



## Mayor's 2019 Address

Good Evening...

As we begin 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to present the vision to build a world-class city that's committed to creating and sustaining the best quality of life... for our entire community. I will share with you some of the highlights from 2018 which the City will continue to build upon, some initiatives City Council has commenced over the past couple of months and some of our plans for the future.

The value we place on innovation will be the key to finding creative solutions for some of our current challenges.

Finding ways to create and provide affordable housing is the biggest challenge we're facing. We've been exploring options to make housing more affordable and available and I pledge that we will continue to work and act quickly to find innovative solutions.

- To this end, we're: creating a housing task force that will come up with recommendations to address our housing issues over the longer term... and to deliver some near-term solutions to help those affected by new development construction. The work of the task force will be grounded in needs identified by residents – residents in all stages of life and at all levels of income and ability. It will consider that families take many forms – from young people just entering the workforce to older residents who may require less space and more care, to working people who are struggling to make ends meet. As we work to develop a made-in Burnaby affordable housing strategy, the City and the task force will look to the people of Burnaby for guidance to make and to shape all recommendations.

To ensure transparency and open dialogue, the City of Burnaby is partnering with Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue to serve as a third-party facilitator for the Mayor's Task Force and to design the City's resident engagement strategy. Strategy development will focus on enabling creativity and ensuring there are meaningful opportunities to wrestle with difficult tradeoffs. It will also ensure that citizens play an integral role in the decision-making process. Special effort will be made to reach residents in all areas, connect with less-heard voices and remove any barriers to participation.

It will be a strategy that puts the people of Burnaby's needs first.

Meanwhile, we're also:

- re-visiting local housing plans and not advancing any further major developments that would displace tenants, until affordable housing or alternatives can be found for those tenants.
- finding opportunities to partner with the provincial and federal government, non-profit housing providers, and the development community;

For example, Burnaby is working with the BC Government and the Dixon Transition Society to support a new 20-unit housing development for women and children in vulnerable situations.

And we're working with our non-profit partners and BC Housing to help advance more low-cost housing projects. The new developments on Hastings Street and 18th Avenue are a good example of this... and will provide about 150 new rental units for low-income residents and seniors.

As we develop our affordable housing strategy, innovation will be key, as it was when we worked quickly this winter to help people who are facing homelessness in our City. This past December – just as temperatures were dropping sharply – City staff worked quickly and creatively to open four warming centres across Burnaby for people who need a safe place to sleep or warm up. I am very proud of the hard work and effort of our staff to pull together this project so quickly.

For the first time in the city's history, Burnaby has warming centres to provide safe, warm places for our most vulnerable residents.

These overnight centres are open every night until the end of March and provide refreshments, bedding, places to sleep and information on how to get further support from aid agencies.

In short, they are safe and warm shelters that could possibly save lives during the cold and harsh winter season.

But, the warming centres are just one example of how the City is innovating, moving forward and addressing the needs of people who are homeless. We will continue to network with the Task Force on Homelessness and the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby – along with the Progressive Housing Society's Homeless Outreach Program – to ensure the best immediate, near-term and longer-term solutions are recognized and implemented.

Other initiatives under way include the City's partnership with BC Housing to construct a three-storey building on Norland Avenue that will provide 52 transitional homes – and will include shared amenity space and support services. We're excited to be in the final stages of the re-zoning process.

Overall, our goal is to transition people who don't have homes – or who are at risk of homelessness – to more permanent solutions. To this end, we are also now planning for a facility that will provide temporary shelter for the homeless at all hours, not just during the night.

Some other key priorities over the next few years will be... to increase safety for all our residents – especially in public spaces, including adding additional lighting in many areas and improving sidewalks throughout the city – as well as upgrading some of our facilities and parks.

Safety enhancements will also include increasing policing and the budget for the RCMP. We are going to improve police response to ensure that when our citizens are in our public spaces, they feel safe. We will enhance the police school liaison program, so more kids see police in schools as role models.

We're adding more cameras and new lighting in our parks and will continue to work to ensure the parks are beautiful, relevant and up-to-date... and to make our sidewalks and other public spaces safer and more accessible.

We're focused, too, on taking full advantage of opportunities for technical innovations that can streamline interactions with City Hall.

For example, we're:

- enabling online payments
- enhancing City maps
- adding archival information
- augmenting our well-used libraries' services, with more programs that use robotics, coding tools and virtual reality headsets, focused on connecting and engaging with youth... while also adding lower-tech, but nonetheless innovative new features like our pedal-powered mobile libraries that take the library into the community, beyond the traditional brick and mortar walls.
- ensuring City Council agendas and minutes are easily accessible for all, which we'll further enhance in a very non-technical way by taking two of our meetings outside of City Hall this year, into the community
- and, coming very soon – a one-stop access to property information with a new online My Property feature, for legal descriptions, tax information, assessment history and more.

In addition to creating opportunities for more seamless citizen interactions with City Hall, we're also focused on streamlining travel throughout the City.

Burnaby's Transportation Plan is also being updated – with great citizen-input already received during the first phase of development, which was designed to set a direction. Staff visited farmers' markets, libraries, recreation centres and civic events, engaging directly with almost 2,000 citizens to collect ideas. Hundreds more residents responded to our questionnaires, we received about 1,000 written comments, and many citizens participated in our 14 stakeholder meetings.

Based on all of the public participation to date, we're now drafting a plan, which we will take to our citizens for additional input.

Meanwhile, we will continue to work to implement traffic solutions citizens have said are clearly needed. For example, we will continue to add to our urban trail network, with the kind of innovative paths that we now see in all areas of the city.

More work is planned in 2019 for the Central Park Urban Trail, as well as for the Kensington and Penzance urban trails. The urban trail on the west side of Kensington will also be extended, to improve connections with the Central Valley Greenway.

Our urban trails now span more than 70 kilometres throughout the City. By creating opportunities to walk or cycle, instead of driving, they help ease traffic congestion and they also lessen our carbon footprint.

Another way that Burnaby is leading the charge for social and environmental responsibility is our LED streetlight project, for which Burnaby committed to be the first city in Metro Vancouver to completely convert to LED street lights – saving the City nearly a half-million dollars AND reducing our eco-footprint. And similar practices are on the way with converting lights in our parks, pathways and facilities.

This is one part of Burnaby's long-term strategic energy management plan.

Another is to ensure that new developments provide infrastructure for charging stations for electric vehicles, which are becoming increasingly popular and available. We will continue to explore the use of sustainable energy to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel and greenhouse gas emissions.

Recognizing the need for more childcare options, the City is currently developing childcare centres at Capitol Hill and Montecito elementary schools. These centres are scheduled to open in the fall of 2019.

Each of these centres will provide 25 spaces for children aged three to five years.

Another childcare facility is also planned at Stride Avenue Community School – with 12 spaces for infants and toddlers, along with 25 spaces for children aged 3 to 5 years.

As we enter the new year, the City is looking at many new infrastructure projects – from upgrading existing public facilities to the development of new recreation facilities – to meet the needs of our growing community.

Preliminary work is underway on four key projects -

- CG Brown Memorial Pool and Burnaby Lake Ice Arena replacement
- Willingdon Heights Community Centre
- Confederation Park /Eileen Dailly Pool, with additional recreation space
- and Cameron Recreation Centre and Library replacement

Finally, plans are well underway for the new South Burnaby Arena – with expectations that shovels will be in the ground later this year for two NHL-sized rinks with community space and other amenities.

I am so pleased to have the opportunity, as Burnaby's new Mayor, to help to advance all of these initiatives, and many more that I am hearing from citizens are important to keeping Burnaby a great place to live and making it even better. For example, I've heard from so many citizens about their concerns regarding Burnaby Hospital. I share those concerns and am determined to get the hospital to

where it needs to be. Our hospital has been neglected for too long, I believe that the provincial government understands the need for this hospital and I will push for funding for the redevelopment of the facility and the addition of a cancer clinic.

As Burnaby's new Mayor, I would like to thank staff for all of the work they have done to support our new Council's direction to date, ensuring immediate action on important initiatives such as housing plans and warming centre development. And I would like to thank Burnaby citizens so much for the trust they have placed in me in electing me as the new Mayor of this wonderful City.

I will do my very best each day to continue to keep your trust and to implement the programs and initiatives you tell Council and staff are most important to your quality of life as a Burnaby resident.

On behalf of Burnaby Council and staff, Happy New Year! I look forward to working with you to make 2019 a great year for the City of Burnaby.