

Gordie Hogg, Surrey First Candidate for Mayor

## **HOW WOULD YOU ADDRESS THE NEED FOR AFFODABLE HOUSING IN SURREY.**

**Surrey is growing by over 300 families every month. We're the size of Richmond, Burnaby and Vancouver combined. While we're still more affordable than other parts of the region, we know we have a housing issue in front of us. Surrey is behind the national average when it comes to a number of categories, including rental, accessible and seniors housing. We also know that city hall and city council have a number of tools they can use to help out.**

**First, I believe that we definitely need more supply. That means getting projects approved more quickly, making sure city charges and fees don't compound the affordability problem, using development incentives to get more creative when it comes to the types of housing we want to see, and working with not-for-profits, neighbourhoods and developers to find creative solutions. At Surrey First we know the community has been sidelined for the past four years by the mayor and his four councillors. We want to change that by getting the community back to the table, along with our developers to put creative tools in place to help with affordability. City council does not have a monopoly on good ideas, which means we should be listening to our community, our not-for-profits, and our city's developers who have a real stake in this city being a success.**

## **WHAT IS, YOUR STRATEGY TO DEALING WITH THE ROOT CAUSES OF CRIME?**

**I began my career as a youth probation officer in Whalley. I went on to be the director of the youth detention centre in Burnaby, and**

**today** after years of public service as a mayor in White Rock and as a Surrey MLA and Surrey MP, I'm an adjunct professor of criminology at SFU. So I've seen the issues behind crime up close. I know how young people get caught up in gangs, I know how easy it is for kids from trouble homes to get sidetracked into crime, and I know tragedy of mental health and addictions and what that does in terms of crime and homelessness.

The fact is **today**, our police are doing more and more social work on the streets, something they're not really trained for. So there's one area where we really need to beef up our approach.

Another is getting more boots on the ground. Doug McCallum hasn't hired a single new police officer in four years, meanwhile our population is growing about 1000 people every month. While Vancouver has about 1500 officers, we have about 840—we should be well over 1100, which is why I want to hire 300 new officers.

But police alone are only part of the answer. We need to work with the other two levels of government when it comes to mental health, addictions and homelessness. A city on its own can only do so much, which means we need the help and partnership of Ottawa and Victoria, and that's where my experience as an MLA and MP can help. I know how the provincial and federal governments work—and I want to put that experience to work for Surrey.

**DO YOU SUPPORT THE CALL BY THE BIABC ( 70 biaS) FOR CORE FUNDING TO MITIGATE MAIN STREET ISSUES ...?**

**Absolutely. Our different BIAs across Surrey and around BC are a good example of where the rubber meets the road when it comes to crime and public safety. We know the cost to small businesses, and we know what happens when people don't feel safe in their own neighbourhoods and downtown. We need to have the provincial and**

**federal governments at the table with us, again because cities can only do so much. Yes, we should implement the basic things like more boots on the ground when it comes to police, better lighting, sanitation, and anti-graffiti tools. I believe our streets belong to our citizens and keeping them safe and clean and open is absolutely critical.**

**A Surrey First mayor and council will be a strong advocate in Victoria and Ottawa. And again, I've been an MLA and an MP, I know how Ottawa and Victoria work and I'm ready to put that experience to work for Surrey.**

### **HOW WILL YOU PROVIDE AND FUND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE?**

**For a start, we won't be building a 60,000-seat white elephant stadium. That sort of announcement by the mayor demonstrates a complete lack of thought, and having been an MLA I know that the province helps fund BC Place each and every year. So, no to Doug McCallum's fantasy stadium and the costs it would incur to taxpayers in Surrey.**

**I want to see us build out a 10 year plan for more parks, pools, rinks, fields and community centres. That plan should be fully-funded and accounted for, and it should move forward in a non-political way from one council to the next.**

**This shouldn't be a political issue, these facilities are an investment in a growing city. When the mayor cancelled the Cloverdale Sport and Ice Complex a few years ago, even though it was costed, and work had started, he brought it back a month ago at a cost that was \$20 million higher. We should have been opening that facility, not turning the first sod.**

**I also want to see free access to our facilities for kids and seniors. We have about 130,000 kids in Surrey and 90,000 seniors.**

**For the kids it gets them involved in something useful and is one part of keeping them out of the hands of the gang recruiters. For our seniors it is a way to keep them healthy, active and engaged in their neighbourhood.**

**The billion dollar 60,000 seat stadium Doug is pushing is the equivalent to building 15 new pools, rinks, or community centres.**

**We also want to make sure that when it comes to infrastructure spending that we are getting our fair share from Ottawa and Victoria. For instance, I believe that when it comes to things like transit funding, we should be dollar-for-dollar parity with Vancouver, or more, because we have a lot of catching up to do.**

**There's a lot of votes and power in Surrey politically if we know how to use it, and I do. I've been an MLA and an MP and that experience and those contacts at both levels of government can help our city.**

### **WARD SYSTEM MIGHT HEIGHTEN AWARENESS OF ISSUES AND INCREASE VOTER TURNOUT?**

**Wards would certainly increase interest in local issues, but it also tends to divide up cities and there can be a tendency to look only at local issues and priorities, rather than city wide issues and priorities..a discussion worth having, but we always want to make sure that we're doing our best to unite the city, rather than divide. We've seen what four years of division has done to our community, and it's time to repair that and get back on track and put Surrey first once again.**

### **WHAT WOULD INCREASE VOTER TURNOUT?**

**I've been a candidate in at least a dozen elections, and my take away after all those campaigns is that people vote for a number of**

**different reasons. Some vote because it is their duty and they know it's important. Some people vote because there is an issue that interests them. And some people vote because they've had enough of one government and want a change. The cure for low voter turnout, particularly at the local level, is to help make residents understand what's at stake. City government is the closest level of government to people. We're there every day. We provide your water, we pick up your garbage, we pave the roads, and we look after your pools, rinks and community centre. It's the level of government that touches you the most and every year we send you a bill and show you every dollar we're charging you on every service we provide. Educating people on how they can impact city hall is also important, far too many people think they don't count, and when that happens people wonder, why bother voting.**

**So at city council we have a job to do to engage people, don't wait for them to come to council meetings, take council meetings to them. Let them know they are welcome back to the table after four years of being sidelined. And showing them that we're spending \$1.3 billion every year on their behalf and how that impacts the taxes they pay. We need to demonstrate we are interested in what people have to say—if they understand that, and they know they can impact city hall, and you don't have to be a friend of the mayor to be heard, then people will connect and once that's done, they know the real value of their vote.**

### **TAKING ADVANTAGE OF SKYTRAIN EXPANSION AND CONNECTING THE REST OF SURREY TO CITY CENTRE AND EACH OTHER?**

**I represented Surrey on the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission and I was in Ottawa helping to get funding for the new line to Langley. I know how Ottawa and Victoria work and I want to put my experience to work for Surrey when it comes to securing infrastructure money. But the line to Langley has plenty of**

**opportunities if we do it right ... if we zone properly ... if we get developers involved early to help pay for stations and other nearby infrastructure. This can't just be a windfall for people who own land along the route, it has to be windfall for the community. That line is going to make a lot of people a lot of money—and all they had to do is be in the right place at the right time. I want to make sure Surrey benefits from that development and growth.**

**I also want to make sure the next two priorities are Newton and the north-south transit into Cloverdale and South Surrey. Better transit means more opportunities to build affordable housing ... it means more opportunities to get cars off the road and help the environment ...and we need to leverage that transit to attract businesses that allow all of us to work closer to home and stop commuting so much. Right now we spend twice as much time in our cars as people in Vancouver. That's the power of transit.**

**I also want to make sure that when it comes to federal and provincial funding, I want dollar-for-dollar parity with Vancouver, or more, since we have been shortchanged for so many years. But at the very least if we're spending a dollar in Vancouver we better be spending a dollar in Surrey. We have catching up to do and our growth certainly lets us make a very strong case for more and better transit.**

## **DEMOGRAPHICS, AGING POPULATION, HOW DO WE RECRUIT, KEEP STAFF AT CITY HALL, TO PROVIDE VITAL SERVICES?**

**It's got to be more than just salaries and benefits. Having good, competitive salaries certainly helps. But It has to be a combination of things, including understanding how people want to work these days. Coming out of COVID everything has changed. Flexible working locations, flexible working hours, and also making sure that the staff we do have do not get burned out because we're short staffed. That only compounds the problem.**

**That's why I think it was a big mistake to not hire any new police officers over the past four years, or to only hire 10 new firefighters, even though we needed 60. I want more police and more firefighters because we need them. And if we take a realistic approach to hiring regularly, which means added people every year, then we're not left looking for hundreds of people after every four year election cycle.**

**I also want to know what sort of people do we need at city hall and for instance how can we not only recruit those people, but how can we do something more innovative – if we need more planners or engineers or other specialized people why wouldn't we work locally with SFU, Kwantlen and soon UBC to tailor those needs and get students to sign on with us while they're going to school. These days it's not good enough to put an ad in the paper or even online. We have to be more innovative and that means reaching out in different ways.**

**We've got good people working for us at city hall because this city has fostered that kind of work environment. I give a lot of credit to Dianne Watts and Linda Hepner who really put a lot of work into creating a professional civil service at city hall. We have to be equally focused going forward, and can't just rest on increasing salaries. That's not enough these days.**

**CITY CENTRE, ATTRACT INVESTMENT, ARTS, CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE COMMUNITY TO DOWNTOWN SURREY.**

**Surrey First mayors Dianne Watts and Linda Hepner were instrumental in the vision of a real downtown for this city. Building city hall downtown was a really big signal to developers and the community that Surrey was serious about having a real downtown for the very first time. By any measure it's off to a good start, but there's more to do.**

**We need a cultural and performing arts centre downtown. We need to attract more businesses downtown. We cannot just be a city hall surrounded by residential towers. That's not enough and it's shortsighted.**

**We need to leverage our own city land, and our tools as the people who decide zoning to provide direction and incentives to our developers in Surrey. The best developers in BC are building in Surrey and they know the importance of having a real downtown with all of the people, businesses, entertainment, and cultural opportunities that make a downtown alive and successful.**

**We also have SFU, Kwantlen and soon UBC in the heart of the city. That combination of academic talent means we should be working with our post secondary institutions, the BIA, and our business community to determine what we want to be famous for when it comes to technology, engineering, and science. If we do that early and work together we can create the kind of environment, development and reputation that goes a long way to attracting the people we want. And throughout this, the city needs to be a player—we have land we can leverage, we have zoning we can create, we have incentives we can put towards projects that help our city succeed.**

## **ADDRESSING HOMELESSNES, CITY'S ROLE IN TACKLING THE ISSUES?**

**We've had an approach in Surrey that was really pushed by Surrey First mayor Linda Hepner where we brought a team of people together from different critical groups, such as police, mental health, social workers and so one, and that team had the capacity to work together in a collaborative way to help individuals. It worked. And we need more of it. But cities alone cannot do everything. Mental health and addictions is a provincial issue and while cities carry the burden, we need the province to recognize that they have a leadership role here. When it comes to this issue, my first call on the**



**subject is to our MLAs and the Premier letting them know that Surrey will be a willing and receptive partner, but we will also be pushing hard for results and resources. This city represents 10 per cent of all the seats in the BC Legislature. That's a lot of influence, and we need to use that influence to make sure we are heard, and our issues get the attention they deserve.**

**So we will be good partners but we know it's a job that needs every level of government.**