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5.Who are you and why should I vote for you?

I am a born & raised Hatter and third generation business owner. I want to preserve and build on some of the things previous Councils have achieved, and not lose sight of progress. I want to be one of many diverse voices around the horseshoe, and a voice advocating for a people-first mindset. If you've read anything I've written, it should be very apparent that I am brutally honest. You may not agree with me, but you'll know where I stand. I've signalled early that I'm responsive and will speak my mind. No false promises or pandering. If I get elected, it will be because of what I believe in, and I'll follow through as the same person I am today.

6.What Governance, Board, Council, Community or Committee experience do you have in your past that would make you a good Councillor?

I was a City employee for three years, so I think I have a little bit on insight into how it works internally. I can read budgets and municipal documents, understand the organization's structure, and know many of the administrators and managers as former colleagues.
In college at MHC, I was the Treasurer of the Education Undergraduate Society.
During my time as Executive Chef at Sheridan College I sat on the board of the Campus Hospitality Managers Association as Vice-Chair for 5 years. The CHMA is a Canada-wide organization representing dozens of college and universities' hospitality operations, with a collective goal of improving the student experience for hundreds of thousands of post-secondary students. I gained invaluable insight into Robert's Rules of Order, Carver model governance, and collaboration with disparate opinions from member representatives.
I also, up until recently, volunteered for Medicine Hat Musical Theatre as a bartender and cast member over three seasons of community programming and continue to support that organization through my restaurant as a sponsor.

7.What is your professional/work background & how do you think that will help with being a councilor?

I'm a chef and restaurant owner, and have worked in hospitality for over 25 years. It informs how I like to deal with people, because the food and beverage industry provides a great common denominator for many staff passing through it to another career. I've managed large teams with multi-million dollar annual budgets as well as small "mom-and-pop" diners where every slice of cheese mattered to the bottom line. Most of my career was in Toronto, so there has always been a lot of cultural, religious, ethnic, and philosophical diversity in my kitchens and operations. I've developed a great skill set for collaboration: genuinely listening to people, finding common ground, and having "strong opinions; loosely held".

8. What is your leadership style?

I have always been described my staff and colleagues alike as easy to work with, understanding and empathetic, and can be a coach and leader that inspires people to do their best work. I intend to bring that same perspective to the horseshoe. I like to think I possess lots of good leadership qualities, but I also know I'm never done growing and that education takes many forms. I have the vulnerability to know I'm not always right, and that I will continue to make mistakes. And that signals to my team that they can also be vulnerable and do the wrong thing with the right intent. Then we try to go forward learning from the mistake or misstep, and use what we've learned in future coaching conversations. Because of my natural curiosity, I can see the value in learning about things that might not seem interesting on the surface. Navigating difficult, complex decisions with generational impact requires more than management. What we will need to bring to the table is a commitment to real, honest, and deliberate leadership.

9. If you could only do one thing for this city in your term, what do you want that thing to be?

Establish a ward system. When living in Toronto, one of the many things I appreciated was their approach to wards. The interconnected nature of Neighbourhood Associations (NAs), Business Improvement Associations (BIAs), government representatives, and residents really helped build community. Ward Councillors sat on the boards of BIAs and NAs, and were the advocate and conduit through which ideas and requests flowed to Council. I've had more than a few conversations where I said something like, "this is a great example of why wards would be good". Often it was someone expressing frustration about emailing every Councillor and not getting a response, or feeling like someone at the City in a department just didn't understand their concern. There has been a decline in our social ties, and I think we can all feel it. We are probably too small by population to have them, but geographically I believe we have enough disparate needs to make wards make sense. Residents on The Hill will have different needs and wants than folks in new sub-developments like Vista and Sierra. Folks in Crestwood might really want to see a community centre and athletic space eventually replace the aging Crestwood Pool, and residents of Ranchlands might want bus routes to come through their area. While Councillors need to take the best interests of the city as a whole, it can also help to have someone who shares your area-specific concerns. I think there can be a long-term economic benefit as well. Obviously community building can have a net positive effect on having people stay here and make roots. Better, more connected, safe communities are more enticing to young families. Residents would have direct connections to a person who lives in their neighbourhood, drives their streets, and understands their challenges because they share them.

10. In the event you're elected to council, and we were to review your performance 12 months down the road, what metric should we judge you on?

Was I consistent in my decision making?
Did I vote in line with what I've outlined as my values and priorities since announcing my candidacy in July?
If not, have I provided an adequate explanation into what changed my mind?
Have I remained as responsive and transparent about my beliefs as I was as a candidate?
Do I continue to contribute as a fulsome member of the team - keeping my colleagues honest, collaborating meaningfully on decisions, and bringing initiatives to the table that have the best interests of hatters at the forefront?

11. In terms of preparing for complex budgets, bylaw restructuring, as well as general communicative skills among the public and amongst council, how would you rate your readiness level for governance, and why?

I think higher than average. Let's call it 7/10.
I have been a nerd for all things politics for decades, and majored in History and Political Science as part of my unfinished B.A. / B. Ed. college and university studies. I've already outlined some relevant budget and board experience, and am a quick learner who takes a genuine interest in detail and nuance in decisions. I am not afraid to ask for clarification when needed, and am humble enough to know I don't know everything. I love to hear the opinions and advice of experts and professionals, and want to bring as many of them to the table as possible to make the best governance decisions. I'm moderately familiar with Robert's Rules and the general flow of Council meetings, and have read dozens of agenda packets in preparation for running as a candidate.

12. Given the diverse field of candidates and polarity of opinions around the horseshoe it will be critical that council comes together as one. With the backdrop of the last 4 years and the inaction it has brought to the city collaboration and swift change will be a high expectation of the citizens.

What does collaboration mean to you? Can you describe how you plan to collaborate with your new colleagues?

I've said repeatedly that I don't want nine of me around the table. Diversity of opinion is crucially important - especially because that shows genuine representation of as many interests as possible.
I have an entire career based on collaboration, the most recent of which was my participation in the "Chef's Collective" for the HALO fundraising dinner. Multiple chefs and restaurant owners worked together to do a multi-course meal in an airplane hangar that had very elevated plating and ingredients. This is just one of many examples of my ability to contribute to a project with humility and creativity.
I believe listening and getting to the core of everyone's values will be essential to collaboration. Any combination of candidates around the horseshoe will very likely have the same broad goals in mind: what's best for Medicine Hat's future? That's the "what". Where we sometimes don't align is "how". Collaboration is bringing an honest, sober assessment of my values to the table, and comparing & contrasting them with the rest of the group to see what aligns and what needs to be modified. I have every confidence that I can work with whoever is elected to make the best decisions with the best available information.

13. How many city council meetings have you attended/viewed in the last year & what have you done to learn how municipal government works?

I've been to 6 in person, and watched several more online. I've read many sections of the MGA while researching for blogs and answers to surveys like this. I've already mentioned that I have some board experience and moderate familiarity with Robert's Rules and the general procedure of meetings. As mentioned, I worked for the City as well, so I have a bit of an inside understanding of how the City functions as an entity.

14. Some councilors have sat on council for multiple terms - some might feel this hinders the City moving forward (same old, same old...)

What is your view, thoughts, or opinion on instituting 'term limits' for the number of times an individual can sit on council? What maximum number of terms do you consider acceptable?

I would be willing to explore term limits, but it's honestly not a high priority. I think it would need to be at least three or higher. I'd also want to look at some data. Beyond one very obvious example, my feeling is that Councils have had lots of turnover in the past couple of decades.

15. What is your vision for Medicine Hat in the next 5-10 years?

This is a very general question, so I'll give a general answer. I want there to be some meaningful population growth, with more young people (20-40) making permanent roots here. I'd like to see a secondary source of electrical generation in place, and progress on the southside rec centre and Briar Run projects. I'd love to see a ward system established.

16. What would you do to restore trust within the community?

I think publishing as much information to the website as possible is a big step. FOIP requests are expensive and cumbersome, and can largely be avoided by proactive transparency. I think public-facing progress dashboards on requests to City Council and various departments are a good idea. Open-book management that signals actual accountability. I would push to only use closed sessions in Council meetings when absolutely necessary.

17. What do you believe is the role of City Council versus the role of the City Manager?

We have a Carver model of governance with Council acting as a board of governors and a sole employee in the CAO. They enact the wishes of Council and execute the operations of the city through Managing Directors.

18. What are your thoughts on a Ward or Council responsible for an area of the city?

Very much in favour. I have been advocating for this and wrote a blog on my website dedicated to it. I think there's built-in accountability by having a person who is your actual neighbour being responsible to advocate for a more specific area. It would avoid the stories of folks emailing 8 Councillors and getting no replies. Residents would have direct connections to a person who lives in their neighbourhood, drives their streets, and understands their challenges because they share them. We are probably too small by population to have wards, but geographically I believe we have enough disparate needs to make wards make sense. Residents on The Hill will have different needs and wants than folks in new subdevelopments like Vista and Sierra. Folks in Crestwood might really want to see a community center and athletic space eventually replace the aging Crestwood Pool, and residents of Ranchlands might want bus routes to come through their area. While Councillors need to take the best interests of the city as a whole, it can also help to have someone who shares your area-specific concerns.

19. Are you able to give 100% of your time to Council or do you have another business that will split your time commitment?

I am a restaurant owner and my business is new, so I need to keep that as my first priority. With that said, I would give as much time as necessary to the role of Council and have had conversations with my partner and staff about how to amend my schedule to accommodate Council responsibilities. I'm fully aware that the role is NOT part-time despite its official designation.

20. If you could change one thing/decision this last council did, what would that be, and why?

I would not have removed the sea cans in Towne Square. This is a great example of bowing to a small but loud group of people and having no backbone in making decisions. The initiative was largely funded by a grant and the project was paid for. It could have been successful with a small re-jig and some public engagement.

21. What was the biggest challenge with Council in the last term and what can be done to resolve that moving forward?

Lack of meaningful communication and ego. Many incumbents are not running, so some of this will take care of itself. But I think many Councillors lose sight of why they're there, which is to make decisions - not constantly defer and show up unprepared and insisting upon themselves. So many of the exchanges between each other and with administration seemed adversarial instead of collaborative.

22.Can you share an example from your time on council, on a committee or in your personal life where you had to weigh conflicting information or opinions? How did you decide which input was most reliable?

This happens very frequently as a chef and restaurant owner/operator. Often, my instinct or feelings about a promotion, menu item, or decision like opening hours is proven incorrect by data. I am very much tied to the idea of letting numbers and stats drive decision making over emotion. I would default to "letting numbers tell the story" on most decisions. I might very much like a menu item, but if it doesn't sell well or isn't profitable, it needs to improve or disappear. This approach can be applied at scale to City decisions as well. If we hear that "people are saying" something about the need for additional services, I would want to see that borne out by surveys and statistics. Often the loudest voices aren't representing the majority. And probably just as often, the majority don't necessarily have all the information or are swayed by hearsay or only part of the story. I want proof and data to bolster or refute opinion.

23.Do you believe there is a different standard or different set of rules for you/Council vs. average citizens?

There is a different set of rules already in the sense of confidentiality and being privy to certain proprietary or personnel information that doesn't apply to the public. Beyond that, Council is made of a group of otherwise regular citizens.

24.Everyone makes mistakes. I'd like to know, if you make a mistake do you accept accountability and own up to it ? Or do you say nothing and perhaps blame it on someone else?

I do this all the time. In hospitality, there is a defined hierarchy and organizational structure and the Chef is always ultimately accountable. I would take that same mentality into a Council role, as they make decisions that have generational impact. I would not blame someone else, and would always endeavour to explain the context behind a mistake.

25.Given the diverse field of candidates and polarity of opinions around the horseshoe it will be critical that council comes together as one. With the backdrop of the last 4 years and the inaction it has brought to the city collaboration and swift change will be a high expectation of the citizens.

What does collaboration mean to you? Can you describe how you plan to collaborate with your new colleagues?

I have an entire career based on collaboration, the most recent of which was my participation in the "Chef's Collective" for the HALO fundraising dinner. Multiple chefs and restaurant owners worked together to do a multi-course meal in an airplane hangar that had very elevated plating and ingredients. This is just one of many examples of my ability to contribute to a project with humility and creativity. I believe listening and getting to the core of everyone's values will be essential to collaboration. Any combination of candidates around the horseshoe will very likely have the same broad goals in mind: what's best for Medicine Hat's future? That's the "what". Where we sometimes don't align is "how". Collaboration is bringing an honest, sober assessment of my values to the table, and comparing & contrasting them with the rest of the group to see what aligns and what needs to be modified. I have every confidence that I can work with whoever is elected to make the best decisions with the best available information.

26.How will you hold yourself accountable for building, nurturing, and maintaining professional relationships in your role?

I have a long career of honing leadership abilities. I like to think I possess lots of good leadership qualities, but I also know I'm never done growing and that education takes many forms. I have the vulnerability to know I'm not always right, and that I will continue to make mistakes. And that signals to my team that they can also be vulnerable and do the wrong thing with the right intent. Then we try to go forward learning from the mistake or misstep, and use what we've learned in future coaching conversations. I would bring that same approach to Council - calmness, vulnerability, honesty, and respectful engagement.

27.What do you feel the role of for mayor and municipal councils to advocate when the provincial government makes decisions which damage the community?

I think it's important to always advocate to the Province for our best interests. Especially with the Premier as an MLA, we should have an automatic ear in Edmonton, and I would remind her of that.

28.What are your plans for regional collaboration and building relationships with Cypress County, Redcliff and Brooks?

I think it's important to nurture a meaningful and mutually-beneficial relationship with our County and municipal partners. There is potential for a rising-tide effect on our part of the province if we make decisions with the best interests of the region in mind. That requires a lot of trust, and we have to make sure we don't shoulder the majority of a cost (like a southside rec centre) when the benefit is shared more evenly.

29.Is promising a property tax freeze or a promise to not increase taxes realistic? How would you propose to implement any taxation plans.

In my experience, it's very rare to see taxes of any kind lowered. They are an inevitable part of living in a society, and we are all subject to them at multiple government levels. At what rate and frequency to increase them depends greatly on what they're being used to fund. As with any financial proposal, I would need to see a business case supporting an increase, and would push back to explore other revenue tools, cost savings, or other ways to minimize the impact to the general public before supporting an initiative. One big initiative I'd like to bring forward is to index tax increases to inflation. Regular frequency, somewhat predictable, and measured increases are much easier to stomach than unpredictable spikes and plateaus.

30. Most candidates tend to say "I won't raise taxes". How do you plan to support essential programs as services with less money?

I don't say that. In my experience, it's very rare to see taxes of any kind lowered. They are an inevitable part of living in a society, and we are all subject to them at multiple government levels. At what rate and frequency to increase them depends greatly on what they're being used to fund. As with any financial proposal, I would need to see a business case supporting an increase, and would push back to explore other revenue tools, cost savings, or other ways to minimize the impact to the general public before supporting an initiative. One big initiative I'd like to bring forward is to index tax increases to inflation. Regular frequency, somewhat predictable, and measured increases are much easier to stomach than unpredictable spikes and plateaus.

31. Are you for or against lower business expenses, fees and taxes at the cost of residential taxes going up?

If that is a purely an inverse relationship, then I am against it. But taxation, off-site levies, utilities, development permits, and business licensing is a lot more complicated than that. I want to see residential tax increases be measured and predictable and that would remain my first priority.

32. What is your plan to grow the tax base?

Population growth is immensely important, but it far from simple. I think enticing students to stay here and make roots is crucial. Our population cannot and will not grow from birth rate, so attracting people from elsewhere in Canada and the world is the only way to meaningfully grow. We need to make sure amenities like transit and density in housing inventory are robust, as many people coming from elsewhere are not looking for large single-family units on the edge of town with no transit service.

We need to get people in their 20's-40's to stay here. As of 2024, roughly one-third of our population is over 50, meaning many of that cohort have exited or will soon exit the workforce. Immigrants to Canada are overwhelmingly under 40 years old. Shifting that curve in favour of 20-40 year old working professionals benefits restaurants, retail, service, grocery, real estate, vehicles, and myriad other industries. Enticing immigrants and migrants to come here, make roots, start families, and open businesses will grow our population and contribute to the overall vibrancy of our communities.

33. What services are you proposing to cut to be able to promise no tax increases (or even lower taxes). What roads won't be maintained? What recreation facilities will be closed? What parks won't be maintained? What infrastructure repairs will be deferred?

I don't make such promises. In my experience, it's very rare to see taxes of any kind lowered. They are an inevitable part of living in a society, and we are all subject to them at multiple government levels. At what rate and frequency to increase them depends greatly on what they're being used to fund. As with any financial proposal, I would need to see a business case supporting an increase, and would push back to explore other revenue tools, cost savings, or other ways to minimize the impact to the general public before supporting an initiative. One big initiative I'd like to bring forward is to index tax increases to inflation. Regular frequency, somewhat predictable, and measured increases are much easier to stomach than unpredictable spikes and plateaus.

34. How would you handle all the asks put forward to the city while juggling amendments to the budget?

I would review all budget proposals as a matter of routine. My understanding is that this is the first job of a new Council and spans several months of work. Various departments are already working on their individual areas, and will be ready to present to the new Council very early on. Council's role is to review and approve. I would do exactly that to the best of my ability.

35. If Council freezes taxes, will they also pass a freeze on rental increases?

It's extremely unlikely that Council will freeze taxes. But separately from that, Council has no influence over rental pricing in Alberta.

36. What steps will you take to protect local decision-making, strengthen our economy, and ensure that common-sense governance prevails over ideology?

I don't think "ideology" is automatically excluded from "common sense" as the question implies. I suspect the person asking has a very specific version of what "ideology" means to them, making this very difficult to answer. Local decision making is literally the job of Council and City administration, and I don't believe it is at risk. "Strengthening our economy" is a huge question that is asked in several forms elsewhere in this survey. Similarly, "common sense" is a very general and subjective term that has different meanings to everyone. It's nowhere near as "common" as the name implies.

37. What do you believe is the role of consultants hired by the City and the value you believe they bring if they are from outside of our city?

I don't think "outside of our city" is automatically a negative thing as the question implies. I believe that many municipalities are already doing things that Medicine Hat is exploring or will explore in the future. In that context, I would want to adopt best practices by collaborating with them before automatically paying consultants to do what is likely redundant work. There are obviously lots of factors at play, but I would prefer to only use consultants when absolutely necessary. If they are experts in their field and understand clearly our needs, then where they are from is irrelevant.

38. What are your thoughts on the narrowing of Division Ave? What do you see as the concerns or hazards related to that roadway now?

My understanding is that the actual individual lanes are not any narrower than before. I drive that road very frequently in a large SUV, and live nearby. I have no issues navigating it. It seems that many people have concerns about turning on and off of it, which requires driving slower and making more acute turns, which was the goal of the project.

39. Would you consider re-building Division Ave to correct the mistakes that were made?

Absolutely not. I don't grant the premise of the question that "mistakes" were made. I understand many folks find Division difficult to drive on or are just against it in principle. But spending hundreds of thousands to reverse completed work makes zero sense.

40. Where do you stand on creating the MCC and why?

I initially shared many of the concerns that others have, and now I'm in favour of the MCC. Council essentially needs to collectively re-learn the energy business every four years. Generally speaking, they are not going to be experts in the energy / utility field. This slows down decision making and leads to redundancy and inefficiency on the part of City staff who play teacher instead of doing their jobs. An MCC would be fit for purpose and comprise experts in the utility generation and delivery field. We would maintain our exemption from the Electric Utilities Act, and the MCC would not open utility generation or delivery to private suppliers or competition. Along with the proposed Rate Review Committee, they would be charged with increasing transparency in the rate setting process and recommend fair and competitive rates for ratepayers. An MCC will not change the risks, but could reduce the City's exposure providing increased oversight and predictability of cashflow between the utility and the City. There has been exhaustive outside consultation, and the City has shared a lot of information about the MCC proposal. Public consultation is important, and the public has been given ample opportunity to engage and learn. I firmly believe the City has acted in good faith on this point, providing multiple information sessions, and publishing a massive amount of information on the subject. More than anything, I'm appreciative that a decision has been made and this isn't the sole issue in the election.

41. What are your views on the solar project?

The 1900's were the century of oil; the 2000's will be looked back on as the century of renewables. I firmly believe they represent an inevitable future. In that context, I am supportive of the City investing in Saamis Solar. My understanding is that several similar projects in other Alberta municipalities pay for themselves in around 5 years and have considerable profitability beyond that. Since the physical assets have a lifespan of roughly 25 years, this strikes me as a very sound investment. We need to explore renewables in addition to maintaining our existing infrastructure. I've heard anecdotally that one concern from international industry looking to invest is that we don't have an alternate source of energy generation to mitigate the inevitable wind down of natural gas. We have the sunniest city in Canada, so it's strange to be opposed to a passive but reliable power source.

42. Will you be able to help keep our utility bills as the lowest in the Province since we currently own our own utilities? How do you plan to achieve this?

I would be willing to review administrative fees and the MCAF to ensure they are fair and balanced. Our utilities need to generate "profit" because we have lots of responsibilities like well abandonment and asbestos abatement commitments, as well as large infrastructure maintenance and replacement needs. Unfortunately, the market for natural gas is much more volatile than the previous century and many of our reserves are running out. Ownership still has an advantage, but that is waning unless we invest in alternate sources like renewables.

43. What are your thoughts on selling Medicine Hat Utilities?

I don't think there is a proposal to sell our utilities, but I would be against it if there was.

44. What is your plan to address the issues related to crime, mental health and addictions in Medicine Hat?

People who are stable and can meaningfully contribute to a community are not terribly likely to commit crimes of desperation. I want to see the systemic problems that lead to many of these petty crimes addressed. We cannot arrest our way out of this problem. People should be sheltered, safe, and able to deal with their various mental illnesses and/or addictions where applicable.

45. Is there more we can do (or should do) to reduce criminal activity in our city?

Yes, but I suspect this question is leading to an idea of arresting people for things like vagrancy or loitering, which I am not in favour of. I also assume this means theft from backyards, vehicles, vandalism, and the like. People are far less likely to commit these kinds of crimes when they are sheltered, safe, and are able to deal with their various mental illnesses and/or addictions where applicable.

46. Where do you believe the emergency shelter should be located?

Wherever a group of people who are professionals in the shelter and general aid spaces determine is best. There is a committee who has already been working on this for several months. It would be incredibly arrogant to think I know more than them.

47. What is your position or perspective on flags on public buildings or government buildings?

The City has a flag bylaw already in place. I would follow that, and have no other position on it.

48. What is your view on the proposed bylaw amendment (Land Use) to enable backyard chickens?

I am in favour of it. Many other municipalities allow this already, and have what appear to be very reasonable and thorough bylaws around it. I have a feeling the actual uptake would be very low - much lower than the number of your current neighbours with loud or intrusive dogs.

49. What do you believe is the Medicine Hat Advantage? How will you promote this advantage and increase our quality of life in Medicine Hat?

"Medicine Hat Advantage" is commonly used to describe our ownership of utility generation and delivery. That advantage is waning as natural gas wells are no longer as productive and we buy it from outside sources for power generation. I am an advocate of continuing to own our utilities, but we have to be realistic. The "advantage" needs to shift to something else. I believe we can go from the "Gas" City to the "Energy" City by additionally investing in solar and taking advantage of the land we own and the sun that shines 300+ days annually.

50. Would you strive to reduce the number of employees at City Hall?

As a blanket statement, no. There are many people working at other buildings. If the question is more general to City employees at large, there may be some redundancies or efficiencies to be found. But most of that is well outside of a Councillor's scope.

51. Is there a way we can break down jobs on the local bids and tenders site so more for small businesses can obtain opportunities?
Example: Mow a park, but the bid also includes cement pouring as well.

I genuinely don't know the answer to this, and it seems hyper-specific and outside of Council's scope. Many tenders are made for broad contracts, and there is likely a reason for that.

52. Is there anything Council can do to prevent large corporations from monopolizing housing in Medicine Hat?

Probably not. Unfortunately, the Province has very little appetite to prevent this, nor do they have any intent of meaningfully affecting affordability in the form of rent caps or controls. Aside from ensuring various bylaws and zoning restrictions are adhered to, Council has very little administrative power in this space.

53. What would you do to advertise and promote Medicine Hat to the rest of the country?

There's a whole MarComm City department who does this work already, in conjunction with Tourism Medicine Hat and Tourism Alberta. I've met with and know many of the folks involved in those teams. A Councillor would have no business interfering in that, but I fully support all of the initiatives they undertake to draw people here. My hope is that they continue to focus on sports tourism as a priority - we already host dance competitions and hockey tournaments, and I'm extremely excited for the Special Olympics! There are significant economic impacts when large groups of team sports come here to stay, eat, and use our various amenities.

54. Every candidate has brought up "creating jobs and growing local economy". What is your position on remote work/jobs at City Hall?

I seldom bring those two items up unless asked, and I'm not sure how they're directly relevant to remote work. The last stat I saw was that 96 of around 1400 individuals (6.8%) working for the City were designated as "remote", which may also include working from home but living in the city or adjacent area. I would like to see local workers (which I would think commonly assumes Redcliff / Dunmore / Desert Blume as well) preferred as a default. If people are hired working truly remotely from other municipalities, I would want to see a strong case for why no local candidates met the qualifications of the role. I also think the stat of working from home should be separated from truly remote work.

55. How will you ensure Medicine Hat remains a welcoming place to all and uphold policies that protect marginalized communities?

The answer is already in the question: I would uphold policies that protect marginalized communities. I'm not aware of any specific ways those policies are under threat or even review at present, but I would always vote against their repeal if that was put on the table.

56. What is your plan to grow Medicine Hat's population?

Population growth simply will not come from birth. Canada-wide, birth rates have been steadily declining for decades. Any meaningful growth we see here will come from immigration and migration. And, we have always been lean in the 20-40 age range. Immigrants to Canada are overwhelmingly under 40 years old. Shifting that curve in favour of 20-40 year old working professionals benefits restaurants, retail, service, grocery, real estate, vehicles, and myriad other industries. Enticing immigrants and migrants to come here, make roots, start families, and open businesses will grow our population and contribute to the overall vibrancy of our communities.

Population growth is immensely important, but it far from simple. I think enticing students to stay here and make roots is crucial. Our population cannot and will not grow from birth rate, so attracting people from elsewhere in Canada and the world is the only way to meaningfully grow. We need to make sure amenities like transit and density in housing inventory are robust, as many people coming from elsewhere are not looking for large single-family units on the edge of town with no transit service.

57. What is your approach to the complex infrastructure problems our city faces?

I would default to letting the experts and professionals in relevant fields continue their good work. I am in no way qualified to make infrastructure, engineering, or city planning decisions.

58. What would you do to move forward Medicine Hat as a labour friendly community?

That's a challenging question, because I'm not certain there is much a Councillor can do. Many City staff are already unionized and work with very strong CBAs. I am supportive of paying a living wage, and do it as a matter of routine in my business. But that's a difficult thing to mandate without provincial support.

59. What is your opinion of un-unionized workplaces and do you support them?

I support any workplace that treats their staff fairly and pays a living wage, regardless of union status.

60. Surveys have indicated that a significant reason for people to choose to move to Medicine Hat are the parks and recreation facilities along with natural areas.

How would you as Mayor of Medicine Hat prioritize supporting parks and natural areas within Medicine Hat as a component of quality of life for Medicine Hat citizens?

N/A

61. Climate change will increase extreme weather events and low stream flow in the South Saskatchewan River. The City of Medicine Hat will be challenged to provide water and other support services due to climate change in the future. How can the City Council and leadership best develop resiliency in face of these challenges?

This is a challenging question and one of the last ones I'm answering of the 70 presented. Water stewardship needs to be a huge priority for the City, but also for our county partners. It's one of the reasons I'm cautious about the types of large industry investment we attract. Data centres, food production, and many agriculture ventures have incredibly large water draws, which presents issues for the future. We need to be responsible and balanced in attracting the right kind of industry that's fit for an evolving climate in what is already essentially a desert. I would want to collaborate with climate experts and conservationists, as they're best positioned to make recommendations.

62. What is your plan to keep young people in this city?

I don't have a "plan" for that, but I think I can identify some of the gaps and needs that lead to us losing them in their 20's-40's.

There is a lack of meaningful employment, largely due to our already stagnant growth. We have a perception of only being a sleepy retirement town with nothing for young people to do. Whether or not this is actually true is irrelevant - it's what people believe.

Affordable housing is in short supply and getting more expensive. Due in part to our lack of building density over the last several decades, and due in part to the functional "tri-opoly" that exists in the multi-unit rental market.

I am still of the belief that we have a great situation here overall: relatively low cost of living, a safe and beautiful city, proximity to large centres and opportunities, and a slowly but steadily diversifying cultural mix. I hope we can build on the progress we've made over the past few decades and reshape the reputation of our city as a place of opportunity and growth!

63. Tourism is an important economic driver for Medicine Hat. When elected my hope is that the Council and Mayor will plan to safeguard the natural areas and beauty of the city so visitors will continue to make it a holiday destination, or even their new home. After all, all Canadian cities have swimming pools, rinks and arenas but no other Canadian city has the beauty and health-giving benefits of Medicine Hat's river, coulees and parks. The citizens of Medicine Hat need clean water, air and soil as well as wild spaces and wildlife. These things are of real cultural and economic value to us all. When considering the approval of expanding or new business and manufacturing developments how high a priority should the Council and Mayor give to environmental stewardship?

Every City development plan or master plan I've seen already includes a section on environmental stewardship. I'm certain there are ways to make that more robust, and I would consider it to be a high priority that should be maintained.

64. There is a large impact that constantly changing policies have on the business sector and citizens of Medicine Hat involved in the hospitality and care industries. What are your views/stance on Temporary Foreign Workers, Student visas and RNIP for the city if the federal government reintroduces the policy?

My understanding is that the RNIP has been discontinued and is winding down reviewing applications received before the 2024 deadline. If it is reactivated, I would review it again at that time. Student Visas are an important attractor to potential new Canadians, and I am very much in favour of them. Students typically work in hospitality, retail, and service jobs, contribute to the local economy, and have the potential to choose to stay and make roots - growing our population in the process. Immigrants who have been in Canada for more than a decade have higher rates of business ownership than Canadian-born individuals, which I view as a great potential benefit. The TFW program has its merits in some industries, but I think one where it is sometimes exploited is hospitality. My experience in hiring for foodservice roles has always been a wealth of applicants, and no shortage of qualified people. Whether here as a student, with PR, or as a citizen, as well as Canadian-born folks, I've never struggled to find staff nor felt the need to explore LMIA and the TFW program. Ultimately this is irrelevant to Councillors' roles as they are all federal and provincial areas.

65. As an avid cyclist, I commuted the last 7 years of working on streets, and found it was fine. Medicine Hat has a great system of recreational pathways but they need to be maintained better and expanded. Therefore there is no need restriction city vehicle traffic for bike lanes.

Do you favour using city funds to maintain and expand recreational bike paths or do you favour spending city funds on commuter bike lanes on streets?

I don't think the two are mutually exclusive. The trail system is beautiful and thorough, as well as very popular. I would absolutely want to see it maintained and potentially expanded. Bike lanes are a different matter entirely. They are used for commuting, and to create a physical separation between vehicles and bikes. I drive regularly, and prefer not to share the road with cyclists. I suspect they feel the same way. Overall, I am a big advocate for bike lanes, and I want to see them on roads that make sense. For example, two different sections of 11th St. on the Hill have playground zones already, and it connects naturally at the east end to the trail system. I think it would be a great candidate for a bike lane as an east-west corridor. Many vehicles prefer 10th because it is one of the few without a playground zone, making that separation pretty natural already. That's the kind of approach I would like to see - look at the existing habits of drivers and riders, and consult with both to find the best path forward.

66. Will you support the construction of a new recreation center in South Ridge during your term? Why or why not?

Yes. I can see that there is a current and projected need for more indoor and outdoor pools, as well as ice surfaces. The cost is high, but will literally never get less expensive. I would want to see all funding options explored, including grants, P3, naming rights, non-profit sponsorship, etc.

67. When it comes to mental health and addiction, much of the conversation focuses on treatment. But recovery is not a short term problem, it's a long term journey and the data shows that post-care should not be treated as 'extra' but as a core part of recovery. Post-care, peer support, and recovery coaching organizations often struggle with short-term, unstable funding. What would you do to ensure these programs are properly funded and sustained long-term, rather than relying on temporary project grants?

That's difficult because much of the current funding comes from the Province and from grants. In speaking with members from many of these recovery and adjacent support spaces, lots of what they do is grant writing and procuring funding from other non-profit, provincial, and federal sources. I don't think the City could afford to bear those costs alone. With that said, I am a huge supporter of wraparound services like transitional housing and employment as part of the post-care picture. I would want to advocate to our two MLAs to provide secure annual funding. The City can absolutely be part of the whole, and I would also want to explore that in conjunction with the Province.

68. Do you support Medicine Hat paying Redcliff to handle our composting program?

Not at this time. I toured our landfill with a staff member who works on compost and learned an awful lot about our current program and how we can make small changes to add capacity to our facility. I would be way more in favour of exploring that first.

69. Activities for generations are very separated in Medicine Hat. How would you promote intergenerational living and learning?

I'm not sure I agree with that as a blanket statement. Obviously there is lots of programming that targets kids, adults, and seniors separately, but there are plenty of inter-generational opportunities: Spectrum, Art in Motion, Tiger and Mavs games, programming at Big Marble and Esplanade, etc.. I'd be willing to explore more of that kind of programming, but would want it to come in the form of a proposal from a community group or non-profit and have the City support it in a formal way.

70. We have heard for a long time that there will be a second entrance to Saamis Heights. It has not happened, the traffic is getting worse and it is becoming very difficult to enter and leave the area, what will you do to see that this actually happens and when?

I'm not terribly familiar with the area and its traffic challenges. It's difficult to imagine where a second entrance would go, unless there's significant development south of that area and another east-west road parallel to the Sierra Coulee Trail or at Vista Dr makes sense to add. This would be up to city planners, and I would weigh the merits of their proposals just like any other Council decision.

