

A light blue map of the province of Alberta, with a white dot indicating a location in the southeast corner.

2025 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

FORUMS



Steven Pudwell

2.Campaign Email - For Public Distribution

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3.Campaign Website

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4.Campaign Social Media

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

Having been born and raised in Medicine Hat, I bring a deep-rooted understanding of our community and the people who call it home. Over the past 30 years, I've built a career in business that spans sales, marketing, project management, partnership in business ownership and leadership—skills that translate directly into results-driven service on City Council. I've served as a director with the Medicine Hat Construction Association, three terms as a director with the Chamber of Commerce, and held executive positions as well as President. I also chaired multiple committees and participated in many business advocacy projects. These roles have given me firsthand insight into the needs of local businesses and the importance of collaboration between the private sector and municipal government. As a proud member of the Kinsmen Club since 1998, I've chaired numerous fundraising and service projects, I have served in executive roles, including President. This volunteer work has strengthened my commitment to community service and taught me how to rally support, manage resources, and deliver results. I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work. My experience has taught me how to listen, lead, and take action—and I'm eager to apply those skills to help shape a more resilient Medicine Hat.

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

see question 5

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

see question 5

8.What is your leadership style?

collaborative, identify the issue, work to find resolution.

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

if I could accomplish just one thing during my term on City Council, it would be to improve communication within City hall from top to bottom and bottom to top! That means building stronger connections between leadership and frontline staff in every department. When internal communication improves, it naturally leads to better service, clearer messaging, and more trust with our businesses and citizens. Medicine Hat deserves a city government that listens and communicates with clarity. I'll work to ensure that when someone asks a question they get timely, consistent, and helpful answers. Better communication builds better decisions. And better decisions build a stronger Medicine Hat.

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?

Better communication leads to better service, better decisions, and a stronger relationship between the City and the people who live and work here. If we've made progress these areas, then I've done my job:
Staff feel more connected, informed, and empowered to serve
Businesses get clearer, faster answers to their questions
Residents feel heard and see follow-through on their concerns
Council decisions are explained in plain language

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'm confident and prepared. As a former partner in a small business here in Medicine Hat and someone who's served on multiple governance boards, I've gained firsthand experience in managing complex budgets, navigating policy decisions, and participating/leading constructive conversations. I understand that tough decisions are coming—and they'll need thoughtful planning, clear communication, and collaboration. I'm ready to roll up my sleeves, ask the hard questions, and work with council and city staff to get the job done. This will include working closely with staff to identify where efficiencies can be found and how we can maximize value for every dollar spent. We need to ensure our processes are accountable and focused on long-term benefit for the community. As a councillor, I'll bring a practical approach to budgeting, bylaw restructuring, and public engagement so that the choices we make today set us up for a stronger tomorrow.

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?

To me, collaboration means listening first, respecting different viewpoints, and working together to find practical solutions that serve the people of Medicine Hat. I've spent my career to help bring people together; whether leading teams through major projects, chairing business advisory groups, or working with nonprofits and service clubs to solve real problems. I know that progress comes from constructive conversation, shared goals, and mutual respect. If elected, I'll approach council with a mindset of partnership. I'll ask the tough questions, but I'll also be ready to listen, learn, and build consensus. I'll work with city staff to understand the details, and with fellow councillors to find common ground because the issues we face are too important for division. Medicine Hat deserves a council that's focused.

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

Over the past year, I've stayed actively engaged with City Council by attending meetings, watching online, and learning how municipal government works. Through my service with the Chamber of Commerce and the Kinsmen Club, I've had honest, solution-focused conversations with city staff, department managers, and council. These experiences have proven that good governance isn't just about knowing the rules it's about listening, asking the right questions, and working together to find solutions. That's the approach I'll bring to council.

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've been thinking about this question a lot lately. Experience absolutely matters when it comes to recognizing past issues, understanding how decisions were made, and knowing how to move forward. Long serving councillors can bring valuable insight and continuity. But I also believe that fresh perspectives are essential for progress. I don't want the same voices to dominate for too long. I'm leaning toward the idea that up to three consecutive terms is a reasonable limit. It allows councillors to contribute to see projects through but also makes space for new leaders to bring fresh energy to the table.

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

My vision is a city that's more connected, more responsive, and more confident in its future. I see a community where communication between City Hall, businesses, and residents is clear, consistent, and constructive because when people feel heard, they stay engaged. I see a local economy growing with long term stability because we've made it easier to invest, build, and innovate here. I see a council that works together with a shared purpose. A council that asks the right questions, makes tough decisions, and follows through.

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

I would start by improving communication and mentoring opportunities between all employees of City Hall. Trust is built when people feel heard and see follow through.

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

Council sets the vision, priorities, and policies. The City Manager executes those decisions and manages day to day operations. Teamwork and trust is needed.

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

Not for or against a ward system. I would have to do more research to find out if it is more cost efficient and would it lead to more localized spending in areas compared to a large system.

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'm fully committed to serving this city. My schedule allows me to prioritize council responsibilities. I have built my career around managing multiple roles effectively. I will be prepared and engaged.

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

I would have pushed for better internal communication and public engagement earlier. Delays and confusion around key decisions could've been avoided.

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

Lack of leadership, lack of direction, and division were the challenge. Yes, we need good discussion but there needs to be commitment to get things done with an overall goal kept in mind.

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?

Throughout my career I have participated in and chaired many various committees. I listen, gather facts, clarify the goal, then work towards common ground with the people around the table.

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

Elected officials and citizens should be held to the same standards. We all need to be respectful and accountable towards each other. Council members are to serve in the best interests of all of the citizens of Medicine Hat.

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 believe in owning my decisions, learning from my mistakes and making sure I move forward to get the situation back on track so that everybody can get to serving our community.

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

I believe collaboration means listening first, respecting different views, and working toward solutions.

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

I will be prepared for meetings and be respectful to timelines.

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?

We have to speak up with a unified voice. Advocacy is a big job for all elected officials. We need to gather the facts and clearly present information.

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

Working together benefits everyone in our region. Projects involving regional partners go further with provincial/federal governments and business organizations. We must continue to foster good working relationships with our regional neighbours.

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

I will not over promise. I will focus on strong planning, smart budgeting, finding efficiencies, nurturing partnerships and growing the tax base to help reduce pressure on taxation.

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

We need to have serious conversations with city staff, organizations, and citizens to prioritize core services to figure out where efficiencies can be found. From there we can be upfront and communicate to everybody what is needed vs. wanted.

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

I support balanced growth that is fair and sustainable. City needs to ensure a stable economic environment to attract and retain business. The city needs to get out in front of business to communicate changes and take in constructive feedback so that if the plan needs to be modified adjustments can be made.

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

Focus on communication! Focus on economic growth! Streamline processes, streamline permit approvals, develop incentive programs that make sense for businesses to participate, encourage partnerships, develop mechanisms for investment to see both public/private opportunities available here in Medicine Hat (& area). Lets make sure all staff in city hall understand the importance of working to provide informed and timely answers to investor questions. Let's become innovative in developing a strategy to show that it can be easy to do business in medicine hat.

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 am not proposing cuts without a full review. Any changes must be strategic. We need to protect essential services and make a responsible plan.

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

By prioritizing based on impact to the whole of medicine hat and how does it line up with the goals for medicine hat future.

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

Council can advocate for fairness and support policies that keep affordability at the forefront.

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

I will continue to focus on practical solutions that will foster relationships to promote sustainable growth in our local economy.

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?

Consultants can provide perspective along with trends but we need to include local knowledge into the final decision making process.

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?

I believe Medicine Hat's traffic calming plans will need to be reevaluated to avoid repeating past missteps like Division Avenue. We need a balanced, collaborative approach that ensures safety for high risk areas but also keeps in mind that traffic needs to keep moving. Medicine Hat residents deserve streets that are safe AND functional. Overly restrictive designs can frustrate drivers, delay emergency services, and hurt neighbourhood businesses.

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

I am open to discussion. Costs to rebuild will need to be carefully considered.

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

I believe we need to explore a revised version of the MCC, one that brings together experts in the field, city employees, engaged local leaders, rate payers and council member. Before making any major change, the City must get its house in order, assess our current assets, and develop a clear plan for future infrastructure and economic diversification. We need a long term solution that monitors shifts in the electrical generation market and prepares us for what's ahead. Ultimately, council will vote on the task force's recommendations grounded in transparency and informed input

41.What are your views on the solar project?

Right now, we're approaching it backwards. Why are we getting the ROI report after the project purchase? Instead of spending millions of taxpayer dollars to build it ourselves, why aren't we out there looking for investors to come to the table? Lets work with investors to build the solar farm and let the City of Medicine Hat benefit through long-term tax revenue and the connection to our power plant. We all know the importance of oil and gas, it's a cornerstone of our economy and it's here to stay. That doesn't mean we shouldn't also be planning for clean energy goals. Large industries already operating in Medicine Hat support this kind of project because it helps their global corporations meet carbon reduction goals. That's a win for them and a potential win for us. Also if we are serious about attracting new industry, we need to ask: are companies passing us by because our power grid lacks a green initiative? Let's maximize the impact of our tax dollars through equitable partnerships. We can build a future that's fiscally responsible, environmentally forward, and economically strong.

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?

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

I believe we should keep the electrical generation component. It is an important asset to our community and can help us attract new industry while providing stability to existing businesses and our residents.

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

I believe Medicine Hat must take a proactive approach to crime by investing in safer streets and stronger communities. This means increasing targeted community resources in high-risk areas, improving lighting and surveillance in public spaces, and supporting programs that help youth and vulnerable residents before problems arise. By working closely with nonprofits, we can address the root causes of crime and build a city where every family feels safe and supported. Medicine Hat must take bold steps to improve food insecurity, mental health, and addiction support. By partnering with health agencies, expanding outreach programs, and creating plans that share funding opportunities, we can ensure help is available for those in need. We must continue fostering collaboration among communities, outreach programs, nonprofits, and policing efforts to emphasize a compassionate response that builds a unified approach with purpose. Our community must keep advocating to gain provincial and federal support that will benefit the people here in Medicine Hat.

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

Look out for each other and be respectful to everyone in Medicine Hat.

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

With the north side location no longer moving forward, it's essential that we approach a permanent shelter with both compassion and practicality. The right location must support our unhoused population while respecting the needs of surrounding neighbourhoods and businesses. That means placing the shelter near key resources (or moving key resources to be closer to shelter) nonprofits, outreach programs, and police services so that prevention and crisis response are coordinated and effective. Equally important is how we fund and operate these services. To get the best value for every dollar, funding must be shared and coordinated between organizations to maximize impact and avoid duplication. We must engage the public in open discussion and set clear expectations. A successful shelter model integrates responsibly into the community, with transparency and trust at the forefront. While this is a provincial mandate, the City of Medicine Hat has a duty to advocate for a solution that reflects the good of the entire community. I believe in practical leadership that brings people together and finds a location that works for those seeking help and for the city as a whole

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

As a candidate for Medicine Hat City Council, I believe flags flown on public and municipal buildings should reflect the unity and diversity of our community. The Canadian flag and Alberta provincial flag represent our shared identity and commitment to public service. Beyond that, any additional flags; cultural, commemorative, team sports or cause based should be considered thoughtfully, with input from residents and alignment with community values.

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

I am open to exploring. We could consider a program similar to what the city of Red Deer has recently rolled out. Considerations for how it will impact neighbourhoods in Medicine Hat and to make sure neighbours, to the proposed chicken locations, have ways to provide input.

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 is a resilient city with big potential; families can thrive, businesses can grow, and our community spirit is strong. We have access to reliable energy, beautiful parks and trails, a vibrant arts and culture scene, and a strong foundation of local entrepreneurship. We need to make smart plans with smart investments and clearly communicate the advantages to keep the momentum moving forward.

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

Needs more discussion and review. Let's make sure we are fiscally responsible while prioritizing what is needed by the city and its citizens.

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.

Open to make sure bidding processes are fair and equitable. Must insure all deliverables and breaches for tenders would need to be clearly communicated.

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

The city of medicine hat can't stop every outside investor, but we can influence the market by supporting zoning that diversify housing types (ie: duplexes, town homes, secondary suites). I'll work to ensure Medicine Hat remains a city where families, seniors, and young people can afford to live and thrive.

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

We should lead with our strengths sunshine, affordable living, reliable energy, emerging sectors (aerospace, ag, tourism), strong community spirit and regional economic partnerships (cypress county, brooks, redcliff, newell)

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

I believe city of medicine hat employees should be residents of medicine hat.

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

Medicine Hat needs to be safe, respectful, and welcoming for everyone. We must continue fostering awareness and collaboration strategies in our community.

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

We need to provide economic stability that encourages growth for local business to expand and attraction of new industry. Good paying jobs and a robust business economy lead to an increase in people moving to our area, vibrancy of community, social initiatives, and cultural initiatives. Encouraging tourism (travel/convention/sport) to our area will also lead for people to consider all the benefits we have to offer and make a move to seize the opportunity.

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

Medicine Hat has aging facilities and critical infrastructure that need attention. We can't afford to keep kicking the can down the road. My approach is simple and strategic. Assess what we have, build a smart sustainable plan for upgrades, invest a proper funding model, and to be up front in the city's open discussions with the residents in why & how it effects them.

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

One way to help build stronger working relationships between employers and employees is that city of medicine hat can encourage more dialogue and collaboration between industry, educational institutions, and provincial/federal government to address training for in demand jobs.

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

I'll advocate for a local economy that values people as much as productivity. That means supporting both responsible employers and empowered employees because when workplaces are fair, our community thrives

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?

as a councillor, while maintaining sustainable fiscal responsibility, I support proper maintenance programs and continued upgrades for our park system. areas. There needs to be affordable access to allow citizens of medicine Hat to stay healthy and connected.

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?

We need to be encourage proactive strategies involving education of the public, collaborative policy making with neighbouring regions, and a commitment to a environmental framework so that we ensure climate resiliency is a component of all city planning and development.

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

I'll work to create real job opportunities, affordable living, and a community where young adults feel seen, heard, and empowered to stay. Lets continue to build regional talent strategies with our neighbours (cypress county, redcliff, newell, brooks) by sharing resources to encourage business expansion and new industry attraction.

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?

I believe economic growth and environmental stewardship are complementary to a thriving and sustainable city. Council will need to evaluate projects on opportunity and respect for the natural beauty of our region.

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?

I believe Medicine Hat thrives when we create opportunity for everyone those who already call this city home, and those who choose to make it their new home. The mentioned programs can help fill gaps in industries (ie: Ag & health care) but they must be used responsibly and strategically.

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?

We need to consider expansion and sustainable maintenance of core sections of bike paths to make them easier to commute through Medicine Hat. Education and consequences for not following rules must be put in place so that people know proper etiquette while encountering others and cross sections of path/streets.

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

Southridge is growing quickly, and the need for recreational infrastructure is a real concern. Years ago, the city partnered with the Catholic Board of Education and the YMCA to build a shared facility that serves both students and the community. There was even talk of adding a pool, but that part of the plan never came to life. We have proven that successful partnerships can be done, the City of Medicine Hat does not have to do these types of projects alone. We need to explore this type of model where we bring developers, school boards, nonprofits, private investment and provincial support to share the cost to maximize the value of every dollar. Taxpayer dollars are limited, the city needs to be fiscally responsible with so many infrastructure upgrades on the horizon (roads, utilities, public facilities). Every new project must be weighed carefully against needs and wants. A pool can be a great asset, but only if it's built through smart collaboration along with a plan of sustainable funding for upkeep. I will look to find ways that meet community needs without putting unnecessary strain on the budget.

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?

We must continue fostering collaboration among our community resources via outreach programs, nonprofits, and governments to emphasize a compassionate response that builds a unified approach with purpose. Our city must keep advocating to gain provincial and federal support that will benefit the people in need here in Medicine Hat.

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

We need to make sure all ideas are explored when it comes to the composting program. This encourages our region to work together. We need to make sure the shared cost and overall value to the citizens of medicine hat are clear.

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

I'll work to enhance the vibrancy of what community truly means: people of all ages learning from one another growing together. We can encourage partnerships by working with schools libraries and outreach organizations with existing programs to connect generations through storytelling, tech help, and activities like cooking and art..

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 know that some work has been done on exploring options and attempts made to provide short term fixes. We need to evaluate where things are at, develop strategy for the next steps, and figure out how to allocate budget dollars to the project. Southridge area continues to grow and traffic flow needs to be address.