

Downtown Surrey BIA
Questions for Council Candidates 2018
Derek Zabel – Independent Surrey Voters Association

1. What makes you think you are qualified to run as councillor?

My experience for this position includes my time as a Duty Manager for the Coast Mountain Bus Company, where I managed end-to-end operational delivery of transit services to the Lower Mainland in Metro Vancouver. Through this experience, I cultivated a distinct expertise in managing operational processes, identifying best practices, scheduling and monitoring fixed asset resources and personnel, and executing detailed logistics. During the course of 13+ years with the company, I was instrumental in the unit meeting organizational goals and requirements while facilitating streamlined logistical operations and motivating colleagues to peak performance levels. Some of my key achievements within this role include achieving a record of success in planning and execution phases, mentoring and training a dynamic team, providing complete oversight of budgetary and fiscal responsibilities and spearheading optimal resource allocation, procurement and data analysis activities. I would look to bring that work ethic to the fore to achieve similar results.

The other facet of my experience included a secondment to the Access Transit Services department for a period of time to support the roll-out of HandyDART in Metro Vancouver. Overseeing a \$50 MM budget in conjunction with senior leadership, I moved the project from inception to execution, identifying and securing necessary resources, equipment and staff to meet project deadlines and budget parameters. As a City Councillor my aptitude for the continuous improvement of internal processes, cost reduction and seamless operational flow can add a further dimension to my candidacy for this job.

2. What skills do you bring to Council if you are elected?

I have demonstrated abilities in operational optimization, team leadership, and core skillset in critical decision making. I believe my well-rounded knowledge of the transit system, expertise in directing company responses and positioning organizational identities are also key skills of mine.

3. In your opinion, what do you think is the most positive thing that has happened in Surrey recently that makes you proud to live in here?

The most positive thing that has happened for Surrey is that the Federal Government has announced funding and plans to introduce light rail. Public transportation can help drive the economy, provides residents with flexibility, as well as lower greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Are you committed to a strong City Centre and the creation of a vibrant Downtown core? What is your strategy and commitment to business - arts – culture – technology and community in Downtown Surrey?

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Yes I am committed to a strong downtown core for Surrey. Art, Culture remain the in the fabric of strong communities and supporting this brings people together. I am committed to learning from other world class cities around the world to see how we can integrate technology into our community even better.

5. The Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association had advocated for the past five years for a professionally managed purpose-built shelter in Surrey. What is your commitment to have this project move forward?

This is a wonderful idea and there needs to be a support system in place to help those who need it the most.

6. What do you see as the top five issues facing Surrey?

Overcrowding without the facilities/infrastructure/programs to support it

Crime and the need to develop better community strategies

Densification strategies around transportation providing residents with the abilities to walk bike or take public transit to where they need to go.

Social housing and support for those who find it difficult to live

Development of a strong downtown core for Surrey

7. We know there is always a debate between perception and reality. Everyone wants a safe place to live and do business. What is your strategy to deal with the root causes of crime?

Developing a community strategic approach to dealing with crime is essential. Learning from the local police force and putting proper educational programs in place for youth, and investing into community policing. Working with local police forces to integrate with all of Surrey's communities to tackle the issues and supporting our local police force so that they have the tools to do the job.

8. Do you support child care space in private developments?

I do support child care space in private developments. Surrey has been rapidly growing, and overcrowding is an issue. Parents cannot register children into recreational programs or find daycare or child care. Private development is another avenue to support families that require both parents to work in this difficult economy.

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9. How should requests for decreased amenity space in new residential or mixed-use developments (both indoor and outdoor) be addressed by the City?

10.

The City needs to develop better policies to address amenity spaces in new residential or mixed-use. Without the amenities close by, it simply makes life more difficult for people.

11. The temporary modular housing is scheduled to be removed from the locations in Downtown Surrey in two years. Do you support the City's housing strategy that moves people from the current temporary housing into supportive housing throughout the City? If not, what is your solution?

We need to take a strong look at the plans; the temporary housing right now is in a good location, close to transit. There is some time to look at all options to help and assist the people at this location. The housing will need to be close to transit, and other amenities. Perhaps there is a way we can look at Crown land to build housing to support this part of our community.

12. How would you make Council decisions more transparent?

We could make an accountabilities section on the City of Surrey website which will show and demonstrate the council decisions. These can be posted for public to view and understand why decisions were made and how.

13. What do you think is the priority for public transit South of the Fraser? What do you support?

The priority for public transit is to ensure that the light rail project goes ahead. There has been so much investment into this project already that if it does not go through, we are many years away from looking at a different type of technology like SkyTrain. Light rail works very successfully in other cities, and if we want to get people truly out of their vehicles, then we need the ability to offer residents quick and reliable transit.

In the future, we need to take a look at extending SkyTrain to Langley.