

**Downtown Surrey BIA  
Questions for Council Candidates 2018**

**NARIMA DELA CRUZ, SURREY FIRST**

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

I have been a leader in the Surrey communities for years and have been a passionate volunteer for years since arriving to Surrey. I believe that Surrey residents are looking for individuals who have experience building community, and who have become engaged volunteer community leaders because they want to further improve this great city.

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

I am very organized and hardworking, I have been used to living a life of serving others in the past decade and able to balance it well with my profession and my family life. I am also a wide reader, one who can read lots in an extended period of time, and still pay attention to important aspects and small details. Most significantly, I am a people person, I can confidently and comfortably talk to and listen to people of all walks of life, negotiate and adjust as the situation calls for it, and if necessary.

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?

That would be the vibrant and progressive City Ctre or Downtown Surrey. When I arrived in Surrey almost a decade and a half ago, Whalley was a place that my fellow immigrants who came here before me would advise against buying a property at. Downtown Surrey has soared to great lengths in the past years since then – it is now vibrant, modern, safer, and continuously progressing. I am proud to be presently residing at the heart of City Ctre.

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?

I am deeply committed to a *stronger* City Ctre and a *more* vibrant Downtown core and would advocate and work for having a space for cultural performances representing Surrey's diversity, and building community. I will also look at more ways to collaborate with Universities and Colleges, and on possible incentives to bring innovative businesses to Surrey.

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?

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Our at-risk and vulnerable members of society's needs are real, and it is essential that they be supported and assisted toward their next chances at life.

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

That would be the following:

1. Public Safety
2. Affordability for Families
3. Lack of Public Transportation
4. Road Congestion
5. Environmental issues

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?

I will commit to having a comprehensive strategy to fight crime built around an engaged community where everyone is safe, and that means a proactive reaching out approach for prevention and intervention because we need to get to the root of these issues.

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

Yes I do. A child care space in a place closer to the kids comfort zone (their home) would be helpful and possibly cost effective to the working parents and other family members.

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

From my perspective, mixed used development must be supported in moderation as it is a significant contributor to creating successful urban places. Commercial and residential projects and/or more amenity space where people can have spontaneous interaction and build community through common spaces and shared economic responsibility would be healthy and practical. The approval and permission must be dependent though, on the area where the development will be at, the size of the development, and its proximity to public amenities.

10. 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?

Yes I do. A supportive housing throughout the city would be a good strategy to help and assist our society members who are very much in need of support.

11. How would you make Council decisions more transparent?

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I would propose to set a wider approach in information dissemination possibly via social media technology or community outreach meetings periodically scheduled per town centres; and a more comprehensive approach in the selection of advisory committee members possibly by a city-wide nomination process.

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

There's no doubt Surrey and South of the Fraser is in need of more public transportation and more transit access in various areas of the city. I do support expansion and more frequent services of bus rapid transit (BRT) on its own designated lane which can easily move around traffic on its own. I acknowledged, however, that LRT has a funding in place and that Surrey waited long from senior governments for that piece of share for public transportation. I am committed to the residents along Fraser Highway corridor and our neighbors South of Fraser to determine what technology best suits the needs of today and tomorrow and will advocate for that system.