

Salmonids in the Classroom at Cleveland Elementary

Back in February, I had the pleasure of visiting Debra Cusanelli's grade 2 class and her grade 7 "Salmon Squad" at Cleveland Elementary School. Debra has been participating in "Salmonids in the Classroom" for more than a decade. The program provides for students to incubate salmon eggs (provided in this case by the Seymour Hatchery), and watch them grow and feed in climate-controlled tanks in the school until they are eventually released into streams in the surrounding area.

I sat down with the grade twos and spoke about my role as MP, and as the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Coast Guard, and how it relates to the work they are doing with the salmon in their own classroom. Students showed me their incubating tank filled with chum salmon alevins, and explained to me the work that they would be doing until they release the fry in April. These students had many questions and were so eager to learn more about the changes that salmon go through before they fully mature.

Nine grade 7 students at Cleveland Elementary constitute the "Salmon Squad," and are in charge of a separate tank of salmon in the school. While speaking with them, I learned of their various responsibilities and all the work they put in to make sure that these salmon grow and develop properly. These students work independently to clean the water in the tank, check ammonia levels, and make sure that the fry are properly fed once they fully absorb their nutrient sac.

These children are interactively learning about the life cycle of salmon, and their commitment to the project is evident through their hard work and dedication. I look forward to sharing the experience of releasing the healthy fry on my next visit to the school in April.



The hardworking "Salmon Squad"

In The Community

Using my emerging French skills to explain the salmon life cycle to grade 2 French Immersion students in Debra Cusanelli's class at Cleveland Elementary



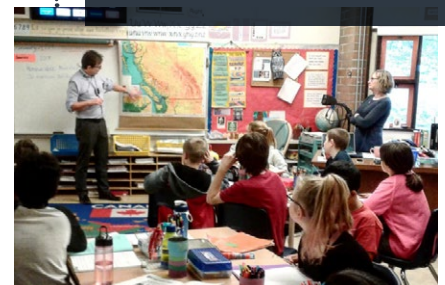
Me and my family skiing on BC Family Day

Opening the NS Stream Keepers conference in February



Celebrating the Allies in Aging conference with Minister Tassi at Family Services of the North Shore

Speaking about how the government works in Laurie Reichert's grade 4/5 class at Brooksbank Elementary



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SPRING 2019

North Vancouver Constituent Update



How to create an affordable community

Housing – including both affordable housing and housing affordability – is one of the most pressing issues in North Vancouver. While house prices have stopped rising so dramatically, the cost of most single family dwellings in this city is still way outside the budget of newcomers, young families or graduates hoping to live in the community in which they grew up. The Liberal government has placed housing front and centre with a focus on assuring that more Canadians are housed securely and affordably.

In March, I co-hosted a roundtable discussion with MP Terry Beech and Mayors Buchanan and Little, to get to the heart of the issue of housing, and to assure that all those involved in planning and providing for housing on the North Shore had an opportunity to access accurate information about the new National Housing Strategy. At this meeting, we debated factors affecting the availability of below-market value rental housing, housing prices, homelessness and incentives to assure new housing starts include spaces that respond to the needs of people who live and work right here.

At the table were planners from local municipal offices, social housing providers, housing advocates, landlord and tenant spokespeople, developers and builders, seniors' representatives, School Board staff, Metro Vancouver representatives, non-profits, housing co-op advocates and those representing persons with disabilities.



The National Housing Strategy is the largest and most ambitious federal housing program in Canadian history. It represents a decision on the part of the federal government to participate in

the funding solutions to housing challenges, after decades of being absent from the housing field in this country. It covers a real range of options for affordable housing, from shelters and transitional housing for those most in need, through improvements to Indigenous housing in both urban settings and on reserves, to affordable rentals and home ownership.



The plan will assist to create new housing, modernize existing public housing, assure resources for community housing providers, and promote excellence, innovation and funding for housing research and data collection to better serve communities in need.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, INTRODUCED IN THE FALL OF 2018, INCLUDES:

- **a National Housing Co-Investment Fund – \$15.9 billion to help those in greatest need** – women and children fleeing family violence, seniors, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, those dealing with mental health and addiction issues, veterans and young adults
- **investments in community housing resiliency – \$4.8 billion** to create and maintain a resilient community housing sector housing nearly half a million Canadians
- **enhanced federal/provincial/territorial partnerships – \$20.5 billion** to assure more affordable housing, reduce homelessness and create better outcomes through collaboration at all levels of government, cost-matching about half of the investments
- **a plan to make homelessness history – \$2.2 billion to reduce chronic homelessness** 135,000 Canadians rely on shelters every year; we will reduce this by 50% over the next decade, including creating the Veterans Emergency Fund for any veterans in crisis, to assure they have a safe place to call home

It is only with the concerted effort of local, regional, provincial and federal cooperation that we will find viable, long-term solutions to the housing crisis about which so many of my constituents voice concerns.



Building on our history

The new North Vancouver Museum and Archives facility, now under construction on West Esplanade in North Vancouver, will be an anchor for local historical understanding and interpretation. It will be a vital and creative public amenity, providing space for exhibits and research, as well as being a welcoming space for children, seniors, youth, families, newcomers and visitors to the region.

I visited the construction site with Nancy Kirkpatrick, Chair of the NVMA Commission, in February. The location, next to Cates pier and Lonsdale Quay, and kitty corner to the new Polygon Gallery, is strategic. It situates our history squarely on the waterfront, at the foot of Lonsdale, where so much of the core economic, social and cultural history of North Vancouver has unfolded. According to plan, Chief Janice George of the Squamish Nation, and Carleen Thomas of the Tseil-Waututh Nation, have been retained as advisors to the content and design of the permanent exhibits, which will feature significant current and historical Indigenous narrative.

The space will be open and inviting, providing an interactive environment which will entertain, educate, inspire and serve community needs. The venue will be able to accommodate visiting exhibits, local meetings and research, and functions of significance to both small and large interest groups.

I was impressed by the vision of the NVMA Commission, which has sought input from numerous groups on the North Shore to assure this space is used and valued as a public amenity. We are indeed fortunate to share in seeing this project to fruition with the input of \$3 million from the Federal Infrastructure Program.

Getting people around the North Shore faster

Transportation on the North Shore is a growing concern for all North Shore communities. Congestion has created unbearable commutes in many areas; we’re moving forward with various infrastructure projects to make sure that people are getting around the North Shore faster, greener and more efficiently.



Source: www.translink.ca

A key initiative, predicted in the INSTPP report to reduce commute times by a whopping 50%, is already well underway and very visible on lower Keith Road. The federal government has contributed over \$70 million to assure that this massive project, including roadway, interchange and bridge upgrades, complementary transit and road network improvements, will shorten travel times in private and commercial vehicles, and estimate transit time savings of up to 30 minutes on trips across the North Shore.

The Liberal government is also focusing on significant improvements in public transit which are, in part, enabled by a \$28.7 billion commitment made last year. Some examples of TransLink funding for planned improvements on the North Shore include:

- **\$20.5 million to upgrade Phibbs exchange** to better handle increased traffic and ensure safety and comfort of passengers with matters such as weather protection;
- **\$16.1 million to expand the Seabus fleet**, reducing transit frequency to and from the North Shore to 10 minutes at peak periods;
- **\$25.7 million for maintenance and repair for the Waterfront Seabus terminal** to ensure customer safety and accessibility, decreasing traffic and increasing accessibility.



Source: www.translink.ca

Marine-Main B-Line (West and North Vancouver) Dunderave to Phibbs Exchange via Park Royal, Lonsdale Quay

Additionally, the North Shore will see improvements this year with a new B-Line express route, beginning operation in the fall. This route will provide effective service from the western terminus at Park Royal in West Vancouver to the eastern terminus at Phibbs Exchange in North Vancouver. With construction set to begin in the spring, accommodation of bus lanes while maintaining two regular traffic lanes in both directions is a feature of the route’s design. Further examples of federal investment in transport on the North Shore can be found on my website.

A Page out of a different book

Charlotte Perrault was a grade 12 student at Handsworth Secondary in North Vancouver last year. She wished to pursue studies in both official languages, and was interested in finding out more about how government works, so she applied to be a House of Commons page in Ottawa, and was accepted into this small cohort of students from all across Canada. I joined her for lunch in March at the Parliamentary Cafeteria, to find out a bit more about the experience.

About 40 students from secondary and CEGEP levels are selected to participate in this program each year. In their role, the pages are responsible for a wide range of tasks directly related to House of Commons activities. They collect and distribute official documents, answer telephone calls, deliver messages to MPs and serve as a link between MPs and their Hill offices, among other things.

Charlotte, and former page Josh Singer Johnson (2015/16), a graduate of Argyle Secondary School, both highly recommend the page program, which Charlotte believes is a unique opportunity to meet students who share similar interests and motivation. Josh mentions he is glad it is a paid position, as pages are under obligation for an entire calendar year while studying at a university in the National Capital Region; their courses are organized around their page duties to accommodate their work schedules at the House. Very strict non-partisan rules guide their interactions inside the Parliament Buildings; pages are also restricted from making any political comments at all while in service to Parliament.



“...You get to see behind the scenes.

“That was maybe the most difficult aspect of being a page, when you are outspoken and politically aware,” says Singer Johnson. “The best part is how much I learned about how government really works. You get to see behind the scenes.”

And while the duties are not onerous, there are protocols and expectations well beyond the jobs these two North Vancouver youths had experienced before. From their uniforms to the many hours of quiet observation they have to accommodate while on duty, they found being a page a remarkable chance to learn first-hand the deep history of the practices of parliament. One of the requirements of being a page is to be fluent in English and French. Both Josh and Charlotte completed their secondary education in French immersion programs, and so were eligible.



Singer Johnson was so inspired by his experience as a page that he stood for office as a provincial Green candidate the following year; he lost that election but won many more votes in the riding than any previous candidate. He still works as a guide in the Parliament buildings while completing his degree.

Students interested in applying to be a page in Ottawa should visit:

www.ourcommons.ca/About/PageProgram/Become-Page-e.html

North Vancouver Youth Council tackles the future

Since the Liberal government took office in 2015, we have been committed to including the vision and needs of our young citizens in policy development on many fronts. During our first two years in office, we solicited over 10,000 ideas from youth, and held over 60 roundtable discussions across Canada to determine the issues of most importance to youth in this country. My North Vancouver Constituency Youth Council (CYC) has held several consultations, the most recent on how they see this city evolving into their futures.

The Youth Council's event on March 7, “Youth Visioning Our City's Future”, was a huge success and touched on some very important topics that could affect the future of North Vancouver's cityscape. Presentations by CYC members focused on the topics of amalgamation, density, green space and transportation, while also including participants in a brainstorming session to come up with innovative solutions for the city.

The question and answer segment led by the Council gave us the opportunity to listen to, and engage in what everyone had to say. The Youth Council did a fine job organizing this event. I am glad that I have the opportunity to meet and talk with these motivated young people on a fairly regular basis.

The CYC is a non-partisan opportunity for young citizens from the ages of 13 to 24 to learn about Canada's political process, discuss views on issues of importance to them, and get involved in their community. The CYC meets once a month for the duration of the school year at the John Braithwaite Community Centre. The North Vancouver Youth Council plans at least one more inclusive town hall-style event before the end of 2019; it might be your chance to become involved.



NV Youth Council executives assist in youth input and policy development

Have ideas for youth engagement in North Vancouver? Want to be part of the Youth Council?
Check jwilkinson.liberal.ca for upcoming events and information.