

MEET THE CANDIDATES

North Vancouver Chamber – Questions for Candidates – Municipal Election 2022



Herman Mah

Councillor Candidate – District of North Vancouver

I was born in Vancouver and have lived in the District for over 20 years with my wife, and young daughter. I graduated from UBC Commerce, specializing in Marketing. My work career has included the Yellow Pages, managing the BCIT Downtown Campus and now in the Real Estate Department of BC Housing. I have worked with friends to start two businesses, one of which has been successful and still operating! I have extensive experience representing interests of businesses having been on the Board of Downtown Vancouver Association for over 15 years and working with various BIA's during that time.

Investment in Public Transit

Q1: If elected, what will you do to advance local, provincial and federal government commitments to transit infrastructure investments to, from and across North Vancouver?

I would continue the work by North Shore Connects, especially advocating for the prompt implementation of the Bus Rapid Transit system and ensure that DNV staff make this a priority in their work plans. The BRT is the best, short-term solution to address the congestion issues. Concurrently, I would collaborate with allies within Translink Mayors' Council to push for the next Skytrain expansion to be to the North Shore. We need to also explore water-based modes of public transportation to the North Shore from the south shore, including a pedestrian ferry to high tourist areas, such as Cates Park and Deep Cove. Finally, engaging with partners such as the First Nations government and municipalities on the North Shore, strongly advocate with senior levels of government for the need to start planning for the replacement of the Ironworkers Memorial Second Narrows Bridge. This should take into the account the need for an elevated guideway to support BRT.

Access to Primary Health Care

Q2: If elected, what will you do, in the short and long term, to support better access to primary physical and mental health care (doctors, dentists, etc.) in North Vancouver?

Since health care is a provincial responsibility, I would meet with the MLA's on the North Shore and form a united front in seeking additional funding resources from the provincial government to provide incentives for health care professions to work in North Shore. I would also provide increased financial support, through the District's Community Services Advisory Committee (CSAC), to local societies that are at the frontline of providing mental health care to District residents. In the longer term, housing and mobility challenges need to be addressed so that North Vancouver is seen as an attractive and attainable option for young doctors, nurses, dentists and other healthcare professionals. The issues



facing the District are inter-related and we need comprehensive and coordinated actions to resolve them.

Rising Costs / Property Taxes

Q3 – Many businesses continue to feel the impact of the pandemic and need support to navigate the current environment, in particular seeking help to reduce their costs and to increase the pool of skilled workers from which to hire and train. If elected, what will you do to help reduce the burden of costs on business? What policies or programs will you introduce to reduce cost pressures and make North Vancouver a more tax-competitive jurisdiction for businesses?

Businesses and industry in the District provide opportunities and good paying jobs for many of our residents. It is essential that the District do as much as possible to support a strong local economy and ensure that the District is an appealing and attractive place to conduct business. Paying taxes are, unfortunately, unavoidable but the District has a duty to ensure that the municipality is operating as efficiently as possible. In terms of programs, I would consider the following (these would require consultation with other stakeholders such as the Chamber):

- provide an incentive for new businesses by reducing property taxes for the first 3 years of operation
- investigate the feasibility of a tax deferrable program
- lobby the provincial and federal government to offer/extend financial support for business owners and commercial tenants as we are still dealing with the effects of pandemic.

Availability of Affordable Housing

Q4– Local governments play a central role in housing. If elected, what will you do to accelerate investments to increase the availability of affordable housing options for people and employees who live and work in North Vancouver?

Along with Mobility, affordable housing is one of the top issues facing the District. There are various initiatives that the District can take to help provide housing for employees who work in North Shore:

- While ensuring public input, shorten the approval time for development and building permits
- While balancing the need for industrial uses, explore the use of District-owned land for rental housing
- Ensure that District take advantage of partnership and funding opportunities from senior level of government (especially from BC Housing and CMHC)
- Explore opportunities to partner with major industries to build workforce housing
- Working with local trade organizations, look at programs to train people who live on the North Shore and increase the pool of trades who will work on the North Shore. We have all heard

anecdotal stories about trades not wanting to put up with traffic congestions by accepting work on the North Shore. The scarcity of available trades is delaying housing projects. DNV could potentially partner with BCIT and First Nations.

Local Government services – Support for Businesses

Q5 – *A municipal government’s processes can greatly affect the economics of doing business. If elected, what will you do to support more efficient transactions and timelines in support of businesses in North Vancouver?*

As mentioned above, the District needs a strong local economy to sustain our quality of life. These are actions for which I would advocate:

- Be willing to further extend the Temporary Outdoor Business Area program when it expires on March 31, 2023
- Review license fees and processes to ensure they are competitive with other municipalities
- Eliminate unnecessary paperwork and District processes for businesses
- Ensure new DNV Business Services Manager position is not only attracting new businesses to District but also spending time to assist and advocate for existing businesses when they deal with the District
- Create a more business-friendly climate at the District through staff training
- Empower DNV front counter staff to be able to resolve issues that business owners call in about; (reduce the time to develop solutions... time is money for businesses)

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