

Roslyn Cassells wants to save Rosemary Heights

Your group has done an amazing job on all aspects of your campaign! I am fully behind you on your effort to save this delicate ecosystem for many reasons.

Your ecological research came to similar conclusions to mine while I was fighting to save Hawthorne Park. The city is actually signatory to a number of accords which should in reality protect areas like Rosemary Heights from development. Unfortunately the city continues to ignore its own policies and the laws governing protection of natural spaces.

The ecological arguments you put forth are unassailable. The best use for this land is to leave it to nature. Some places must never be developed... whether due to wildlife corridors in an increasingly fragmented lower mainland ecosystem, the possibility of extirpation of uncommon or endangered species, nesting and foraging sites for migratory or resident birds, or the disappearing riparian areas so many species depend upon, it is a matter of utmost urgency to protect this and other areas like it in our city.

Elected or not I will use all means at my disposal to stop this project going through.

There are many tactics at our disposal. You also point out the issue of lack of amenities for new residents. I was at the last council meeting for this term to oppose a development at King George for just this reason. The city approved over 3,000 new parking spots and the destruction of over 300 trees. Council also removed a park and ride lot which was used by commuters accessing the King George SkyTrain, and they now have nowhere to go. I told the outgoing council that Surrey needs to have adequate amenities in place before adding residential units, because there was a deficit in the amenities for this project.

There were no traffic studies done, and it will increase local traffic significantly.

I also raised the issue of the City Green Fund which is supposed to be used to replace trees on a two-to-one basis. The city has been keeping the money and not replacing the trees. That's why we have a reducing tree canopy even though we have the funds to replace the trees. Of course you can never replace a mature tree with two little twigs and call it fair. I think we need to protect our mature trees and ecosystems at all costs.

Here's a clip of one of my 5 council presentations that night: Oct 1/18 council meeting - 3 mins - <https://www.facebook.com/100000712779479/videos/2140005096033229/>

I propose a No Net Loss of Green Space Policy for Surrey, as I did in Vancouver while I was a park commissioner for the Green Party. This would be based on ecological values - not a hectare for a hectare, or "replacement vegetation".

For your members not present Oct 4/18, here's a clip from that all candidates' meeting: 1-2 mins

<https://www.facebook.com/1699563733470833/videos/248376312688305/>

I am attaching a policy note Ecology & Governance which contains my policy on the issues of concern to your campaign (See Below).

Thank you for getting in touch, if you'd like more info let me know, I am your staunch ally to save Rosemary Heights!

Best,
Roslyn Cassells GreenVote candidate for council

Ecology & Governance policy note:

Govern according to global green principles of social and ecological justice.
Direct and ongoing involvement with local communities and First Nations on all projects at the planning stage and beyond, before decisions are taken and commitments are made.
Apply triple bottom line accounting to all city projects, programs, services, and departments so that three aspects 1) society, 2) the ecology, and 3) the economy - are all given equal consideration in planning decisions Maintain Best Practices in all city projects, programs, services, and departments.
Regularly review programs and services to ensure improvements to Best Practices are implemented without delay. Maintain close ties with professional and academic bodies to this end. Encourage staff to continually upgrade their knowledge through continuing education.

WILDLIFE NEEDS OUR PROTECTION TOO

Support wildlife protection, reintroduction, and education programs in cooperation with local residents, wildlife rehabilitators, ecological groups, First Nations, other municipalities, districts, and regions, provincial and federal governments, adjacent states and countries, cross-border programs such as the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, and international agreements such as the Migratory Birds Convention Act etc.

ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

Reconnect and remediate fragmented ecosystems and ecological communities through wildlife corridors, native plantings, day-lighting historic streams, decommissioning roads and other structures and remediating their sites, and reintroduce extirpated species once viable ecological supports exist. Protect all species, most particularly those who have a great ecosystem impact, those provincially and federally listed species, those at risk of local extirpation, and those at risk of extinction.

Incentivize projects, programs, and infrastructure that offer/add/protect ecological and social values within their philosophy, practices, or structures.

Adopt a NO NET LOSS OF GREENSPACE POLICY, city-wide. The concept of green space is not simply hectare for hectare, but considering ecological values of biodiversity, protection of endangered or uncommon species and ecological communities, the fragmentation of habitats, with the goal of maintaining and improving our local ecologies, reconnecting fragmented habitats, re-establishing native species and ecologies, and supporting and increasing biodiversity.

Of all the things we leave behind when we leave this world...a healthy, biodiverse planet is the most valuable gift we can leave for future generations, for all our relations.

OUR PARKS AND PLACES

Increase green spaces in low-income neighbourhoods. Increase mini-parks and off-leash dog parks. All residential areas should be within walking distance of both parks and dog parks. This improves health outcomes, increases foot traffic, increases eyes on the street, increases safety and community connections.

More benches and covered benches/tables and public toilets are needed in parks and public spaces so people can extend their stay outside and enjoy a break along the way.

Many seniors, disabled persons, and parents with small children have great need for this and cannot access greenspaces if these amenities are not made available.

Improve the paths network to address connectivity, safety, and accessibility for cyclists, walkers, and others using transportation other than cars...i.e. wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, motorized scooters, skateboards, rollerblades and so on.

Separated bike lanes are necessary for bicycle commuters on main routes to provide safe commuting options.

DO WHAT WE CAN TOGETHER

Improve food security by protecting existing Agricultural Land Reserve lands in our jurisdiction and encouraging their active use for local agricultural production.

Encourage property owners to grow food for themselves and for the community on their land.

Expand community gardens to allow more low-income apartment dwellers to access greenspace to grow their own food.

Network with master gardeners and seed-sharing projects to enhance crop diversity, and strengthen resilience and cultural survival through mutual aid.

Ban any ecologically damaging practices in our jurisdiction.

Support community initiatives to strengthen cooperation, the ecology, and local economy – farmers' markets, community markets, free markets and stores, maker spaces, and community arts spaces and hubs.

Increase frequency of pick up of organics and recycled bins and reduce frequency of pickup of garbage.

YES TO EXPANDED BUS SERVICE - NO TO LRT AND SKYTRAIN GreenVote says No to Light Rail Transit and No to Skytrain.

The communities most effected by the construction of these mega-projects were ignored, no consent was given at the local level. LRT has little local benefit, and has resulted in increased congestion in the North Surrey construction zone, increased pollution, increased road construction.

The "Early Works SNG LRT" projects include the 105 Ave. Connector from Whalley to Guildford- which bisects an elementary school playground leaving Hjorth Park Elementary School (home to the city's most vulnerable students) on a traffic island between 104 Ave., 148 St., and the 105 Ave. Connector when the City, ignoring wildlife protections, paved a road through Hawthorne Rotary Park over the opposition of over 12,000 residents, draining a 5,000 year old bog and destroying the habitats of many wild animals and plants including 17 endangered species.

For the \$1.6 Billion approved funds by the federal and provincial governments to be spent on Phase 1 SNG-LRT project, we could easily fund an excellent rapid bus system which would be more affordable and accessible, and provide sustainable jobs.

Reviving the interurban rail is another possibility, but would require full public consultation.

TRANSPARENCY AT CITY HALL

Surrey needs clear policies and practices around decisions made at council. Conflict of Interest rules must be established and followed to avoid the too cosy relationships between elected officials and companies doing business with the City.

City councillors who receive campaign donations or other considerations from developers and/or related industry and individuals may not serve on the Planning Committee for example, due to conflict of interest.

Improved public participation processes need to be implemented without delay. Meaningful consultation means being open to cancelling or changing projects.

OFFICE OF OMBUDSPERSON FOR SURREY

Establishment of Office of Ombudsperson in Surrey to address concerns of public on municipal matters when all regular channels have been exhausted. The Ombudsperson would have the power to require the City to reconsider decisions, to follow existing laws, policies, protocols and procedures when the City has not done so.

KNOWING THE FACTS OF THE MATTER AND TAKING ACTION Municipal register of property owners and businesses which operate in Surrey, to ensure transparency in council decisions in any dealings with companies that do business with the City, Tracking of City actions/inaction on climate change, and waste policies, Keep a regularly updated register of demolitions, demovictions, AirBnB units, secondary suites, empty homes, rental stocks, and shelter beds, Track numbers of homeless people, people in core housing need, people in short-term rentals, people in unstable, unsafe housing, Monitor pollution, toxins and use the full extent of current laws to mitigate damaging business practices, put in place regulations to monitor any company, organization, or individual who has violated environmental regulations, and provide penalties to eco-offenders, and Regularly assess deficiencies and develop short and long-term plans to remedy them using Best Practices. Work in cooperation with other jurisdictions on regional issues and to promote equality and equity.

PROGRESSIVE GREEN TAXATION

Changing the tax regime to reflect green values of taxation. Taxation should be based on consumption and waste.

Provide tax and other incentives to companies, organizations, and individuals whose actions, policies, and practices have a positive social and ecological effect on those who live in Surrey.