

**2018 Municipal Election  
Candidate Survey Questions  
22 Aug 2018**

**1. What is the role of Abbotsford City Council from your perspective.**

The primary role of Council members is to set policy, which includes:

- a. Adopting annual budgets
- b. Ensuring that a viable community plan exists and is regularly reviewed and updated.
- c. Adopting zoning bylaws that will support the existing community plan
- d. Ensuring that sound policies are enacted and maintained for an effective local government to exist.
- e. Advocate, on behalf of the community, to senior levels of government for supportive funding as deemed necessary.
- f. Beyond that, the Council must provide annual reviews and feedback to the city manager, who is the Council's sole employee. He/She is held accountable, by the Council, for the efficient and effective day-to-day operation of the city.

**2. What inspired you to put your name forward for consideration in this election and what qualifications or experience do you possess that will assist you in being an effective Mayor/Councillor?**

I have served four terms, each under a different mayor, and this experience will greatly benefit me in terms of making sound, well-thought out decisions. A number of key initiatives from this term remain to be concluded within the next term, which I would like to see through to the end. My experience provides me with insight into what this city needs and what it doesn't need, moving forward. I have both training and experience in leadership roles.

**3. What opportunities for growth and development do you see in the future for Abbotsford?**

I see Abbotsford as an increasingly more attractive location for new businesses, and in particular, those owned and operated by millennial entrepreneurs. The rental costs for retail buildings in Metro Vancouver have become prohibitively expensive. Our quickly-developing historic downtown has become a magnet destination for many of these businesses. Our airport and university, along with the black fiber optics service will attract tech-related, higher-paying jobs to Abbotsford. Additionally, the growing Agri-Tech industries will attract more of same to Abbotsford.

**4. What specific strategies will you seek to implement in order to achieve these opportunities?**

We are engaged with Intelligent Communities Canada already to advance our marketability across the world. There are synergies to be taken advantage of in partnering with UFV, the airport, and the hospital. Resulting from present initiative to join the Intelligent Community Network, Abbotsford can capitalize on these assets to develop a knowledge workforce and to build the capacity for locally-developed innovation. This in turn can attract investor interest, both nationally and internationally.

**5. How can the City better support the growth of existing and attraction of new business to Abbotsford?**

As 75% of growth occurs within existing businesses, marketing our city as a desirable place to raise a family will attract young, skilled workers. Designing our retail centers to include residential development will not only increase customer traffic but will attract new businesses to those centers. This is, in fact, in process under our newly-adopted community plan. A Labour Force Analysis of our city (presently in process) will help Council in developing its vision for a vibrant economy. This analysis will assist employers to identify key factors for attracting and retaining talented employees.

**6. The Industrial Land Supply Study completed by the City in 2017 concluded that Abbotsford can play a much larger role in the regional industrial land market in the future. However, to do so will require the City to bring to market sizable industrial land parcels that match market criteria. Given our quickly diminishing supply of available industrial land, how can we best plan for future needs?**

Given the fact that very few parcels of significant size exist any longer, two things need to occur:

- a. Strategies to attract industries requiring smaller parcels of land need to be developed and applied, and
- b. Continued lobbying of our provincial government needs to take place. The case for releasing land from the ALR needs to be reiterated with our provincial government. Not only is it an Abbotsford issue, but a regional issue as well. Population growth demands that at some point more land will be required (Abbotsford's population has grown 6% over the last 5 years). It should also be noted that the average age of Abbotsford residents is 39 (an increase in young families looking for a place to work, play, and live). The pressure (need for industrial land) is already being felt in the Lower Mainland/Metro Vancouver area.
- c. Simultaneously facilitating the growth of Agri-technology will increase food supply on smaller parcels of land, thereby offsetting any conversion of marginal farmland to industrial land.

**7. Council adopted the 2016 Official Community Plan (OCP) as a tool to guide the City to a population of 200,000 residents. Staff are now working on nine Master Plans and**

**four Neighbourhood Plans as a roadmap to implement the OCP. Do you support this approach or what changes would you propose?**

The nine Master Plans have already been adopted. A community plan without master plans provides nothing. The master plans “direct” the execution of the community plan. These plans are 25-year blueprints on achieving the end results set out in the community plan, including financial planning that will set a reasonable pace for providing the means without burdening residents with unexpected expenditures. Three of the four neighbourhood plans are now underway, with one having been adopted.

**8. The City relies on its tax base to finance infrastructure, capital projects and operating budgets. Residents demand more services but don't like tax increases. What factors do you feel are important for Council to consider when setting its annual property tax rates?**

Keeping tax increases to the annual cost-of-living increases, as well as average wage increases. Ensuring there is a balance among all taxation classes and that any increases are sustainable.

**9. What role can the City play to encourage the supply of more affordable housing options of all types in the City?**

The City can assist through zoning regulations, to some extent. In addition, the City can offer incentives to developers to include affordable housing in their projects, keeping in mind that this becomes a property tax-payer cost. One of the city’s more important roles in this respect is to lobby the provincial government at every opportunity, in light of the fact that housing is a provincial mandate and should not be added to the burden of property tax-payers.

**10. The Ministry of Agriculture has struck a committee to look at revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). In the committee's recent interim report they recommend the urgent need to curb land speculation in the ALR by establishing a maximum total floor area for all primary residences in the ALR and providing local government flexibility to zone below the maximum. Would you support the committee's recommendation?**

I most certainly support regulating building foot-print of residences on ALR land. This initiative is long-overdue, and something that staff had already proposed in the early stages of our AgRefresh initiative, which is now on hold pending the release of the Ministries report in the fall.