

Respondent

< 12 Anonymous >

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Time to complete

1. Please enter your full name and municipality.

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Phil Turnbull, Medicine Hat

2. What active role have you played to improve our community prior to running for council/mayor?

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I worked with JumpStart and KidsSport to raise money for these great causes. I was a fund raiser for Alberta Winter Games, Alberta Seniors Games, Santa Claus Fund, Alberta Special Olympics and I am joining the committee for Special Olympics Canada. I coached many minor sports. I was past president of Downtown Kiwanis.

3. What initiatives would you propose to improve tourism, investment attraction and development to our municipality and region and support business recovery during/after the pandemic? *

Our City finally has a strategic plan for economic development and tourism is part of this initiate. As a councillor, I supported an \$8.9 Million Covid relief package which supported business in a meaningful way. We will continue to support business after the pandemic. Formation of the hydrogen hub, unlike other hubs include private companies locally and outside the local. We also are including

regional partners such as Redcliff and the counties. Most importantly, Federal and Provincial governments are part of the hub in addition to local and other companies.

4. In Medicine Hat, businesses pay a higher proportion of property taxes compared to the residential sector. Medicine Hat's tax gap of 2.35% is one of the highest in Alberta. What is your position on the current approach to taxation and your thoughts on potential strategies to narrow this gap?

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I would like to bring down commercial taxes. We could perhaps look at bringing small business tax down, but it becomes complicated. This is a complicated question because if we take away taxes then we have to make up the difference in taxes elsewhere. You have to have a plan and study the possible outcomes of any changes prior to making promises.

5. If elected, what specific steps would you take to encourage & promote entrepreneurship within the region?

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I am a big proponent of entrepreneurship and would work with the Chamber to find ways to incentivize and discover the financial help for more small businesses to open and succeed.

6. What is your stance on COVID-19 related laws that mandate requirements, including masks and vaccine passports?

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I support Alberta Health and Alberta Government rules. I believe that by following the case numbers before and after masks prove that masks help. I will not favor forcing anyone to be vaccinated. Regarding vaccination passports, it seems clear to me that in order to travel you will need a vaccine passport. My wife and I have chosen to get a vaccination passport.

7. What is your plan for publicly-funded services (examples would include Medicine Hat Public Library, power plant, facilities) if elected?

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The Public library has a budget of \$2.4Million, the bulk of which is supported by the medicine hat tax payers. The city sees the library's yearly budget proposal and supports the library. The power plant is self funded. All loans both principal and interest payments are part of their expense structure. Utilities must be run as a business. It is not funded by taxes from the city. It is funded by its profit and loss.

8. How important is it for our region to have a local Community College? What specific steps could the municipality do to work better with Medicine Hat College to provide ongoing opportunities for future learners?

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Medicine Hat College is very important, and we host thousands of students there. MHC provides jobs. It brings students and jobs to our city. The city works closely with the college to provide ideas for skilled trades.

9. How will you attract newcomers to the district and address the needs for a skilled workforce? *

Power generation will be paramount in attracting new investment. In addition to that carbon capture, hydrogen hub, & hydrogen fueling station, will attract investment in the future. Our city offers one of the finest parks and recreation facilities and our trail systems are better than most cities. This attracts people who want a great quality of life. That, in itself, is an investment. We don't have enough affordable housing, and that is something we must work toward.

10. What is your stance on the importance of mental health & wellness support in our region? What ideas, implementations, and initiatives would you put forward to improve the overall mental health & wellbeing of our community?

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Over the past six months, the City has formed a social collective to coordinate the efforts of the Salvation Army, McMann Community Services, The Mustard Seed & Community Housing. We are now all working toward one plan and a combined location. We are working together toward a day and night shelter that would also provide help to people with mental health issues, drug addictions issues, housing issues & social services needs. Our achievable goal is to have a place where these and other problems can be addressed in one place. We can better help people suffering from difficulties by working together, in a consolidated location.

11. How will you further diversity and inclusion initiatives in our region, as it relates to each of the pillars in the Chamber's Vote Prosperity Platform: <https://www.medicinehatchchamber.com/voteprosperty2021/>
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The City has a history of cooperation with MHC to expand in-demand trade programs as well as partnering with enterprise via DBA, etc. We will continue to work with the Chamber when we meet, to discuss promising initiatives.

12. On a municipal level, how do you intend to address climate change and pollution?

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We are building on City history of burning clean gas, developing solar, and we will continue to push in that way. A review of all City of operations has identified transit-on-demand pilot project started 1 year ago, and resulted in a 20,000km reduction in distance used in just the trial areas, from 630-10om. As this expands across the City, a major pollution decline is apparent. Switching Police & City vehicles to hydrogen & electric will also reduce emissions. Unless our Power Generation is renewable, Carbon capture is our only solution to containing rising costs of emissions. ALSO - I am a strong proponent of planting thousands of trees to further offset our carbon emissions.

13. What strategies will you use to communicate and engage with the community and remain accountable to the citizens?

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Information on City operations must increase. Council cannot & should not be afraid to state their support publicly, regardless of public response. Prime example is our MasterPlan for Parks & Recreation. The first cut is just that – the FIRST CUT. Let's now collect more input from the public for this 40 year look into the future.

14. Are there any other issues you wish to address or highlight that were not mentioned in the questions above?

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Our City still has work to do, in furthering our financial stability. We have made dramatic progress over the last 4 years, but more is needed. City operations costs should not be funded by utilities profits and we are well on our way to ending this reliance.