

Pulling Together

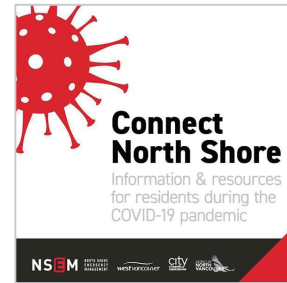
While these past weeks have indeed been very difficult for all of us, the challenges we have faced have brought forward remarkable demonstrations of community solidarity.

There are many unsung local heroes and local stories that have been very much a part of our collective effort to combat and overcome COVID-19. These are stories of our community pulling together during this difficult period – and they include:

- Every evening at 7 p.m. our community rings with clanging pots and pans, bells and horns, recognizing the dedication and courage of those on the front lines – medical personnel, first responders, caregivers, cleaners, food services workers, mental health providers and more;
- Two local businesses, Stealth Distillery and Sons of Vancouver Distillery, have converted production lines to produce hand sanitizer to support community health;



- Cargill, whose grain terminal stands on the North Vancouver waterfront, has committed to match donations to the Harvest Project up to \$20,000. These funds will provide food and support for the most vulnerable in our community;
- The on-line group, Connect North Shore, has been launched by North Shore Emergency Management to link residents to community resources including information for those in need and volunteer opportunities for those who want to help;
- North Vancouver libraries have launched a campaign for donations of books and tablets to provide reading materials for those who may not have access to the internet. Telus has already made a commitment to donate 400 tablets.



These are but a few of many examples of community members supporting each other – of this community coming together to meet a common challenge.

In The Community

Social Distancing for meal prep at St. Andrews United



Trails are open but keep a healthy distance



Rocks with messages of hope are appearing everywhere

Our offices are presently closed to in-person visits, but all services are available by phone and email



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SPRING 2020

North Vancouver Constituent Update | Covid-19 Edition



A Concerted Community Response to COVID-19

Lately we have all been preoccupied by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 virus. The fact that a number of COVID-related deaths have occurred in our own community is cause for great sadness. My sincere condolences are with the families who have lost loved ones to this pandemic.

All who live in North Vancouver and in Canada more generally, are, of course, worried about the well-being of our loved ones and our communities. COVID-19 has been a rapidly evolving global challenge. Canadians have watched the spread of the virus to almost every region and community, and are aware of the very difficult circumstances that have evolved in several countries.



Protecting the health and safety of Canadians is the Government of Canada's highest priority. Over these past weeks, the federal government, working in close collaboration with provinces and territories across this country, has taken important measures to address the spread of the virus and to support Canadians who have been impacted.

CONTAINING THE SPREAD

Public health initiatives at all levels have been guided by the advice of our health professionals. Canada's Chief Health Officer, Dr. Teresa Tam, and her team have been working with local and international partners to prepare for this pandemic and to minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on the health of Canadians and the economy. BC's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, has emerged as one of our local heroes, providing thoughtful advice and feedback based on science and data.

To date, the measures taken – and the widespread respect for these measures on the part of Canadians – have kept infection numbers in our country to relatively low levels. Thus far we have been successful in ensuring the impact of the virus has not overwhelmed the capacity of our health system to care for those infected.

We are not, however, out of the woods. Continued vigilance will be required for some significant time to come. Requirements to avoid transmission – such as 20-second handwashing with soap and hot water and physical distancing – will remain important even once we are at a point where some measures may start to be relaxed.

Many individuals in our society, including the elderly and persons with compromised immune systems, remain at significant risk. We all have a responsibility to take precautions to protect those at risk and to protect our families and our neighbors more generally.

You can find additional information on the virus and its prevention at www.canada.ca/coronavirus and www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19.

CON'T

Beyond measures we can take as individuals to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, the federal government has taken other important steps to prevent virus spread. These have included preventing non-essential international and domestic travel while concurrently ensuring that essential travel – very much including the movement of food and medical supplies – has continued. Maintaining well-functioning supply chains during this challenging time is of critical importance to the well-being of Canadians.

Further, the issue of procurement of Personal Protective Equipment for front line health workers has been a significant area of focus. All countries have struggled somewhat in working to ensure that sufficient supplies of masks, gowns, ventilators and other key equipment are readily available. Canada is no exception in this regard. However, through intensive work – once again very much done on a collaborative basis between the federal government, provinces and territories – Canada has been able to secure significant supplies internationally. Concurrently, we have worked with industry to repurpose existing manufacturing operations to produce needed supplies.

A very good local example here in North Vancouver is Arc'teryx, which has repurposed a portion of its manufacturing facilities to produce medical gowns. Companies drawn from a range of industries and from across this country have stepped up to provide assistance during this time.

SUPPORT FOR CANADIANS AND CANADIAN BUSINESSES

The federal government has stated that, in these extraordinary times, no Canadian should have to worry about putting food on the table. As a government, we have also said that we must work to stabilize the economy – small businesses in particular – to ensure that once this crisis has passed, economic recovery can happen as quickly as possible.



With the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)- which offers a 75% wage subsidy for qualifying employers – we are protecting jobs. With the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) – which provides \$2,000 per month to those who have stopped working or had their work significantly reduced because of COVID-19 – we are helping those who've lost their jobs. With the Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) we are providing interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to small businesses and not-for-profits, to help cover operating costs during a period in which revenues have been impacted. With the Canadian Emergency Commercial Rental Assistance (CECRA) – which provides much needed rent relief to beleaguered small and medium businesses – we are assisting commercial tenants to retain their operating premises even if their businesses are shuttered during this crisis.

In addition, we have developed initiatives that address the specific concerns and challenges of students and youth. These have included:

- the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), to support students and new graduates who are not eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit;
- a doubling of Canada Student Grants for all eligible full-time students to up to \$6,000 and up to \$3,600 for part-time students in 2020-21;
- an enhanced Canada Student Loans Program, which will raise the maximum weekly amount that can be provided to a student in 2020-21 from \$210 to \$350; and
- changes to the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program to make it more flexible and able to provide employment opportunities to youth and assistance to essential service providers in our community.

The various programs put into place over the past month are intended to be both flexible and responsive. They were developed with speed in order to address the very real and very serious issues facing many Canadians. The Government of Canada is working actively and intently to ensure that individual Canadians and Canadian families are supported during this difficult time, and to ensure that Canadian businesses are able to move forward rapidly once it is prudent to begin to relax current measures.

For additional information on measures that have been announced, go to: www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html



Helping Canadians during COVID-19

- ✓ Temporarily increasing Canada Child Benefit payments.
- ✓ Additional assistance for low to modest income Canadians through a top-up payment to the GST Credit.
- ✓ Introducing a six-month interest free pause on Canada Student Loan payments.

CONTINUED VIGILANCE

Canada has made significant strides in addressing COVID-19 because of the willingness of most Canadians to take appropriate precautions. We still have a significant way to go – it is vital that we continue to keep our physical distance, protect ourselves by washing our hands often, staying home as much as possible, and by following all public health directives.

We all must stay the course and continue to do our part to limit the spread of the virus.

To all North Vancouverites, I would say “stay safe.” While the current circumstances are indeed extremely concerning, if we all act responsibly, we will get through this together.

Recent Progress on Our North Shore Transportation Challenges

Transportation has been – and continues to be – a major issue for all who live on the North Shore. While COVID-19 has reduced transportation challenges in the short term, these chronic issues will re-emerge in the coming months and years if action is not taken.

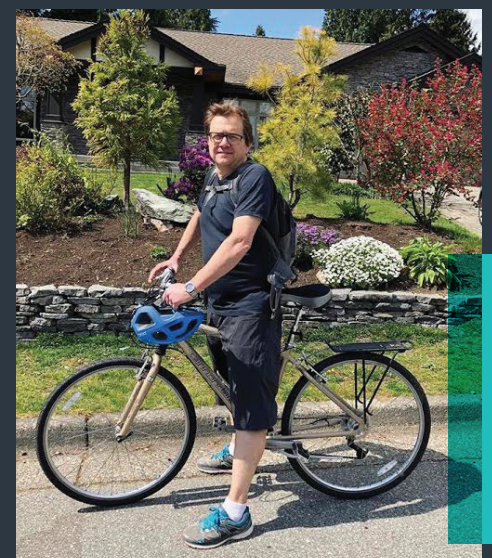
Under normal circumstances, April 6th would have been a day for celebrating the advent of our new B-Line RapidBus service on the North Shore. However, in the current context, the day came and went without fanfare. The transit changes that became effective that day are an important step in ensuring better and more rapid transit service across the region.

The new B-Line bus service emerged through the work of the INSTPP (Integrated North Shore Planning Project) process, which brought together the three North Shore municipalities, the provincial government and the federal government to look at ways in which we might better work together to address our transportation issues. Several near- and medium-term initiatives have come out of this process. These include 10-minute Seabus sailings (under normal circumstances), new bus services and upgrades to transit hubs (including Lonsdale Quay). These improvements are in addition to significant roadway enhancements underway for Highway #1 near the Iron Workers Memorial Bridge.

However, in the longer term, it's clear that some form of rapid transit link to the North Shore will be required to address traffic and transportation pressures. Connecting the North Shore to Vancouver and the rest of the regional rapid transit network was a recommendation put forward by INSTPP in late 2018. Since then, we have been working on a technical feasibility study for a potential crossing from Vancouver across the Burrard Inlet to the North Shore, and on an associated study that is assessing economic opportunities and impacts of such a link.

To date, several potential options have been explored and six of these have been shortlisted for further investigation in the next phase of study. For more information on this report, please see: *Burrard Inlet Rapid Transit Study moves to Phase 2.*

Important progress has been made over the past few years. However, we clearly have more to do. I look forward to continuing to work with municipal and provincial leaders on the North Shore to build on the collaborative work that has been done to date in ensuring we develop and implement effective transportation solutions for our region.



North Vancouver's Youth Voices

Every year, my office solicits North Vancouver youth to join and participate in the Member of Parliament's local Youth Council. The purpose of the Youth Council is to engage young people in discussion of public policy issues and encourage participation in our democratic system. The Council also provides opportunities for me, as their local MP, to hear directly from young people regarding their concerns and aspirations.

The activities of this year's Youth Council commenced in January. The Council has met several times since that time to discuss issues that members deem most important for them and their peers.

With the recent onset of a global pandemic, the topic the group determined is of greatest importance is youth mental health – how young people in our community are coping with the stresses and anxiety caused by the uncertainty of these times.

The Youth Council is presently conducting an on-line survey of North Shore youth, to poll students and young workers about their mechanisms for coping, their supports and strategies for weathering this storm. The survey is also exploring what young people in our community perceive to be gaps in the existing mental health network that should be addressed.

If you are a person between the ages of 15 and 24 living in North Vancouver, and you would like to participate in the Covid-19 & Youth Mental Health Survey, please contact Kelly Perrais at jonathan.wilkinson.c1c@parl.gc.ca for more information.