The Burnaby Citizens Association is responding to the questionnaire on behalf of the Mayoral, Council and Board of Education candidates in the upcoming civic elections, as we act on behalf of all of the candidates, and have policies that our community relies upon that are consistent for all of our initiatives. **We have attached a copy of our recently release Housing Priorities Program\***, which includes many points that relate to housing our vulnerable citizens.

Mayoral Candidates

1. Addressing homelessness: The BCA position has always been a Homes First policy, in that we look for opportunities to provide, long term supportive housing, as opposed to emergency shelters, for the homeless and those at risk.
2. Actions towards affordable housing: In spite of the lack of funding and support from senior governments in the last decade, we have managed to achieve more than 1000 units of non-market housing completed or in progress in the last 3 years. More than half of these have been approved since the new government took office in Victoria, including the Norland supportive housing project.
3. Using the BTF expertise: We have been pleased to work with the BTF over the past years, by allocating city staff to participate in the work of the BTF, and have made a specific provision in our housing platform to engage with community agencies such as the BTF.
4. What have we done and what will we do: The city has already spent more than $20 Million from our housing fund towards creation of non-market housing, and will allocate additional funds, towards reducing the rent levels of new projects to provide more affordable social housing in the city.\*
5. Comprehensive strategy: The BCA housing priorities document\* shows how we will allocate additional funding and resources towards non-market housing proposals, as well as completing the process of implementing rental zoning that will require addition rental units in projects and will span the housing continuum from low income to market rental.
6. Other levels of Government: Mayor Corrigan was a representative on the UBCM housing task force, whose recommendations formed a significant portion of the provinces new 30 point housing action plan. Councilor Jordan has also represented Burnaby on the metro region housing and homeless committees. BCA officials will continue to lobby for resources to address housing matters at Federal and Provincial levels.
7. Bylaws: The introduction of Rental Tenure Zoning\* will, in our view begin a long process that will create more affordable housing for our city.
8. Showers: Our platform document includes eliminating the policy of charging for showers.
9. Ending homelessness: As has been demonstrated with the opportunity for the development of the Norland project, we will look to participate in every opportunity that arises, in co-ordination with other levels of government and community non-profits to build homes for our most vulnerable.

City Council

1. Increasing affordable housing: As noted in our Housing Priorities\* a BCA council will add to the measures already in place in a number of significant ways.
2. Seniors and low income: As noted, the Housing Priorities\* will allocate significant funds now available through our housing density fund towards non-market (social and seniors) housing. A unique feature is the proposal to allocate a per unit cash contribution towards each new unit; this will aid in producing a lower rent level for tenants on an ongoing basis.
3. Bylaws: As noted above, the most crucial bylaw will be the implementation of the Rental Tenure Zoning.
4. Scattered Sites: The city is committed to offering city lands for a variety of housing projects, such as the 18th Ave/New Vista project and Hastings/Success project. Our Housing Priorities\* proposal also looks toward purchasing additional property for this use, as opportunities arise.
5. Showers: As noted above, a BCA council will eliminate this charge.
6. Ending Homelessness: As noted above, a BCA Mayor and Council will continue to engage with all other levels of government and community agencies to take advantage of any opportunities that arrises to create additional affordable housing.
7. Additionally, we have committed in our Housing Policy to allocate funds from our Community Housing Benefit Policy to provide community agencies with support for working with vulnerable groups in Burnaby such as those at risk of homelessness, women fleeing violence, persons with disabilities, seniors, first nations and immigrants to find and develop suitable housing opportunities.

School Trustee

1) What will you do and what have you done in the past to bring awareness on

homelessness in schools?

In close partnership with our students, teachers, administrators and parents, the Burnaby School District supports a number of initiatives to help ensure that our school communities are aware homelessness in Burnaby and other parts of Metro Vancouver.

One of our recent Governor General Award recipients, Daniel Lu, graduated from Burnaby North Secondary School with an amazing grade point average. In addition to his academic achievements, Daniel was supported in his school in taking on a number of initiatives that made a real difference in our community, including Christmas Cheer and Small Steps, a club that makes and serves food for the homeless twice a week.

Our Board has also supported the work being done by BASES (Burnaby Association for South East Side) Family Thrift Store, by creating learning opportunities in our Social Justice 12 programs, by supporting various school clubs that focus on poverty issues and the amazing efforts being undertaken by our Burnaby Firefighters Charitable Society Healthy Snack Program. The Burnaby School District is also very proud of our unique Community School model, supported by both our District and the City of Burnaby, in creating centres of social action in various neighbourhoods in Burnaby.

2) How can you help reduce stigma and myths on homelessness and poverty to school-aged

children and youth?

An important aspect of the role of our School Board is to ensure that inclusion and respect is a major focus in all of our schools. The work being done by our teachers and administrators on a daily basis helps to build on these positive traits in our students. Initiatives being undertaken by individual students, like Daniel Lu, as well as fundraising efforts in schools does a great deal to bring awareness and build empathy toward those in our community who may need extra assistance.

The School Board and District supports the efforts of our DSAC (District Student Advisory Council) in their work in our school community. Their annual “Burnaby’s Got Talent” showcase is a major event developed, produced and staged by our DSAC that brings awareness to various charitable causes while allowing some of our most talented secondary school students to perform to a cheering audience. In the past, this event has raised funds in support of the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness, the Burnaby Youth Hub, etc. In 2014, the event proudly raised more than $3,600.00 for the Burnaby Children’s Fund. Annual efforts by students at Taylor Park Elementary School also raise funds for the Burnaby Children’s Fund.

3) If elected as School trustee what strategies would you use in Burnaby to first be able to

identify and then reduce the number of children/youth living in poverty?

The School Board works very closely with our teachers and administrators to identify areas of need in our schools in order to formulate respectful strategies that can help to reduce the number of children/youth living in poverty. Our Community School model remains the envy of most other school districts in the Province of British Columbia for being so closely connected to the neighbourhoods that they serve. Our highly trained Community School Coordinators and Community School Principals liaise with individual teachers and parents on a daily basis and help to identify those children and families that are in need. With this knowledge, referrals to other helping agencies can be made and strategies put into place to help children overcome the barriers that could prevent them from thriving in school. We so much share the opinion that children can not learn properly if they come to school hungry or are burdened by other social challenges.

Our District has also worked to “fine tune” our School Meal Program in order to provide nutritious meals for children while at school. The program operates on an anonymous basis in order to ensure that dignity, privacy and respect is paramount for the children and families that are utilizing this service.