



Mara Nesbitt

| 2.Campaign Email - For Public Distribution | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| | worknplaybrooks@gmail.com | | | |
| 3.Campaign Website | | | | |
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4. Campaign Social Media

Facebook Mara Nesbitt for Brooks City Council

5. What are your top 3 priorities if you are elected?

I feel the top 3 priorities are 1. Economic Dev, work at filling up the industrial park and empty lots in the city particularly along the main street of Brooks - we need to broaden our tax base to lighten the load on our current businesses and residents.

- 2. Infrastructure I support needed infrastructure in all areas of our community. We need to ensure the right infrastructure is in place to accommodate our current capacities needed as well as growth. We can't add additional businesses, schools, homes without the needed infrastructure. That includes water treatment, sewer treatment, roads and communication
- 3. Safety in our Community I want the residents of our community to feel safe no matter what time they venture out of their homes and feel safe in their businesses- I support our police force and community police officers I want our officers to have what they require to do their jobs effectively

6.City Council meetings are often held at inconvenient times for many to attend. How will you ensure you are available to your community and their concerns?

The Council meetings and all meetings I am responsible to attend will take priority over anything else going on. I work for you the taxpayers of our community and will do the job I am elected to do and put in the time required and more.

7.What do you consider to be your strongest qualities and how would it be an asset to you as a member of City Council?

I feel that my strongest qualities are the experience I have gained as a two term County of Newell council member, sole-business owner over 13 years, and as a property manager of 14 plus years for the affordable housing complexes on the East side of Brooks. I value that our tenants find a safe, well maintained residence they can call home. I've worked with every nationality and everyone is treated equal. I've been responsible for maintaining balancing budgets, dealing with contractors, staffing, onsite issues from the many different residents on site. I've been an active member of this community for the 50 plus years I have lived hereraising my family, volunteering on various boards and committees and I care where our community is heading and I want to see positive strides happening here and I know that we are capable of it. I believe in working together on initiatives and value the relationships with County of Newell, the minimunis around us and the EID. We are only stronger working together.

8. Passion for the community is best shown through action. Please share volunteer work on clubs and committee's you've been on, and how long you were involved.

As my boys grew up I was involved on every school council, starting with Nursery School and also on their various team boards volunteering where needed. I was an active Kinette for at least 10 years . I am most proud to say I was a founding member of Communities in Bloom and worked diligently to get the flower beds built through the City of Brooks and with other members we gathered sponsorships to ensure the flowers would be covered every year. I was a founding member and still active with Sage Brush Arts. I don't propose to be an artist but I love to support the budding artists within our community where I can. I am also currently an active member of the Rotary Club of Brooks and have participated with the various Pump it up Runs, Radio Auctions, and Terry Fox Runs helping where I can. I was thrilled to attend and help at the Rotary International Convention held in Calgary in June. I was a two term Brooks & District Chamber President and volunteered in various other positions. My community is important to me and it only gets better if everyone chips in where they can and I value all the others that volunteer their time and expertise also.

9.What is your vision for economic development and how do you plan to attract and retain businesses and jobs?

My vision for economic development is to fill the empty serviced lots out in the industrial park and along the main street of Brooks. We have everything needed for a business to succeed, the road structures, serviced lots, we have transportation routes, an airport and rail lines right here in the community plus we have the people. For the industrial park, Just throwing it out there... I would like to pursue the idea of a vertical greenhouse business (tomatoes) if Taber can grow lettuce why can't we grow the Tomatoes to go along with the lettuce and burgers...the off shoot of growing tomatoes is that there is so many other things that could be done- canned tomato sauce, salsa, juice etc.....there should be no waste to this product. The greenery could be part of the feed going to the feedlots? I would also pursue having Data centres established here, again we have the serviced land.....are there things we can assist with to help our existing companies to expand? What do they need? If the waste to energy goes forward, what products can we produce from what is left? I have so many questions and other ideas...and our community is full of individuals that have so many ideas, I'd like to develop a think tank...,lets get these ideas to market.....

10.Have you run or managed a successful business? For how long? Did you grow the business either by employees or profit?

I have owned and operated Work N Play Brooks for over 13 years this month. I have successfully grown our business by both employees and we have had many profitable years...the oil crunch, bse, covid haven't made the road smooth but we are still here and my staff will continue to run the store if I am elected. Both staff members have worked with me - 11 & 9 years. I have another part time employee that has been with me 4 years. I also have at least two part time high school students that tend to work from grade 10 through to graduation. I am very fortunate for their strong support.

11. What does supporting local mean to you, and how do you plan to prioritize it within Brooks?

I feel that we need to really pump up the message of "Supporting Local", the dollars that stay within the community keep our businesses viable, which in turn provides employment and support to many community events and organizations through donations. I liked the messages the Chamber City, and Radio & Bulletin were sending out regularly - I would support initiatives such as this. I think customer service plays an important part. If our customers feel they are important and treated properly they return and this is something we can learn and promote throughout the community. We don't want people leaving our community to shop, we need to grow the businesses that keep people here.

12.We have seen many small businesses close in town over the past few years. Many leave and do not return. How can you prevent this from continuing?

The past number of years have been hard on small businesses within our community and much is out of the individual owners control - oil field crunch, bse, covid, high interest rates all of this would have affected small businesses. I think the way to prevent this from continuing is to continue to offer a working relationship that includes providing services that support the business community, support their employees by supporting good infrastructure, schools, recreation, and work as hard as we can to keep people shopping in town....grow our business base to lessen the strain on our taxpayers and existing businesses, keep our community safe and clean.

13. There is currently a tax break for new homes, which will likely benefit newcomers or big business. What will you do for the 30-40 year tax payers that helped build this town?

I'd like to find a way to reduce our taxes for all of our long term tax payers as well... we need to take a hard look at our revenues and expenses, what are the needs not the wants and build a stronger tax base. Ensure that the City gets all of the grants available to help with the infrastructure needs, these costs shouldn't all come back on our taxpayers.

14. Vacant land in Brooks has a high contamination issue with the soil. What would you do to clean these up to sell for business?

I am unsure which area you are referring to? If there is contamination this soil can go through a reclamation program and this cost would go back to the lot owner....if this is now city land the land can be reclaimed and cleaned up but this may have to stay on the back burner until we get other more useable clean vacant lots sold.

15. Since the cost of living and grocery prices have risen over 20%, what would you do to keep Brooks property taxes from rising as well?

Reduce our expenditures where we can and gain more revenue by drawing in more business base to our community.

16. What steps would you take to address affordable housing in Brooks?

We are currently in the process of developing affordable housing units in Brooks, the City has been a strong partner in this initiative and these units are being built with the increase in various forms of housing currently approved. There is still an affordable housing project in the works that will develop 16 to 20 units (three bedroom) as an expansion to the current Brooks Housing Society complexes and BHS is working through the application process.

17.Rental prices have skyrocketed in Brooks (and everywhere) making it difficult for young people to get a start. What would you do to improve this in the future?

Rental prices are high and basically out of our control as they are market driven. As more units come on stream there should be a levelling off of rental rates as the supply is expanded.

18. What is your position on allowing or limiting liquor stores or cannabis stores?

I feel that we have eneough in our community already and feel that by increasing more liquor stores and cannabis stores we are sending the wrong message to our youth, and community.

19.How do you plan to bridge the current or perceived gaps between different cultures in our community?

I think we need to continue with educating everyone on the different cultures in our community but it goes both ways, we need to educate new comers on our cultures as well. We have a wonderful community here and if you talk to the different groups they are settling in and growing their families, they think, like we do that Brooks is a wonderful place to live. I have been told many times they feel BLESSED TO LIVE HERE IN BROOKS. We need to address the issues that are developing, it isn't one faction or another, cleanliness is an issue that we all need to take ownership of - we need to stress that our community will only stay as nice as it is if we all work together and keep it cleaned up. What might have been acceptable in their countries may not be acceptable here and we need to educate! Those that don't want to follow the rules should be dealt with accordingly and not ignored allowing the situations to get worse. I love the Taste of Nations and the opportunity to learn more about the many cultures within our community. Can we strike up more initiatives that would encourage this mingling, getting to know our neighbours better. The Block Party the Radio Station puts on is a prime opportunity to get to know others within your block and hats off to them for initiating and carrying this opportunity forward each summer....

20. How do you plan to support the well being and development of the youth in our community?

I know there are many programs available to youth in our community but are under utilized....how do we get that message out. The rec centre is an ideal place to encourage youth to develop their various skills in swimming, basketball, badminton, weight room, hockey and the list goes on. I fully support the development of the soccer fields that are in the works and look forward to the finishing of the skateboard park and the bike park that was talked about. Makerspace is available through Spec and the youth can learn some valuable skills attending their sessions. It would be great to see more integration between our youth and seniors....one area I've got to look into is there an opportunity for equipment to be provided to youth, is this hindering some from participating? Are there camps that can be initiated to teach the skill sets so the youth can try out various things without signing up initially. I fully support recreational facilities and programs that keep youth busy.

21. What are your plans to expand/attract events to Brooks? What are your plans regarding future fees to use our facilities?

I think it is important to keep our facilities as well maintained as possible to attract outside events. Keeping connected to the various organizations such as Travel AB and other areas we can continue to promote our area. Sometimes we could have had events in our area but we weren't in the loop so it is important to always be promoting our area.

Future fees for use of our facilities is something we need to drill down on. Yes expenses are always climbing but the benefits of our youth and families using our facilities far outweighs some of these costs....can we keep the fees affordable I think this is a necessity. Can we encourage more sponsorship of programs? I will have to really look into this along with the rest of council if elected....

22. Why does it seem like parking is not a concern with new developments? Is this something that can be resolved in the future?

Parking is and should be a concern with new developments..once something is built and occupied the problems start if there isn't eneough parking identified......we can't have everyone always parking on the streets and especially if our streets are built with narrow roads as in some parts of our community. This should never happen and there should be a stringent bylaws that needs to be followed.

23. What can council do to work with the 2 largest employees in our community -- Grasslands Public Schools and JBS?

From the outside looking in I think that there is currently a great working relationship between the City and the Grasslands Public Schools and JBS. Open and regular communication is a necessity, if they need help from the City the door is open as far as I can see....and I hope to keep this going in the future if elected.

24. With 25 councilors and 5 mayors plus one Reeve for a population of 24,000, what is your position on possibly merging municipalities within the County of Newell?

At this present time I am not in favor of merging municipalities within the County of Newell, not to say there aren't opportunities to work together on reducing costs for all involved.