

The four Burnaby BC NDP candidates would like to submit a joint response to this questionnaire. We work together as a team to address the issues impacting Burnaby. We combine our many years of experience and our expertise to speak with one voice in order to effectively advocate for our community. On housing, homelessness and other issues, we are stronger together. We are committed to continuing to work with the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness to ensure that the relevant Ministers are aware of the challenges and opportunities related to homelessness in Burnaby.

Please answer the following questions:

1) If elected what resources would your party allocate to increase the supply of affordable and core need housing stock in Burnaby?

Affordable housing is critical, and is fundamental to reducing poverty, stimulating our economy, and improving the health and wellbeing of Burnaby residents.

The BC NDP will continue to build on the progress of the 25,000 affordable homes that are already complete or underway. We are committed to building 114,000 affordable homes in 10 years. We are also going to add 2,200 units of supportive housing, on top of the 2,800 units we've already built.

Our 10-year Homes for BC plan has resulted in numerous affordable housing projects being approved in Burnaby. Examples of this are: MacKay Apartments, Cedar Place, Hall Towers and the SUCCESS project at Hastings and Esmond. We have every confidence that under a John Horgan government more will be built. We are committed to continuing to advocate for affordable housing projects in Burnaby.

One reason why the Lower Mainland's housing market became so expensive under the B.C. Liberals was their inaction on the thousands of empty homes purchased by foreign buyers. We took concrete action by implementing a new speculation tax which turned 11,000 residential units into long-term rentals in 2019 and raised \$115 million.

Regulatory action such as the speculation tax is needed at multiple levels. That's why we will freeze rents until the end of 2021, then cap increases to inflation after that. This will save renters an average of \$333/year. In addition, we'll provide a renter's rebate of \$400 a year for households earning up to \$80,000 a year.

We have always worked closely with local non-profits and agencies who advocate for housing and our homeless neighbours. We will continue to work with you, learn from you and find solutions together.

2) If elected, what resources would your party allocate to support people who are homeless and people at risk of homelessness access the health and support services they may need to gain or maintain their housing and quality of life?

For those who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, we have a number of programs and supports we plan on implementing. Firstly, we will reduce poverty long-term through our Poverty Reduction Plan. We pledge to improve food security for those in need by partnering with grocery stores and not-for-profits to design and implement food recovery and redistribution programs.

The John Horgan government also funded 280 units of transition housing to help women and children fleeing violence – the first major investment in transition housing in more than 20 years – and we plan to build on this progress.

We're also committed to adding 800 new treatment beds, new rent supplements for people in supportive housing transitioning into independent living, and 10 new Complex Care homes for our most vulnerable, who need more intensive care than supportive housing provides. We will

also invest \$25 million for more front-line mental health and social service workers, refocusing police resources on serious crime and criminals.

And to ensure that fewer people enter precarious housing situations, we will add 2,200 more units of supportive housing to the 2,800 we've already built and expand on our work of building 114,000 affordable homes in 10 years. 25,000 homes are already built or on the way, and we plan to continue moving forward on our progress.

Because we know that COVID-19 will likely be with us for a long time, we will also freeze rents until 2022, and then tie increases to inflation after that. This will ensure that renters, who often have less financial stability, won't be unable to afford their rents and lose their homes. We will also reduce the cost of construction of homes by streamlining regulatory processes, and these cost reductions will be passed down to prospective home buyers. We also know that purchasing a home is out of reach for a lot of folks; that's why we are committed to exploring better, more equitable pathways to home ownership, such as a rent-to-own program.

We know that properly tackling the housing crisis requires a comprehensive and thoughtful plan -- not band-aid solutions thrown at the problem.

3) If elected what strategies and resources would your party commit to the prevention of homelessness amongst those at risk such as low income earners and people facing racial or cultural barriers?

Our Poverty Reduction Plan and our 10-year Pathway to Hope mental health plan are integral to the prevention of homelessness.

We will continue on our work of delivering 1,750 new homes for Indigenous peoples, both on- and off-reserve, totalling to a \$550 million commitment. We also know that other levels of government have a role to play in this; therefore, we will also call for the federal government to do its share in providing urgent housing for Indigenous people that puts people first and is culturally appropriate.

We will work with BC's new Human Rights Commissioner to introduce legislation that paves the way for race-based data collection essential to modernizing sectors like policing, health care, and education. Without race-based data, we won't fully understand what we need to work on and how to get there. This kind of race-based data will be across sectors and help us in continuing to create new legislation and support programs for racialized communities in accessing housing.

Because of the gender pay gap, women are more likely to earn less than their male counterparts. This systemic discrimination has rippling impacts on important aspects of life, such as housing. We will move closer to equal pay for equal work through new pay transparency legislation.

4) What strategies and resources would your party commit to assist low income earners and people living in poverty overcome barriers such as to improved employment, better health and resource access?

Recognizing the continuing challenges faced by people on Income Assistance and Disability Assistance, we extended the additional \$300 COVID-19 supplement until the end of December. Based on our Poverty Reduction Plan and the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Basic

Income coming later this year, we will then determine the best approach and path forward to reducing poverty long-term and providing opportunities for jobs and skills training for everyone through our Economic Recovery Plan.

In the meantime, many of our platform commitments will assist Burnaby residents living in poverty, along with other Burnaby residents needing support in the context of the current pandemic. Investments like our \$1000 Recovery Benefit will help people to address the additional costs the COVID-19 pandemic has created, and give people immediate relief. And programs like free transit for children up to age 12, significant expansions of child care, investments in new Urgent Primary Care Centres, and completing the increase of the minimum wage to above \$15/hour, and then tying it to inflation, will make a difference for many of those most in need of opportunities.

A \$17.3-million WorkBC contract over three years equips people with disabilities with assistive technology to support employment opportunities.

- The Assistive Technology Services (ATS) program is delivered provincially by Burnaby's Neil Squire Society, providing consistent, reliable service for people with disabilities, no matter where they live.
- Supports available through the ATS program include:
 - mobility supports, alternative keyboards, voice input equipment and other workplace modification technology;
 - advice to employers on how to be more accessible and inclusive; and
 - training to help people navigate other services and supports to assist with employment.

For better access to health resources, we're putting \$25 million towards more front-line mental health and social service workers. We'll also expand access to counselling by investing in new e-health and other technologies, because access to care shouldn't be dependent on the size of your bank account. We'll also continue to fund mental health intervention teams like the six new Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams recently announced.

5) If elected, what will your party do to ensure that Winter Shelters and warming centres are established this winter in Burnaby for local people who are experiencing homelessness?

We are proud that under the John Horgan government, 52 units of supportive housing were opened on Norland Avenue. As well, a 40-bed emergency shelter opened on Douglas Road. Both facilities were sorely needed and are having a positive impact on our homeless population.

As well, BC Housing is working towards securing a site for a short-term Emergency Response Centre. The temporary ERC is expected to operate until the spring of 2021.

This temporary ERC will provide bridge housing for individuals leaving hotel rooms secured by BC Housing for the provision of temporary accommodation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If re-elected, we will advocate for additional units of supportive housing for Burnaby. The BC NDP's election platform commits to increase the number of supportive housing units from the 2,800 units already built to at least 5,000 units through our 10-year Homes for BC plan. These units are key to providing alternatives to emergency shelters and homeless encampments.

The BC NDP platform also commits to providing new rent supplements for people who are ready to move from supportive housing to independent living. This will free up space in existing supportive housing.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Task Force on Homelessness and other local advocacy groups should we be re-elected.

Sincerely,

Anne Kang	Katrina Chen	Raj Chouhan	Janet Routledge
Burnaby-Deer Lake	Burnaby-Lougheed	Burnaby-Edmonds	Burnaby North