



CITY OF BURNABY

**Mayor Derek Corrigan
December 7, 2015
Year-End Council Address**

Tonight, on behalf of Council, I have the pleasure of reviewing the great year that we've had in Burnaby in 2015 and of taking a look forward at many of the exciting projects that we have under way and on the horizon.

It was a year of remarkable achievements.

Our town centres – which we can now all really see taking shape in the way that we planned for more than 20 years ago – continued to attract major investment, providing the framework for sustainable development. They're demonstrating the significant benefits of concentrating density in specific, designated areas – it allows us to preserve our city's beautiful parks, established single-family neighbourhoods and urban villages.

New design standards approved by council early in 2015 ensure that development in all of the town centres incorporates attractive street and sidewalk design that considers people of all ages and abilities. In addition, we continue to work with artists, developers and community members to create the public artworks that now enhance so many areas of the city.

Building permit values are expected to reach their highest value ever by year end, with many important projects advancing in the public, commercial, and industrial sectors. The total permit values to the end of November of this year are an impressive \$720 million, with an expectation that we will achieve over \$800 million in building permit values by year end. Prior to this year, the highest annual value was \$792 million in 2008.

All City activities respect Burnaby's sharp focus on sustainability, and are guided by our official community plan and our award-winning Economic Development and Social Sustainability

strategies. Our new community-driven Environmental Sustainability Strategy will be complete early in 2016. It builds on our many strengths and will make Burnaby an even more livable, healthy and resilient city. Results from the Burnaby Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) will also be presented for public input and feedback. CEEP proposes a long-term framework for reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in Burnaby.

Work is also advancing on the Transportation Plan update, which will explore creative ways to manage the City's transportation needs while contributing to our social, economic and environmental objectives. Citizens will be invited to engage in this planning process in 2016.

Another project that will yield significant environmental benefits is the recently launched complete conversion of streetlights to LEDs. Burnaby is the first city in British Columbia to begin full conversion. This will dramatically lower energy consumption while improving neighbourhood lighting.

As we build the city, we never lose sight of the importance of preserving and enhancing existing assets. Recently, as part of an infrastructure renewal project, the City completed upgrades on Rumble Street that included an urban trail. We also began work on the rehabilitation of Gray and Cedar creeks, remediating erosion sites and improving watershed health. It is gratifying that salmon have again returned to many Burnaby creeks, including Still Creek, which for decades did not support spawning. This is a direct result of longstanding environmental policies and associated restoration of waterways.

This year, we also upgraded many park and recreation facilities, including:

- replacement of the artificial turf on one of the fields at the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex West
- replacement of playgrounds at various parks, including Harwood, where additional improvements were made including the introduction of a looped pathway around the park perimeter.
- installation of new shade structures at Confederation and Cameron parks
- rebuilding the spraypool at Suncrest Park to meet new standards for water play facilities
- continuing new trail development on Burnaby Mountain's south slope
- improving accessibility at various parks

In addition, we began work on the development of an ice arena in south Burnaby with a Feasibility Study for the replacement of CG Brown Pool and Burnaby Lake Arena. Plans are also under way for development of new recreation and cultural facilities in the City's four Town Centres.

There continues to be a great response both in the community and among travellers to the free admission at the Burnaby Village Museum.

We continue to work to provide new online citizen services. This year we also upgraded our award-winning Heritage Burnaby website, which just went live in September and significantly enhances the accessibility of Burnaby's historic records for everyone who wants to access Burnaby photographs, artifacts and text records

We're also continuing to leverage the benefits of our enterprise business systems to streamline business interaction for all citizens and Burnaby businesses. We continued to work with vendors to move from paper cheque payments to direct deposits. Seventy-five per cent of the City's payments are now processed electronically.

The Inter-Municipal Business Licence program has now been adopted permanently for trades-related businesses when they operate in: Burnaby, Vancouver, Richmond, Delta, Surrey and New Westminster. Our Licence Office is also making great strides in improving upon existing business processes and streamlining applications and renewals.

In all areas, we continue to work with residents to ensure that our shared vision for the future of all of our town centres is realized. In the rapidly developing Brentwood Town Centre, for example, the Gilmore Station Plan, developed in partnership with the community, will ensure citizens' expectations are front and centre as the land surrounding the station is redeveloped to provide a vibrant gateway to Brentwood. The plan includes significant open areas among the many new residential and commercial buildings. In addition, conceptual design work is well under way for the much-anticipated Willingdon Greenway that will link Brentwood Town Centre to Confederation Park. This green space will provide an attractive, pedestrian oriented public park linking the Heights and Brentwood Town Centre, two iconic areas of our city.

The Woodlands Site Conceptual Master Plan, in the Brentwood Town Centre, has been refined based on public input, and is advancing towards final adoption. The Master Plan includes a new neighbourhood park, a variety of housing options, new vehicle, cycling and pedestrian connections, and environmental improvements.

In Metrotown, as in Brentwood, high-density development continues to position Burnaby as a regional leader in creating sustainable transit-oriented homes. In October 2015 we opened the fifth City-owned, non-profit office space, the Pioneer Community Resource Centre. This facility was obtained through Burnaby's Community Benefit Bonus Policy that gives developers the opportunity to add density to a building site, in exchange for contributions toward valuable community amenities such as child care centres, affordable housing units and non-profit spaces. The Pioneer centre provides a 6,000 square foot home for two long-standing Burnaby non-

profits: Burnaby Family Life and Burnaby Hospice Society, adding to the many community amenities already achieved since the City initiated its Community Benefit Bonus Policy in 1997.

Benefiting the entire city, 20 per cent of all contributions made via Burnaby's Community Benefit Bonus Policy are deposited in the Housing Fund to support housing-related projects. To date, more than \$2 million has been granted from the Burnaby Housing Fund to support 257 units of non-profit housing in the city.

In the fall of 2015, Council approved a new program that will make City lands available for non-market and/or co-op housing projects. Two City-owned sites (7898 18th Avenue and 3802 Hastings Street) have been offered under the program to date.

Edmonds Town Centre is also thriving, with a mixed-use community proposed for the Edmonds and Kingsway area. Complementing this, the first phase of the Southgate Neighbourhood will move forward in 2016. Ultimately, this 48-acre neighbourhood will include a new five-acre park and will reflect the citizen input that is shaping its character and design.

The new Edmonds Community Centre, opened in 2013 and already the cherished heart and hub of the community, is a world-class facility that was recently recognized provincially by the B.C. Recreation and Parks Association with a Facility Excellence Award and internationally by the International Paralympic Committee/International Association for Sports and Leisure Facilities with a Distinction Award for accessibility.

For Lougheed Town Centre, the Lougheed Core Area Conceptual Master Plan will advance to Public Hearing in early 2016. Based on public input, the Lougheed area will continue to develop as a vibrant, transit-connected town centre. Included in the Plan is the replacement of the Cameron Recreation Centre, with a new pool and a new Cameron Library.

Our focus on efficiency, partnership and innovation continues to ensure that the City's fiscal position remains strong. Our investment portfolio returned an annual yield of 3.93% for 2015 and investment income of \$41.8 million. The portfolio has performed well under the extreme and prolonged low interest rate environment. This income helps to reduce City taxes and provides funding for the City's capital investment in infrastructure replacement.

For 2016 the City is projecting income of \$39 million and an annualized return of 3.35%.

Burnaby staff are also making a significant contribution to our excellent financial position, focusing on efficiency and conservation. Our City's sustainability focus will ensure we continue to maximize value in all areas, while providing exceptional service to the Burnaby citizens.

For businesses and for citizens, all departments are continuing to make as many services as possible available for those who prefer on-line transactions. And our purchasing staff, in concert with the Burnaby Board of Trade, continue to offer workshops to the business community to provide support to them in carrying out their work.

The City has always been a close partner with our progressive Burnaby Board of Trade and with Tourism Burnaby. In addition, we continue to support and partner with our active and dedicated local merchants' associations and the many businesses that call Burnaby home. With the City playing an active role, international- and family-operated businesses continue to thrive here.

Our RCMP are, as always, providing exemplary service.

They have continued to develop their very successful Crime Reduction Strategy that focuses on working with community members and relevant agencies to identify: crime trends, localized crime areas and persons believed to be responsible for the majority of the crimes.

In September 2015 the Crime Prevention Unit, in partnership with the City of Burnaby, launched its web-based Business Watch Program that gives local businesses immediate, online access to information and resources.

And the continued development of the Burnaby RCMP Mental Health Coordinator position has allowed the RCMP to identify and assist individuals who have mental health issues and are responsible for a high number of police contacts. Because these few people sometimes have frequent police contacts and can cause a significant drain on police resources, identifying and helping to secure appropriate services for them, helps these individuals while ensuring more appropriate use of RCMP resources.

Our Fire Department also continued to provide exceptional service. On average, they respond to 14,000 incidents annually.

A new CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) upgrade has almost been completed for the Department, which will be complemented by software updates for all of other programs. These software packages are designed to have all Fire Department reporting and personnel needs housed together and will deliver real-time information wirelessly from the department's dispatch centre to mobile data terminals located on fire vehicles. Pre-Incident planning information is now available to our vehicles and to Incident Commanders, enhancing decision-making processes at incident scenes, and enabling even more effective delivery of emergency services.

To ensure the Department is well equipped to respond to the City's higher-density communities, it is introducing a new training program related to high-rise fire operations. This program will enhance the Department's ability to fight fires in all high-rise buildings. This two-part program has a Strategy & Tactics component and also includes modifications to current equipment which will assist firefighters in meeting the challenges they'll face when working in these tall buildings.

Turning to the activities of another key service provider – our libraries; they continue to be valued neighbourhood focal points. In March, the library completed renovations to the Bob Prittie Metrotown Branch First Floor and the McGill Branch. Next year and the following, helped by matching funds through the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program, that

branch – the largest and busiest of the city’s four library branches – will see \$400,000 in upgrades to the second floor.

Also next year, the library will celebrate its 60th anniversary with special events running throughout the year.

As we reflect on the many achievements of 2015, it is clear that Burnaby has a great base on which to build our promising future. Thank you to all of our citizens, business leaders and non-profit organizations for the exceptional contributions you continue to make to the development of Burnaby. Thank you, too to City staff in all departments for your outstanding commitment to our City and our citizens. Together with all of you, Burnaby Council looks forward to ensuring that Burnaby exceeds our high expectations for the city’s future.