , we must protect and expand our green spaces and plant more trees , which absorb CO2 . There are solutions out there . It just takes some genuine government involvement to get things moving in that direction . If the oil companies are holding us back , they must be ignored . The clean energy sector can create jobs , too . The planet and our very lives depend on it . Article Continued Below . Jane White , Scarborough Canada , which contributes less than 1.6 per cent of overall greenhouse gases , is being forced to pay carbon taxes while China opens a new coal - fired generating plant every week . If you support the climate change theory , you should stop driving a car , stop using carbon - based electricity , and stop using anything that is made of carbon . If you support open immigration , you should welcome and support an immigrant in your home . The carbon tax and open immigration should be voluntary and those who support it should pay . The progressives are hypocrites and never walk the talk . When we have finally had enough , the yellow vests in Canada will stand up to Trudeau and his politically correct progressive elites . Earl G. Hyde , Brantford The Dunkirk analogy , far from being disrespectful , is entirely appropriate in the context of the greatest threat our planet is experiencing . Unless ordinary people like us rally against the climate change deniers in both the federal and provincial Conservative parties , we are marching toward climate catastrophe . Article Continued Below . To paraphrase a well - known expression , " While Conservatives fiddle , the planet burns ! " " Bravo to our Guelph MPP , Maggie Ladlaw , Guelph This " goal post " talk reflects Ford 's view that this is all some sort of political game , when it is actually about the preservation of Earth and life itself . Science tells us that the goal posts of catastrophic climate change have already been cemented in place via human greed , and the politicians who prioritize corporate profit over public good keep us hurtling toward these posts at breakneck speed . If you want to talk about unfair , try living in a world where someone as ignorant as Ford can somehow rise to political power . Joel MaziarSKI , Toronto Climate fears are real , so oilands must close . Walkom , Dec. 5 Thank you to Thomas Walkom for this thoughtful column . There is a growing movement of young people calling for climate action and environmental justice , through school strikes , sit - ins and a recent lawsuit in Quebec against the federal government 's failure to take meaningful action . Parents and teachers want the best for our children . But we are busy and anxious providing what they need to thrive now , so it 's hard to look to the future at something over which we seem to have so little control . As a new parent , there is nothing I want more than for my daughter to grow up in a stable climate , not only for herself . And I do n't want her to have the weight of knowing that children in other places are facing hunger , flooding or displacement because we did n't act . If we come together in solidarity with the youth , we have power . In Canada , we can lead the way to the rapid and intense climate action the planet needs . No new fossil - fuel infrastructure . We need yellow and rising carbon taxes returned to the taxpayers and intense investment in green infrastructure , jobs and social justice infrastructure . Rebecca Weigand , Toronto/France 's yellow vests and the tarsands of Alberta , Salutin , Dec. 7 Rick Salutin is right to mention the urgent needs of both saving the planet from ruinous climate change and putting the next meal on the table . Although a carbon tax can help with the former it does nothing for the latter , as the yellow vests are saying so clearly . But we can address both needs by returning the proceeds of the carbon tax to households to help them pay for the transition to a low - carbon economy . British Columbia did this 10 years ago . The federal Liberals have finally seen the light . Even U.S. Republicans and Democrats have seen it , with the introduction of the bipartisan energy innovation and carbon dividend act . President Macron : pay attention . Doug Pritchard , Toronto . Read more about : . Looking for a job , kid ? Try a store , a bank , a hospital or an IT company . The retail industry , long a place for people to take their first step on the employment ladder , is still a solid place to start . According to the Civic Action study , the retail sector in Ontario employed 226,000 youth in 2017 . (Andrew Francis Wallace / Toronto Star File Photo) . Those sectors are the best bets for youth looking for an entry - level position , according to a study which is being released Monday by Civic Action . And employers in all those industries are looking for some of the same abilities : most sought - after are skills such as communication and empathy — not just the latest technical knowledge or courses . " Some of those ' soft ' skills are in short supply , but they 're what employers are looking for , " said Sevaun Palvetzian , CEO of Civic Action , a non - partisan civic engagement group . Article Continued Below . According to the most recent numbers from Statistics Canada , the unemployment rate of young Canadians is more than double the national average . In November , the national unemployment rate fell to 5.6 per cent (from 5.8 per cent in October) . For Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 , the rate was 10.8 per cent (down from 11.0) . There are more than 860,000 youth across Canada who are n't working , studying or in some form of training , the Civic Action study found . That 's not just a problem for the youth who are directly affected , but for society at large , argued Palvetzian . And it can be measured in dollars and cents , not just moral outrage . " There 's a societal cost to having someone remain unemployed , " said Palvetzian . The study estimated that if one of those young people stays unemployed for their entire life , it would cost Canadian society up to \$ 1 million . " There are health - care costs . There are welfare costs . There can be criminal justice costs , " Palvetzian said . Civic Action also has an online " road map " for employers looking to beef up their youth hiring and suggests companies " should move to skills - based hiring , " as opposed to " practices that prioritize . . . credentials and experience . " The retail industry , long a place for people to take their first step on the employment ladder , is still a solid place to start . According to the Civic Action study — which used research from Burning Glass Technologies and LinkedIn — the retail industry is the biggest source of online postings for entry - level jobs . In 2017 , the retail sector in Ontario employed 226,000 youth , according to the study . Article Continued Below . The Civic Action study also used online data to come up with the skills employers are looking for . Top of the list ? Communication . While dealing with customers at a shop or bank (or patients in a hospital) are obvious situations where communication is vital , it 's also crucial in Canada 's burgeoning tech sector . The stereotype of a socially awkward IT professional stuck in a back office somewhere no longer holds true — if it ever did . One big reason strong communication skills are important is they wo n't become outdated no matter how much technology changes , Palvetzian said . " These are things that are the least susceptible to technological disruption , " Palvetzian said . Next year , the information and communication technology sector will have 182,000 job openings across the country , with more than 40 per cent of those openings in Ontario .