

Burnaby Civic Election 2014 Candidate Questionnaire

Name: James Wang

Running for: Councillor

Biography:

I came to Canada from China in 1996. My family and I have lived in Burnaby for 15 years. I have two kids growing up in Burnaby who are enjoying the excellent public education system. I was elected to the Burnaby Board of Education as a School Trustee in 2008 and re-elected in 2011.

I have a Masters in Business Administration. My accomplishments include: Independent Director & Senior Advisor with Canada Export Centre; Honorary President of the Northwest Benevolent Association of Canada; Advisor with the Canada Community Service Association (CCSA). I was recognized by the Vancouver Sun as one of the Top 100 Most Influential Chinese-Canadians in BC (2006) along with my brother. This year I was named one of RBC's Top 25 Canadian Immigrants of 2014.

I volunteer my time with many community activities and have led local fundraising campaigns for earthquake victims in Haiti and China. I am an avid photographer and a golf & Table Tennis enthusiast, sitting as a director of the North America Golf Association and vice Chair of Canadian Chinese Table Tennis Federation (CCTTF). All of this positive work has encouraged James to want to do more to serve the community. That is why he made the decision to for a BCA City Council. James knows that he will do his best to bring his passion, energy and extensive experience to the role of City Councillor.

What skills would you bring to the office if you are elected and how would those be of use in your role?

Being fluent in English and Mandarin, I helped bridge some of the gaps between Burnaby's diverse communities and the role that School Trustees play in securing leading-edge learning opportunities for Burnaby students has been a significant asset in building trust and understanding of the important role of publicly-funded education. I know that I can play a similar role on City Council. My philosophy is: "Serve more with my passion and energy and to be a bridge to Burnaby's diverse communities"

If elected, what will be your top goals for your coming term in office?

Burnaby is one of most diverse cities in lower mainland and there is a gap between the diverse local communities and our multicultural society. I will continue to be a bridge between Burnaby's diverse communities and the City and encourage the involvement of local communities in the City's development of sustainability. I will be working to strengthening the community networks to keep Burnaby as the most livable and best run city in Canada

What strategies do you think the City of Burnaby should adopt to foster the growth and success of our local businesses?

The City should continue to work with the Burnaby Business community to build an environment where Burnaby Businesses are valued as an integral part of the City's economy and community. This means keeping regulation to a minimum while protecting the public interest, ensuring equitable rates of taxation and an open door policy between members of the Business Community and the City of Burnaby Mayor and Council.

If elected, what will you do to ensure the City of Burnaby is seen as being "open for business?"

The Burnaby Citizens Association Council will continue to work with the Board of Trade to identify opportunities for Burnaby businesses both within the City and beyond. This means welcoming delegations from outside the city and participating in events beyond the City's borders, with the intent of welcoming new investors and convincing them that they will love operating in Burnaby as much as we do.

We will also continue to implement the City's recent Economic Development plan, our Social Sustainability plan and our soon to be finalized Environmental Sustainability plan. Together the three documents offer great possibilities for new and existing investors within Burnaby.

How would you propose the City of Burnaby manage its continued densification and the development of its 4 town centres?

We are committed to upholding the Regional Growth Plan and our City of Burnaby Official Community plans. These plans, which have had input from citizens and businesses in Burnaby, set out where and how Burnaby can densify. They restrict the bulk of the City's density to the City's four town centres, thereby preserving our single family neighbourhoods. Our official community plans also address the infrastructure and amenities (recreational, social etc) which are necessary within our town centres to achieve a balance, so that Burnaby is a great place to work, live and play.

The efficient movement of goods and services is important to local businesses. What do you see as the major transportation issues facing Burnaby and what do you think are some solutions?

The impact of recent and future growth does impact the efficiency of transportation in the City. The fact that we are a conduit between the suburbs to the east and downtown Vancouver, means that we get more than our share of commuter traffic. We have initiated a city wide review of our Transportation plan during the coming year. We recognize that we need to update how businesses and residents get around the city. We also are also making improvements in our pedestrian and bicycle networks. Throughout this process we plan to seek input from residents and business.

The Inter-Municipal Business License (IMBL) Pilot Project is currently underway with an end date of December 2015. Do you support making Inter-Municipal Business Licenses permanently available for the construction industry? Do you support expanding the Inter-Municipal Business License program to include other sectors?

Yes, we would be open to discussing with you and other parties relevant to this project the feasibility of expanding the program to include other sectors in addition to the existing construction industry participants.

This review would include a review of the business case of program expansion, together with other aspects of the pilot program performance.

What do you see as the role of the City of Burnaby in supporting the development of Burnaby's key sectors and industries?

The role of the City of Burnaby should be to work collectively with the business community, labour and other organizations such as the Burnaby Board of Trade to foster a business climate which is welcoming, politically stable and which operates within a triple bottom line of Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability. We need to recognize the unique differences and similarities of our key sectors and industries and work to accentuate our advantages in order to maximize Burnaby's leadership position. We are particularly targeting growth in the high tech and green industry sector along with other knowledge-based businesses.