

Mayor and Councillors  
c/o The Office of the City Clerk  
Burnaby City Hall  
4949 Canada Way  
Burnaby, B.C., V5G 1M2

March 12, 2019

Re: Request to Appear as a Delegation on April 8, 2019

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing on behalf of Burnaby Food First (BFF) to appear as a delegation on Monday, April 8, 2019. BFF is a coalition made up of community members and local agencies working together to bring food security to Burnaby. It was started in 1997 by members of the Eastburn Interagency Council, and since then has been working on the following goals:

- Everyone has enough fresh, healthy food
- Everyone has the knowledge and skills to prepare healthy food
- Everyone has access to many different kinds of food
- Locally grown, processed and stored food is widely available
- Our food system values other people, both locally and around the world
- Food is grown in ways that respect the environment

To achieve these goals, BFF has been involved in a wide range of activities including hosting community workshops, developing food projects and food advocacy work.

Currently, we are advocating for the implementation of a Food Security Strategy for the City of Burnaby, as outlined in Burnaby's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

Enclosed, you will find a briefing note related to the delegation.

Sincerely,

Chau Chin Yo

## **BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE CITY OF BURNABY: DEVELOPMENT OF A FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY**

### **PURPOSE:**

To inform City Council on the importance of the development and implementation of a food security strategy in the City of Burnaby.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Food insecurity is a serious population health problem and is a growing concern in British Columbia. The Household Food Insecurity Report estimated approximately 485,500 individuals experiencing food insecurity in B.C.,<sup>1</sup> and from 2008 to 2016, there has been a 33% increase in food bank use.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that something must be done to curb this trend.

The City of Burnaby is not immune to these trends. Furthermore, the makeup of Burnaby's demographics also presents unique challenges. Burnaby's population has become increasingly diverse in the past 25 years, with over 50% of its population represented by immigrants. Trends suggest that in coming years, the population of new immigrants and visible minorities will continue to grow. Language barriers and lack of integration among new immigrants could be potential barriers towards food security within these populations.<sup>3</sup>

Burnaby also has a high level of poverty, with 20% of households having incomes below \$20,000. Among the 22 local authorities comprising Metro Vancouver, Burnaby's median annual household income ranks 17<sup>th</sup>.<sup>3</sup>

### **DISCUSSION:**

The City of Burnaby has made great strides in tackling the issue of food insecurity, with its support of the Regional Food System Strategy (RFSS). Passed by the Metro Vancouver Board in 2011, it contains 5 goals and 21 strategies to "advance actions that support the vision and public benefits derived from the regional food system".<sup>4</sup>

Burnaby also publicly launched its Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS) in 2016, a plan for Burnaby's "green" future in which food systems was one of ten themes.<sup>5</sup>

While the City of Burnaby has and continues to do great work, it currently does not have a comprehensive food security strategy to oversee the completion of the goals outlined in both the RFSS and the ESS. In fact, one of the key strategies outlined in the ESS is the development of a food system strategy "to improve sustainability of food production, distribution and use, by the City and the community".<sup>5</sup>

In order to achieve the goals outlined in the RFSS and ESS, the implementation of a food security strategy is necessary.

## **Appendix A: References**

1. Li, N., Dachner, N., & Tarasuk, V. (2016). Priority health equity indicators for British Columbia: Household food insecurity indicator report, August 2016. Toronto: Food Insecurity Policy Research (PROOF).
2. Food Banks Canada. (2016). Hunger Count 2016. Toronto: Food Banks Canada.
3. City of Burnaby. (2011). Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy. City of Burnaby.
4. Metro Vancouver. (2011). Regional Food System Strategy. Vancouver: Metro Vancouver.
5. City of Burnaby. (2016). A Plan for Burnaby's Green Future – Burnaby Environmental Sustainability Strategy. City of Burnaby.