

## **Burnaby Civic Election 2014 Candidate Questionnaire**

**Name:** Paul McDonell

**Running for:** Councillor

**Biography:**

I was first elected to City Council in 2008 and re-elected in 2011.

I've been a Burnaby resident since 1964. My career as a Firefighter and Rescue Service Worker led to my extensive involvement in numerous community organizations over the years, including the Muscular Dystrophy Society and the United Way.

Over the past two decades, my desire to serve led to my involvement with the Burnaby Parks Board, which I Chaired. Seeing a need in the community, I became involved with the Burnaby Health Board, focusing on what the Board could do to help advance important regional healthcare initiatives. In 1998, I became Chair of the provincial government's Simon Fraser Health Board.

As a Councillor I have helped build partnerships that have advanced numerous successful initiatives throughout the City, including the Mural Program to help curb graffiti; assisted with the Eco-Sculpture Program and the subsequent involvement of high school students in their creation; the Edmonds Santa Claus Parade; the Edmonds City Fair that now includes the Classic Car Show; and was instrumental in the planning of the Burnaby hosted 2012 BC Senior Games.

Together with the BCA Council and strong citizen consultation and involvement, my efforts continue to be directed at strengthening the community networks that have raised Burnaby's reputation as an exemplary local and internationally respected City known for its liveability.

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

Through my community activism and in my role as a Burnaby City Councillor, I have come to recognize the success citizen involvement brings and the worthwhile partnerships that help guide the decision making process at the Council level. I know the process of good decision-making isn't always an easy one and I appreciate the significant contribution made by hundreds of Burnaby residents and businesspeople as they participate by appearing before Council or being involved on one of Burnaby's numerous citizen committees.

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

I will be focusing on housing, social issues as well as finance and budgets. The city needs to be fiscally responsible and plan ahead. Tax dollars are entrusted to elected officials by residents so we need to handle them responsibly. We need to set aside money for new amenities and to deal with social issues.

**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.