



## **Burnaby Council Candidate: Alison Gu - Burnaby Citizens Association**

Alison Gu is Burnaby's youngest ever City Councillor. Born and raised in Burnaby, she is an advocate for affordable housing, equitable climate action and preparedness, and better traffic safety and transportation options. She graduated as Valedictorian from Burnaby North Secondary School and attended McGill University on full scholarship. She received her B.Sc while working two part-time jobs. She was awarded "Top 25 under 25 Environmentalist" in 2020 and speaks Mandarin and French. Alison has passed 10 motions at Council and committees in just one year, proving she can get the job done and make Burnaby better for everyone.

### **What skills would you bring to the Councillor's position and how would those apply to the business community?**

As a sitting Councillor, I have had the opportunity to hone my understanding of land-use decisions that support local businesses as well as the challenges that businesses face in Burnaby today. I will continue to bring strong collaboration, listening, and critical thinking skills to Council. I've heard about how some businesses have been hard-hit by the pandemic, and need governments to act quickly and nimbly to try creative solutions to support businesses, and I am committed to ensuring we make City Hall more responsive.

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

There should be more exploration of the zoning tools at our disposal that can support businesses. I've heard from retail businesses that the spaces being created today are often too large and expensive for the local businesses that we want to keep in Burnaby. Since the City Council elected in 2022 will be the ones making the decisions on a new Official Community Plan – the first plan since the last one was updated 25 years ago – we need to be looking at how we can support businesses within the new Plan. We also need to be looking at how to boost economic activity to businesses by following up-to-date best practices, including updates to infrastructure.

### **How would you propose the City of Burnaby manage its continued densification and the development of its town centers?**

The priority for existing town centers should be a larger emphasis on the investments in infrastructure that will more greatly benefit community members, residents, and businesses. Rather than waiting to complete development of housing until investments in public spaces, amenities, green space, and safe walking, rolling, and cycling infrastructure, the timing needs to shift to for these important investments to come online earlier. We also need to shift towards strategies like urban villages to be able to create more diverse types of housing while creating spaces for businesses to thrive.

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

Creating a vibrant city that is built around people is my top priority. This means building housing on top of retail and stores, safe streets for walking, cycling, and rolling, and public plazas and spaces. All the evidence, research, and real-world experiences show that building these kinds of cities is the best way to boost businesses, economic activity, and vibrancy.