

Burnaby Civic Election 2014 Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Colleen Jordan

Running for: Councillor

Biography:

I lived and worked in Burnaby since 1976. I was first elected to Council in 2002 and re-elected in 2005, 2008 and 2011.

I was a media librarian in the Burnaby school district where I saw the critical role public service employees play in providing quality services. Realizing the connection between good public services and great communities, I became actively involved in my union to ensure valuable public services and the jobs and community benefits they create are protected. I was elected as the full-time Secretary-Treasurer of CUPE BC, a position I held until my retirement in 2005.

As the Chair of the City's Community Development Committee, I have played an integral leadership role in the careful planning and implementation of a comprehensive growth strategy that benefits Burnaby's business, residential and neighbourhood communities. I have helped develop strategic initiatives that have brought added revenue to the City while securing much needed neighbourhood benefits such as child care centres, spaces for community services and significant well-used community facilities such as Bonsor 55 plus, without impacting property taxes. I also championed the process to adopt the secondary suites bylaw. I was pleased to be a part of planning for major new facilities in each of our four town centres, including an ice rink in Edmonds, and arts/events centre for Metrotown, and community centres in Brentwood and Lougheed; again, all financed via amenity bonus funds, not property taxes.

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

I have decades of community activism and participation on numerous community boards, committees and projects and continue to serve on several boards. I have served as a City Councillor for 12 years and have been a leader in driving important policy changes. My role as a director for both Pacific Blue Cross and Community Savings CU, have allowed me to develop skills in governance and financial matters that I have brought to my role as a Councillor.

I am a strong proponent of community involvement and consultation in reaching goals that provide benefit to everyone in the City. My work on Burnaby's Heritage Commission has helped facilitate award-winning heritage projects exclusively through the use of gaming funds, ensuring no impact on Burnaby's tax base.

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

- Protecting our environment and park spaces
- maintaining high quality public and protective services within our limited fiscal capacity

- working on expanded affordable housing options

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 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.