

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

1. Why are you running for Mayor?

It is time for 'clean politics'. Today, an unknown few are gaining too much influence on our democracy. Surrey politicians are great example with 25000 dollar a plate dinner with Mayor etc. Politicians are not disclosing the identities of individuals or groups funding their campaigns in any meaningful way. Once in power, the politicians have to work for the donors and special interest groups since they have to see them again in the next four years.

We are a group of non-politicians running for council and we are the real change Surrey need. We want to bring values back to politics. It is a matter of time this will happen – we will make it happen. This is why we are running as a team and I am running for Mayor. We have four fundamental values and explained how we will practice them. We are a fiscally responsible team. We have a clearly laid out, 16 point platform for Surrey. Details on our website [peoplefirstsurrey.ca](http://peoplefirstsurrey.ca).

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

We want to make Surrey a world class city with all the amenities a large city need and should have. We want the city center to be a proper downtown. We want to identify a street for nightlife. We want to revitalise downtown with more and more greenery and trees and walkways. We want to bring more arts and culture to city center. LRT is NOT essential to all these.

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?

We want to keep the Tax rate per capita the same way it is. We are a very cost conscious team and it will reflect in everything we do. This is one of the reasons we are not supporting Surrey's own police force etc.

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 are a fiscally responsible team. But some of the areas we are open to spending money is environment (aka more trees) and housing for those in need of it. So we are very positive to the purpose-built shelter in questions. We will adopt a timeline based, roadmap approach to get things done – rather than pages and pages of strategy documents.

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

We will continue to support the efforts of city in this. We will fast-track the development approvals process for new purpose-built rental housing. We will also develop a timeline based approach, ie; a plan with outcomes every six months or so. This will push the generic plans and objectives the city strategy documents to a very real action plan with timelines to meet. A project like approach!

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 the strategy of supportive housing in appropriate locations. Those locations to be identified with criteria's made public and with public consultation. However, we need changes at more fundamental level to address this issue. Our strategy is to bring more entry level housing to

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market using a 'build up, build more' approach. As more supply comes to market, and we speed up approvals in city hall using streamlining processes using technology, we expect more people in the basement units be able to afford owning places again.

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?

A municipal government cannot address all the root causes of crime. However, it can implement policies that to some extent minimize the causes of crime. For example, we can address the issues that lead to homelessness by ensuring bringing more entry level housing supply to market. We can implement policies that those in need get a 24\*7 contact who understand them. We can implement policies that further enable the activist and people that work directly in touch with them.

Some other things can also be done, which is actually the major part of our crime and gang violence platform. We will implement camera in all road intersections and any points that public request, like the business units surroundings. However, the footage will not be monitored or given to police. City staff will be in control of it. If an incident has occurred this footage can be used to identify suspect and ensure there is proof for courts. These cameras placed in a strategic grid manner so that all escape routes after crime is committed will be in camera.

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?

I understand managing bureaucrats in city hall will not be easy. But our direction to them would be to 'find a ways' to implement policies, not excuses for not doing it. That is why they get paid. But if they keep finding excuses, we will replace them with people who can find ways.

Another one is, we want the development approvals, whether it is a yes or no, faster. We might have to hire some staff for it.

9. How would you describe your leadership style?

Transformational and Democratic. Harnessing the power of people.

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?

It might increase voter turnout. However, we think the rational for people asking for ward system is representation. In PEOPLE FIRST SURREY, we try to get candidate representing all possible neighbourhoods. We think other slates should also do this to ensure representation. Representation is one of the four founding principles for us. However, we do not support a ward system as it could cause lot of neighbourhood thinking and competition. Surrey is a large city already and we need a city and lower mainland level thinking to move on as a big city.

11. Economic Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> 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?

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Technology, Technology and Technology. That is where the high paying jobs are. That is where the opportunity is to make it big for our new generation. What we need is not the barista jobs offered by the coffee shops around LRT. We need to bring more businesses in the technology sector. We need good connectivity to technology hubs like Vancouver and Seattle for us to grow. Once the talent is here, we can bring businesses here. We need programs to support such businesses. We are exploring options like patenting support for businesses in Surrey. Exploring the possibility of Free Municipal WiFi. We will actively explore partnership with Tech big wings to bring them here. We want to more actively pursue the Smart City roadmap of Surrey. Surrey was a pioneer in this but not anymore. We need to get back on track with Smart city and really do it.

We need to use technology for solving the issues faced by the society. This is where we advocate use of camera, single case management systems to speed up city hall processes etc.

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?

We need special task forces to bring larger companies to Surrey. We need to attend more industry conferences, present our city to such events. We need to do more pilot projects and programs. These do need some investments but it is money well spend as long as there are follow ups to bring them to Surrey. As part of our 16 point platform we have announced that we will have a team in city hall or partner with external organizations to help patent inventions of Surrey business paid by city hall.

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?

Surrey and south of fraser in general is not getting their fair share of transportation investments. A great example itself is LRT, where City and Tranklink is neglecting the delays and impact to crossing traffic by LRT and the human loss of life due to avoidable accidents over the years. The matrices churned out by Translink is not showing the full story, to say the least. We will work with other Mayors in south of fraser cities for more cooperation and advocacy in Mayors council. We need more data from Translink to get what Surrey deserve. We will also explore the option of separating planning and strategy from Translink to an independent, trustable body while Translink manages the day to day operations of Transportation.

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

Housing affordability, infrastructure and overcrowding all are interrelated problems. We will work with the province and school board to see if we can develop formula about this. We are not running a school board but we have promised to have in person meetings and a good working relationship with the school board.

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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 have a strong commitment to Surrey downtown to bring it to a world class downtown format. We want to identify a nightlife street in Surrey. We also want to see a walkable, tree lined city, properly lit at night times. This is especially important as we get more student population in city center. We are ardent supporters of all arts but especially performing art.

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?

There is a lot of crimes statistics in cities run by RCMP and own police force in BC itself. There is no significant crime pattern difference we could see. Own municipal force typically costs more but it uses more resources. Probably 50% or more. Policing is the biggest expense of our city with 150 Million of our 1 Billion yearly budget. So this is a big decision for our city with a definite increase in taxes. There are no proof on any impact to crime or gang violence either.

So we advocate for a study on RCMP Vs Municipal force for Surrey, Publish the results and then people vote for it.

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

We cannot mandate specific provisions along with private developments. These additional requests will affect prices and could negatively impact affordability. If a private party want to bring such facilities, city hall will appreciate it but will not mandate it.

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

We have a declared goal of making the city hall application waiting times to half. We will do this by streamlining processes and automating and integrating departments. See our housing affordability priority for details <http://peoplefirstsurrey.ca/page.php?page=Priorities3>. We also have daily sessions if audience have specific questions.

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?

We will implement a citizen centric case management system. We understand there are multiple case management systems today. We will make it one, as it is supposed to be. There will be one person, one case manager, responsible for each contact or say touchpoint in the city hall to ‘own’ any request. Rather than sending you to another desk. These are best practices from around the world.

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

Need more information about this question. Does this refers to specific developments?

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

Transparency is our team first and foremost value. We practice it even today by disclosing every dollar we receive to our website. Our policy will be to use technology to attain a similar level of transparency to every city transaction and contracts. We will get there slowly but steadily.