

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

1. Why are you running for Mayor?

After 18 years of the same representation it's time for someone different, someone that represents us and the people of our city.

Every day gets harder for working class families, increasing costs for housing, transportation, insurance, gas, taxes, groceries, child care and our incomes have not changed.

We need a new voice, new ideas and not an incumbent with old political ties.

It's time to fight for a Surrey that all families can afford. Regardless of their income, status or privilege.

2. Citizens of Surrey have a sense of pride in place and in community – what is your platform to help keep this momentum going?

There is no doubt that Surrey has an identity problem. There are a number of stereotypes most based on the Vancouver/Surrey, or the South/North Surrey divide. We need to push back on the stereotype.

My plan is to make Surrey a place that leads in education, transportation, has a low crime rate and a place where all can come to live and work. This will do more than anything else to change the false perception of Surrey.

3. The City of Surrey Tax rate per capita is the lowest in Metro Vancouver. What are your views on this? What are your priorities?

There is at present no need to increase the tax rate. The city can sustain an increase in program commitments within the current surplus of over 350 million per year.

4. 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?

We believe that the way forward is to support and adopt the Affordable BC housing strategy proposed by the BCGEU and CUPE for individuals who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

5. It is necessary for municipal leadership to insure there is affordable housing dispersed throughout the City. What strategies would you consider implementing?

Increase social housing on public land;

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Look at matching density strategies;

Develop mix buildings, and/or density sharing or trading

6. 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 support strategies that provide adequate and supportive housing for our vulnerable and homeless population combined with a comprehensive plan for supportive addiction and mental health services.

We applaud the BC government's intervention and provision of modular housing to many homeless residents, we are still deeply concerned that many members of the chronically homeless population will either not occupy this housing or will have health issues rendering long-term occupancy without significant support impossible.

The provision of modular housing is not a sufficient response to the homelessness crisis and will not end people living rough on 135A Street. The growth of homelessness will not end until Fraser Health is resourced as a partner in housing the hard-to-house in Surrey. The provincial government needs to direct new and sufficient funds to Fraser Health to replicate the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH's) housing program.

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?

Proudly Surrey has a comprehensive plan to deal with the root causes of crime.

We will improve urban planning and design; improved transportation and community services; developing our own Police Department or a South Fraser Police Department; adopt and all stakeholders strategy.

8. In response to the current City budget, what changes in staff at City Hall would you make to enhance your ability to meet your priorities?

Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes and systems to ensure more timely responses to customers and citizens in general. Ensure that staff undertake effective engagement with all relevant stakeholders

9. How would you describe your leadership style?

I am a strategic leader that understands the structures and processes that makes the organization works effectively and works towards consensus building.

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10. Voter turnout in municipal elections is historically low – do you think that a change to the ward system would heighten awareness in local issues ultimately increase voter turnout?

Moving to a ward system would not heighten awareness or increase voter turnout. The best tool to delivery a proportional system is the ‘Cumulative Vote System’. This system lets smaller communities of voters pool their votes together to get a representative who reflects their wishes.

It is more effective and less expensive to implement. It does not require change in legalisation, and no significant changes in counsellors or wards. This type of system does not required maintenance of a boundary system.

11. Economic Development in the 21st Century requires leaders to position the City globally – learning and recruiting from the best. How do you plan to position Surrey to take care of business globally?

I will focus on the business at home, such as the provision of services and the improvement of programs and policies for the residents and employees of Surrey.

I believe our policies will strengthen the global reputation of Surrey. The Federal Government has the lead role in International Relations and I will ensure that Surrey is on their mind when discussing options for international investments.

12. Innovation in the medical and technology sector is attracting the best and the brightest to our area. What are your thoughts to further job growth and attract businesses in these sectors to the Downtown Surrey?

A community with low crime, affordable housing, great parks, excellent schools, an educated workforce, a transportation infrastructure that looks to the future and an open and transparent civic government will attract businesses from all over the world.

13. We know we can expect over 1 million new residents to arrive in Metro Vancouver over the next 30 years, so we need to take the necessary action now by investing in our transportation system. As Mayor, what would you do on the Mayor’s Council for Regional Transportation to ensure Surrey’s requirements are highlighted?

I will retake control or our transit system and the gas taxes we pay to support it.

We would begin proceeding to legally pull out of TransLink and create a local transit system in partnership with TransLink and adjacent cities, one that maintains fare transferability, rapid transit building and maintenance and interurban service.

The South Fraser Transportation Authority would focus on any new transit development on frequent bus services to all neighbourhoods to ensure that seniors, kids and night shift workers have a bus system that meets their basic needs.

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We will base any future rapid transit decisions on two main principles: cost-effectiveness at moving people and effectiveness at combating climate change.

14. How do you plan to address the overcrowding of schools in Surrey?

The primary plan is to get the government to build more schools, implement a hiatus on development until an adequate number of primary and secondary schools are built to accommodate all students, in all areas of the city.

Implement a progressive plan to update and improve those schools that require refurbishing and expanded facilities.

Implementation of community schools -joint initiatives with the school board that will pool resources to provide necessary comprehensive services and programs to the community.

15. The creation of a City Centre and a vibrant Downtown core is vital to the growth of Surrey. What is your strategy and commitment to business - arts – culture – technology and community in Downtown Surrey?

We need to recognize and acknowledge that the current city centre does not in fact service the center of Surrey, it primarily serves as the center of the Plateau. It in no means deal with the needs, progress or growth of South of the city (Surrey).

We will create a Bear Creek Arts Strip along 88th Avenue and King George Boulevard, anchored by a renewed Surrey Arts Centre. This will include the construction of new municipal buildings for restaurant, gallery and studio space on public land on the north and south sides of 88th between King George and Lauder Drive

We will re-zone the private residences between Lauder and King George to permit incremental conversion to commercial and mixed-use space

We will increase the budget of Surrey Arts Centre to fund local dramatic and musical production, phasing out the Arts Club contract

We will increase the budget of Surrey Art Gallery to fund better gallery shows with greater emphasis on local and aboriginal production

We will establish a property tax discount system for short-term gallery rentals, reducing property taxes on commercial spaces that grant short-term (1-3 month) leases to artists and galleries

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We will invite Emily Carr University to partner with the city in creating a Surrey campus either as part of the Bear Creek Arts Strip and/or the University Drive development to further expand Surrey's local university campus system

16. How would a municipal police department be different than the RCMP to residents and businesses? Have you studied the studies and what are the financial implications?

Surrey being one of the fastest growing urban cities requires a bigger, smarter, and more connected police force. Right now, the RCMP is having trouble filling the positions we ask for.

We would create and phase in a South Fraser Regional Police Department. This will increase our policing budget to pay a 30% higher officer presence.

Our recruitment program will include training at local institutions, and competing aggressively for graduates in criminology, social work and other interventions professions.

We will supplement our police education and retention program to include: increasing resources for language training in the languages spoken in Surrey; more and broader social scientific approaches to crime reduction.

We will increase community policing approach and put more cops on the beat.

It can be anticipated that annual cost would be 20-30% higher, however given our current surplus of \$353 million the budget could support these increases in costs.

17. Do you support child care space in developments? How would you implement this within the City Development process?

I do support licensed supervised child care space in developments, this could be determined on the size of the development and the number of expected employees.

The size and numbers would be assessed based on the proximity to a Community School with licensed child care facilities.

18. A number of developers have requested shorter waiting time on their projects to commence. What would you implement to ensure this happens?

It is recognized that undue delays can be very costly for businesses and create structural issues that will only multiply over time.

If things are not handled in a timely manner it could severely impact on the integrity of the process and potentially compromise the level of due diligence

Increasing the number of staff directly responsible to councilors, especially those conducting public consultation processes to ensure that a clear line of accountability exists

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Assigning a 'lead councilor' to every public consultation process undertaken by the city to produce clear lines of accountability through councilor staff.

19. What would you do to address "the silos that operate in isolation at City Hall" – meaning many of the departments don't communicate what is happening. What would you do to address this huge issue?

Easy, remove the 'silos', establish lines of communication and have competent individuals who know what is needed and how to keep people in the loop.

We want to reduce the number of employees that report to the city manager and increase the number of employees that report to council. This will ensure that the peoples representatives know where the problems are.

Emails have a cc button which can be used effectively to include all relevant parties involved and up to date on the progress of activities and tasks.

The implementation of a project management information system (PMIS) is a "coherent organization of the information required for an organization to execute projects successfully".

The use of a PMIS allows departments to systematically collect, share and use information. This would allow departments to share information as all would be captured on the system and follow-up in real time the progress of activities.

20. How should requests for decreased amenity space in City Centre developments be accommodated?

We will review requests on a project by project basis. All requests for exceptions should be highlighted and addressed at the application process.

21. How would you bring transparency into Surrey City Hall?

The building of public confidence in municipal government requires robust professional standards that promotes openness and inclusion by eliminating a 'silo' mentality where departments control the flow of communication that hinders the process.

As mentioned above, we want to reduce the number of employees that report to the city manager and increase the number of employees that report to council. This will ensure that the peoples representatives know where the problems are.

To increase the confidence in the decision making at city hall we will implement a strict code of ethics that includes stringent rules on conflict of interest. We want elected officials & spouse to disclose assets. We need to prohibit elected officials from practicing in a profession that is likely to conflict with their public duties.