



# Drew Barnes

## 2.Campaign Email - For Public Distribution

info@drewbarnes.ca

## 3.Campaign Website

www.drewbarnes.ca

## 4.Campaign Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

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

Drew Barnes was born in Saskatchewan in 1961 and moved to Medicine Hat with his parents in 1974. He went on to complete a Bachelor of Commerce degree in 1983 from the University of Alberta and immediately thereafter embarked upon his award-winning career in real estate.

Drew was an elected representative to the Provincial Legislature for 12 years, representing the Constituency of Cypress-Medicine Hat. He became involved in provincial politics (beginning in 2012) with the strong desire, which remains his primary goal still today, to ensure that Alberta is the freest, wealthiest and best place to live and raise strong families in North America. His core beliefs regarding political behaviour are: smaller government, free enterprise, less taxes, balanced budgets and less red tape.

Drew is the only person running with the proven experience and leadership ability to be Mayor. Through his entire career, he has remained steadfast and principled in the face of uncertainty. With the last 4 years that can only be remembered as chaotic and dysfunctional, with petty drama and personal attacks, Medicine Hat needs to refocus. Our city needs a steady-hand on the wheel. It's time for Medicine Hatters to be in the drivers seat, with council accountable to ratepayers and a municipal government that is focused on their priorities such as making our city more affordable, promoting our city as a destination for investment and cleaning up the crime and vagrancy on our streets.

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

An active member of the community, Drew has been involved in many organizations in Medicine Hat and area. He sat as campaign chair and president of the Southeastern United Way, overseeing one of their largest campaign drives to date. As former president of the Medicine Hat Real Estate Board, Kiwanis Club and Opportunity Capital Corporation, Drew enjoys working with others to forward a common cause. He was also a past member of the Kinsmen and Hockey Hounds.

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

Starting as a young and energetic 22-year-old, Drew quickly became a top-selling agent in Medicine Hat. In 1985, just 2 years after beginning his career, Drew was the top salesman amongst his colleagues and had purchased 50% of First Choice Realty Ltd. He went on to own and manage other real estate offices, and at the peak was responsible for 35 agents and had the number one office in Medicine Hat. Drew's career in real estate and brokerage lasted a successful 26 years. In 2009, Drew retired from real estate with the sale of his extensive client list.

Drew is primarily an entrepreneur and businessman. He owns a number of businesses in Medicine Hat, which include a construction company, storage facility, and a property management company. Drew also owns commercial and residential property all over Southern Alberta and Southwestern Saskatchewan, and has irrigation and ranch land raising commercial beef and rodeo stock.

8. What is your leadership style?

Principled and Collaborative -- Drew has been known to be constantly engaging. In over a decade of being MLA, he consistently stood up for his constituents, even when it wasn't popular. He makes a habit of regular doorknocking, townhalls and events. He is known for asking colleagues and constituents what their thoughts are and acting upon what he hears. In the last 4 years, there was a void in communication, a lack of leadership and engagement that could be felt around the horseshoe and throughout the community -- it's time for change.

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

Drew has many things that he would like to accomplish but, overall, he would like to make Medicine Hat the best place to live, work, and raise a family. He plans to do this through halting property tax increases, putting an end to spend-thrift out of touch pet projects, selling our City as a destination to invest, bringing more skilled jobs and industry, and taking leadership on tough files like homelessness and crime.

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?

Drew would hope that voters can judge him by his record and hold him to his platform commitments.

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?

Drew is the only Mayoral candidate on record who can say that he has done all of the above. Drew sat on various legislative committees, reviewed complex legislation and drafted several reports ranging in topics from building on time and on budget, to infrastructure, to finance.

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?

Collaboration means actively listening to colleagues, taking their thoughts on board and working together toward a solution. Throughout the campaign, Drew heard from several incumbent councillors that they would go months without hearing from the Mayor-- that is unacceptable. Being collaborative means showing up for your colleagues and putting in the time and effort to build meaningful relationships. This extends beyond the horseshoe and must include collaboration with Administration and City staff.

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

While Drew largely took time to be with his family after dedicating over a decade in the provincial legislature, he couldn't help but watch what was unfolding in the council chambers. He has read the scathing Municipal Inspection Report front to back, knows the Municipal Government Act well, and was keenly watching as conversations unfolded around the MCC and Rate Review Committee.

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?

Drew believes in the democratic will of the people. Voters know best. If the voters want to elect the same person for multiple terms, they should be allowed to. If they are dissatisfied with the representation that they received, they will show that person the door.

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

If elected, Drew would dedicate his time and effort to making Medicine Hat the best place to live, work and invest.

Through building meaningful partnerships with business, industry and more, he would work to attract more investment to our City so that he can keep taxes low and commerce flowing freely. He wants Medicine Hat to be a destination for families to move to, with manageable growth, where they can afford a home, find a good-paying job, and have the facilities that they need to enjoy a good life and the incredible sunshine.

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

There's no question that trust has been broken. Drew would provide the steady hand that our city needs so desperately. He would work with fellow councilors to improve our image and work with the province to rebuild what has been broken for the last 4 years. He would immediately ask for a review of unpopular projects like the transportation master plan, so that council is in the drivers seat.

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

The role of city council is to govern, the role of the city manager is to deal with the operations of the city. In order for the two to work well together, it is imperative that they know their roles. A glaring issue in the Municipal Inspection Report is that the Mayor and CAO both overstepped their boundaries, creating confusion and chaos.

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

While this was recommended in the Municipal Inspection report, Drew wants to further consult Hatters on what they feel. So far, this has not been a top of mind issue for people that have contacted Drew.

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

Drew is 100% committed to being Mayor, should voters entrust him with that responsibility on October 20. Mayor is a fulltime role that needs someone who will show up, be professional and treat the role with the respect it warrants.

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

The answer to 20 & 21 are the same. Drew would have never let the last 4 years descend into chaos to the extent that they did. The childish games and petty drama did grave damage to our City's reputation and it's time for a new group of councilors, with fresh perspectives, to step into these roles and get the house back in order.

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

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 the COVID Pandemic, Drew remained principled. His constituents wanted less restriction and more freedom, the government of the day wanted something entirely different, Drew advocated for a regional approach to restrictions that balanced the need for public health protection and the freedom of his constituents. He will always stand up for constituents.

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

Yes-- there should be. Elected officials should be held to a higher standard in terms of conduct and professionalism.

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?

Own your mistakes, always.

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?

Please see the answer regarding leadership style.

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

Please see the answer regarding leadership style.

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?

Drew's default position is to work collaboratively with the province. The province has many levers that they can pull and ultimately can help or hinder the work of a municipality. Drew has maintained decades long relationship with members of the UCP government and plans to use those relationships to ensure that Medicine Hat is heard in Edmonton.

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

Drew's former constituency encompassed Cypress County and Redcliff and he has conducted business all over Southern Alberta. He will continue to work toward more regional collaboration including discussions of industrial zones and more. Especially when it comes to discussions with the province, a team approach is best.

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

Tax savings are not only realistic but imperative. The City's books need to be opened up immediately to find cost savings. The disastrous Division Avenue rebuild, residential traffic circles and enrolling in "strong towns" cost taxpayers millions. By eliminating these projects, Drew intends to pass along the savings to citizens.

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

See answer to question 29.

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

It is not one or the other. We can have both with sound financial and strategic planning as was indicated in question 29.

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

Drew's plan to grow the tax base is to attract more investment and good paying jobs to Medicine Hat. This will bring more workers and families to Medicine Hat, more opportunities for developers to build more homes etc. All of these things grow the tax base.

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?

The premise of this question is flawed. With reasonable, manageable growth, growing the tax base and eliminating projects that Hatters never wanted to begin with, we can lower taxes for ratepayers.

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

Without having further detail, asks of the City would need to be evaluated on their merit and availability of funds. Projects would need to be presented to council and the public with full transparency.

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

No. This is outside of the legislative jurisdiction of municipal governments 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?

This question has been answered in others listed above.

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?

Sometimes consultants are needed on a case by case basis to provide expert advice or opinion to further round out a discussion. It is rumoured that the City spends far more than other municipalities on out of town consultants. Drew would rely on the experts and knowledgeable staff that they City already employs before venturing outward.

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?

Division Avenue is a disaster and become a symbol of the dysfunction of the last 4 years. When Drew is doorknocking, this issue comes up multiple times a day. The transportation master plan needs to be reviewed and possibly rescinded to make room for a plan that works for Medicine Hat.

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

Unfortunately, with the project already completed as such a high cost, the best we can do is encourage safety and caution when turning on to Division Avenue. Safety issues must be corrected but, unfortunately, what's done is done.

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

The MCC is a polarizing topic that was poorly communicated by the previous council. Drew has said that he would not move forward with an MCC without the support of Hatters. As it stands now, more consultation is needed. He generally supports a rate review committee.

41.What are your views on the solar project?

The solar project is a boondoggle in the making. These projects should be driven by the private sector -- full stop.

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?

The Rate Review Committee is a great start. Drew would also scrap the MCAF fee.

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

The Medicine Hat advantage is made partly by owning its own utilities. Drew supports keeping this valuable resource.

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

Drew believes in separating homelessness and people falling on hard times, from the issues of mental health and addiction, as well as treat crime for what it is. These issues get entangled but, at the end of the day, Drew believes in a recovery oriented compassionate approach first and foremost. People should be able to access housing supports and services readily in Medicine Hat.

However, those that engage in crime and vagrancy need to be stopped and face enforcement. Drew is running on a tough approach that penalizes criminals, empowers enforcement and ensures that criminals are prosecuted. He is also running on working with council to pass a trespassing and vagrancy bylaw, giving more resources for police to enforce and detain those who create disorder and damage property in our City.

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

See question 44.

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

The emergency shelter needs to be widely consulted upon. At this time, Drew does not have an answer aside from that the shelter needs to be in a place where disorder can be managed and those who need support can access it.

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

Drew is patriotic and will raise the Canadian and Alberta Flag, standing proud of where we come from, at every opportunity.

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

The response at the doors during the campaign has been mixed on this issue. Drew welcomes more feedback.

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?

This question has been answered in previous questions.

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

We need to empower existing employees to be able to do their jobs without threat of a toxic environment, as was mentioned in the Municipal Inspection Report. All departments play a valuable role.

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.

This is more of an administrative question that should be answered by someone who is familiar with legislative requirements with respect to procurement.

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

We need to build more affordable homes in Medicine Hat and unleash development. Taxes and fees are prohibitive.

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

Drew has said, on numerous occasions that he would spend time telling the Medicine Hat story across the country and especially in Edmonton. Medicine Hat must be seen as an attractive place to invest and grow.

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

Now that the pandemic is over, there is an increased trend to having workers come into the office. Drew supports this.

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

All Medicine Hatters deserve to feel safe and respected in their community. No questions asked. Drew believes in the kindness and good deeds of Hatters and will continue to support all citizens just as he always has done.

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

This question has been answered previously: see growing the tax base etc.

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

More consultation, more input from Hatters, deal with problems as they arise instead of passing them off to future councils.

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

Drew supports all workers.



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

See question 58.

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?

Drew and his wife are avid trail walkers and nature lovers. Drew will continue to support recreational projects that are well costed and serve the community's interests.

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?

Water management is mostly governed under provincial Water Act legislation that is expected to be updated this year. We need to plan for drought and advocate for more water management resources to be available to municipalities.

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

Good paying jobs, housing availability and low taxes coupled with recreational facilities for young families.

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?

Drew is a firm believer in balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship. The land that we work and play on is essential to continuous growth, including agriculture and agri-food opportunities.

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?

This is out of the scope of the role of the Mayor and Council. Drew is a proponent of manageable immigration and labour supports for industries that need these programs such as greenhouse growers and agriculture.

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?

Medicine Hat has many kilometers of usable, well maintained trail infrastructure. More construction would need proper costing and a business case to be made.

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

Drew supports the idea of a south side recreational facility and is hopeful for the outcome of the current council's survey.

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?

These supports are the jurisdiction of the province. We need more recovery supports, no doubt.

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

More information is needed to be able to provide a fulsome answer.

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

Drew is an avid supporter of families and has always supported family friendly policy in his tenure as an elected official.

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?

Drew would hold a townhall with Saamis Heights residents, or use a survey or both, to garner feedback and go from there. He has heard many concerns around safety and traffic flow from doorknocking in this community.

