

Chamber of Commerce - Candidate Questionnaire

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

ANSWER: I've been in business in Medicine Hat since 1980. I love Medicine Hat. I served on council and then ran for Mayor last election. I came in 2nd. I'd like to get back on council because I believe I have a lot to offer. I believe tax payers can get better value when the city uses technology, innovation and business discipline to improve the delivery of services. I don't know if you have heard, but the city is currently having a challenge with its buses. I took the 7-day bus challenge. It was a nightmare to get around. I believe it can be fixed and we can do much better. City Hall has to be held accountable. I'd like your vote on Oct 16.

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

ANSWER: I've been in business most of my life. I was fully accountable for the success and failure of the business. We employed hundreds of people whose futures relied on our success. I generated and studied weekly management reports to closely monitor the business for success. I will apply the same expertise in the business of the city. I have served on city council & ran for mayor last election, coming in 2nd. I want to return to council and bring my voice to the table. I believe in economic development. I believe in being accountable. I believe in being available and I am committed to this city.

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

ANSWER: 1. Short Term and Long Term Strategic Plan for utilities based on commodity prices.

2. Value for Money Audits: Every department needs to go through an audit. I believe in line by line audits. Are we efficient? Can we do better or do we have out of date policies that need to be replaced?

3. No Quick answers to cutting costs. Where we find efficiencies – this will help us find the money to pay for cost of services. We want to maintain and improve our service levels.

4. "Open for Business" is not a buzz word but should be an everyday environment. Are we actually providing quick and effective answers for anybody who wants to develop business in our city?

5. Economic Development. We need to go way beyond what we do today. We need far more encompassing goals. We need to recognize and utilize our business people. People can open doors for us - for our city to attract, maintain and grow business. I will engage the great business leaders that are already here – they are ambassadors in waiting that will pave the way for new businesses.

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?

ANSWER: I believe we have amazing business leaders in our city. We need to harness the great business leaders who are already here. They are ambassadors in waiting that will pave the way for new business here in our city. We can't work alone; we need many voices to attract business. We need an attractive tax rate and perhaps other incentives -- to move to our city or expand current business here.

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

ANSWER: I believe we need a water and sewer agreement with our partners and that the city cannot be boxed in, so we need to ensure we have plans that allow us to annex land for our city to grow. We also need to negotiate the building and management of recreational infrastructure and develop a form of cost sharing for residents outside the city. Finally, I believe we should negotiate for a regional airport to allow a cost sharing agreement to operate the airport. I believe if we negotiate in good faith with our partners we can achieve a fair and suitable agreement.

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?

ANSWER: If you want business to come here – we need to have a competitive tax rate – at or below the provincial average. I want businesses to come here.

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?

ANSWER: I believe in downtown revitalization. I'd like to see more weekend markets and activities downtown. I believe the city should provide grants or matching grants for old buildings. If you have a business that meets city requirements then you can apply for and qualify for a grant to invest in fixing up your building.

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?

ANSWER: We need a master plan. This plan would encompass the next 40 years. Let's look at ongoing recreation needs which include our ice surfaces. Single pad vs multiple pad. ... cost efficiencies.... Don't put money into buildings that are at the end of their life cycle unless they can be carried into the future and fit with the plan. Any buildings that need to be torn down can be turned into multiple lots for residential development or other commercial opportunities.

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?

ANSWER: We can have an airline here. We could bring in a regional airline that has 25-30 seats for daily service. We would have to guarantee sale of seats, with the guarantee phasing out after 2 years. This would enable the airline to get a foundation of clients. We should form a Regional Airport Authority not

just a city of Medicine Hat Authority, this would give more voices at the table and have more vested interest.

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?

ANSWER: This is about using Technology, innovation and business discipline to achieve real cost savings while improving service delivery.

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?

ANSWER: Raising Taxes and Fees must never be the 1st resort, but the last.

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

ANSWER: Run City Hall like a business. Ask the tough questions. What can we do better? How can we improve without losing quality of service? Do Line by Line Audits... value for money audits. How can we use technology and business intuition and provide value?