

Candidate Questionnaire – Myles Mulholland

1. What inspired you to put your name forward for consideration in this election?

I have always had a keen interest in politics and a strong sense of public duty. That being the case I want to see the City I am proud to call home grow and prosper into this new century. I will work hard to ensure that this City moves forward and becomes the place that Canadians choose to live and work in Alberta. I aim to lay the groundwork which will encourage job market variety and grow the services responsibility to help enable retention of future talent, I hope that my children will look at this city as the place to realise their potential.

2. What qualifications and/or experiences will assist you in being an effective councillor?

My life experiences as a soldier and a worker in the O&G Industry have given me a solid work ethic, an appreciation for budgeting, timekeeping, a healthy dose of common sense and a "shop floor" perspective for the struggles that families and hard-working Hatters have dealt with over the past few years. We can see the stagnation of growth and the lack of vision displayed. We need fresh perspective to move forward.

3. Please list your top 5 strategic priorities that you will commit to during your four-year term.

My overall strategic priority is to enable the return of growth and economic diversification to the city. Whilst I believe this will take longer than four years we need to start or we will keep trundling on in neutral. To enable this, I will pursue the following:

1. Keep the current utilities offset initiative to help attract investors, enhance if feasible.
2. Introduce a new Aggregated tax system for new and expanding businesses based over a five-year period with an initial zero tax rate then increments of 20%pa until tax level is reached
3. Improving the connectivity of this City is key if we are going to embrace the opportunities that are coming with the ascendance of online business and services. We should research availability to improve our fibre optic bandwidth network in the very near future.
4. Fiscal responsibility needs to return to council. The City of Medicine Hat is not a Venture capital firm, we should be investing in areas that support growth and business revenues to expand our tax base so that we can provide first class services as opposed to sinking tax dollars into O&G speculation.
5. Diversifying economy from traditional sources. We should focus on improving tourism, exploring the potential of 3D printer manufacturing and providing business services.

4. What opportunities for growth and development do you see in the future for Medicine Hat? What strategies will you seek to implement in order to achieve this?

There are many areas in which we can seize opportunities.

- Great potential in aquaponics with our excellent local climate and existing expertise in the greenhouse industry,
- A 3D printing revolution coming to manufacturing, we can be part of this and profit from it

- Improving our connectivity will enable us to embrace the financial and business services industry's
- We can aggressively pursue rail services to work towards creating a transportation Hub taking advantage of our excellent location and space availability thanks to the Tri Municipal agreement.
- We can improve our retail selection, attracting new business through using taxation incentives, our current utilities offset and availability of land to develop.

5. In the past Intermunicipal Collaboration has been entered into on a voluntary basis. The Municipal Government Act review will make the adoption of an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework a requirement. What aspects of the current Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan would you like to see expanded, eliminated or amended?

The Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan is very comprehensive and as such it is difficult to do it justice in a few short paragraphs.

There are however three areas I am very in favour of preserving, expanding and creating.

- Preserving the water protection legislation as discussed in section 2.16 (Intermunicipal Services) maintaining a safe water supply is essential for our future generations
- Expanding the discussion in section 2.13 (Airport Protection Overlay) to enable us to attract more frequent services to our airport. We should discuss with carriers what needs they require and how we can responsibly implement them.
- Creating a subsection in section 2.17 (Transport Network) to discuss the possibility of a transport network link between our communities. We could use a dial a bus model or lay on set schedule routes with funding provided by all three municipalities. I am, as an avid walker, keen on expanding walking trails (2.17D) where and when feasible to do so.

6. Businesses in Medicine Hat pay a non-residential tax rate that is above the provincial ratio average. In your opinion what is a reasonable ratio? What factors should be considered when calculating the non-residential tax rates?

The current non-residential tax rate is in my opinion set to an acceptable level being just slightly above double that of a business located in the City. I am in favour of giving our existing business incentives to stay and grow within the city limits. We should consider proximity factors and if the non-residential business is adversely affecting a local business providing comparable services when calculating the non-residential tax rate.

7. The City has committed to a Downtown Revitalization Development Plan. What is your personal vision for downtown Medicine Hat? Are there any further opportunities that should be included in the overarching future plans for development in the core of the City?

I would like to see the area become more pedestrianised like the pedestrianised centres in Calgary and Edmonton. To achieve this, we need first and foremost to improve parking availability in the downtown area and lower the current speed limits. Increasing the CCDA grant, if feasible, would also be a good avenue to pursue. I would like to see more festivals and perhaps a return to the Thursday night jams with live music, food trucks and late-night shopping available. We can cosmopolitanize this area but it will take investment, time, hard work and cooperation between the city and downtown businesses.

8. Medicine Hat has made major investments into recreation facilities as well as decisions for cutbacks. What vision and direction do you have for the development of our recreational facilities so as to best service the population of Medicine Hat?

I would like to see more walking trails established, the trails in Southridge and Ross Glen for example are exceptional and it would be good to see more of the same. I am happy with the current improvements to the leisure center and we should capitalise on enhancing this when the funding and opportunity are available. I have nothing but praise for schemes such as the skate park and I would look to being supportive of any similar project.

It is essential that we ensure that sufficient ice time is available to support our national pastime and that we are not losing out on tournaments and opportunities for our youth.

I also have a desire to increase tourism by examining the possibility of attracting a private enterprise water fun park to the City, we have the land and climate to make a success of such project.

9. Medicine Hat travelers are left with limited options when it comes to air travel. To facilitate a more convenient and efficient travel model for Medicine Hat and area how would you pursue lower airfares, increased flight frequency, better connection times and increased load capacity for travelers?

We need to aggressively pursue the new low-cost carriers such as Swoop (WestJet) that are now appearing in the market place. By addressing section 2.13 (Tri municipal agreement) and consulting with the carrier companies to identify their requirements, I hope we as a City can work with them to enable increased services to our airport.

10. How do you feel that the council and the City can provide a more efficient business-to-government process to streamline government services for business both online and within City Hall?

We should talk with current and aspiring business owners, community leaders and City officials to see where there have been difficulties, excessive red tape, delays and what we can do to streamline the process within the current City's framework. We must have a businesses friendly environment in City hall and only by holding frank and honest discussions can we review and amend our current practices.

I would like to see changes made to our license levels and our taxation system for new and expanding businesses. We must enable the conditions for private sector growth to expand our taxable base

11. As costs for services increase and costs to businesses increase at all levels of Government, how will you evaluate the increases in fees and charges to ensure fee structures are reasonable and that any increases are implemented over a reasonable period of time?

I am not fond of trying to predict future levels of taxation but it is essential that we should aspire to stay below or on a parity with the provincial average as the years progress. We should also examine similar sized and competitor communities to see how they are progressing, imitating best practice and avoiding pitfalls where possible.

Doing so will enable us to gain and then keep an advantage to our local economy. When and if raises are required any raise should be made inline with, if possible below, trend and not in anticipation of such a raise. We have a duty to be fiscally responsible for to our citizens

12. What are your plans and/or strategies for achieving financial sustainability while balancing service delivery, capital requirements, cost containment and fair taxation levels?

Growth, growth, growth, we must be ambitious and energetic in advertising the ability and potential of this City. We need to move away from traditional avenues of pursuit and embrace the emerging markets this will require time.

Our plans and strategies are not short term, they are long term. Myself and fellow Candidate Michael Klassen believe we will need 4-6 years maybe more to rebuild what has taken place since the last election. The financial structure of the city may remain similar going into 2019 and 2020 while we develop the ground work and the infrastructure on which to build new business opportunities. The business and industry potential of this city has not been tapped during these last several years. The people have been diminished - their net worth has decreased. We intend to reverse that with a fiscally conservative plan that builds a business-friendly environment and physical infrastructure which attracts manufacturing, distribution, Research & Development, and new technologies to build and enrich the lives of those who make this great city of Medicine Hat their home. We can make a difference if we have the courage to act. We aim to grow the City, not taxes, on October the 16th Vote Myles Mulholland and Michael Klassen for Medicine Hat City Council, lets get Growing!