

2022 Mayor/Council Candidate Questionnaire – Anthony Shephard Response

1. Should all sectors have affordable housing and permanent rental stock, or should one or two sectors be designated for rentals and designed for low income no income people?
I believe that all areas of town should have different types of housing, we don't want a stratified society where the rich get their own section of town that in my opinion isn't healthy.
2. Should all neighborhoods have small complex care housing as has been suggested by research?
I am not opposed to that I think that it would have to be looked at closely to make sure the resources that are required are in the different areas where complex care housing is proposed.
3. One of our members was advised that in March 2023, the Ministry of Social Development & Social Innovation office will be moving from Dilworth Drive to the old CIBC building across from the Petro Canada on the corner of Dougall Road South and Highway 33. This has sparked concerns that community safety will be put further at risk as the population of repeat offenders and transients will increase even further and we have already seen a large increase over the last year. What actions would you take to ensure that residents are informed of matters that affect community safety in the area?
First I would speak with different community organizations such as the Rutlands Residents Assoc, and then I would send out information in the mail to the area residents inviting them to contact me with any concerns. If the concerns are valid I would take the matter to council with the suggestions of the residents that would be directly affected.
4. Neighborhood Associations previously had access to speak at City Council meetings open to the public on any matters affecting residents living within their boundaries. Recent changes to City policies severely limited the ability of Neighborhood Associations to bring forward their concerns and discuss these at Council meetings. What would you do to ensure that Neighborhood Associations are included in decisions being made at the municipal level?
Change it back to what it was or better. More input is better; we need more constructive dialogue so that we can take the correct action. Acting without talking is just as bad as talking without acting.
5. We constantly hear that 'community safety is everyone's responsibility'. Do you think that this has contributed to a level of vigilantism within the community?
No, I think that the inability to get a handle on our crime problem contributes to vigilantism though. This idea that the victims are somehow at fault and that protecting your own property and neighborhood is wrong is crazy. We need to make the RCMP understand what our expectations are and make sure they meet them. If they can't or are unwilling maybe we need to seriously look at getting our own police force that is accountable directly to city hall.
6. What would you like to see municipal, provincial, and federal governments do in terms of addressing safety concerns in our community (as well as others)?
How about start arresting people that steal, vandalize, and assault people. Then pressure the crown prosecutors to put them to the maximum. I believe the rights of the residents come first and if the laws aren't tough enough to do that then change the laws so they are.
7. Do you support replacing the current Kelowna Theatre and what priority does this project have to you?
I would need to see stats on just how many residents of Kelowna actually use the theatre. After the costing is done maybe we need a referendum after all it is the residents who are going to end up paying for it. If only 5 % of people utilize the venue then why would the other 95% want to pay for it? I would expect that we can also get information on how much revenue it brings into the city, visitors coming here for the theatre and spending money etc.
8. What is one specific process or decision of the last council that you disagreed with, and what specifically would you have done differently on this file?
I just received one in my email. It was about a trailer park on Hart Rd. I cannot believe the residents in the area were not permitted to speak on their own behalf. I would have spoken with them before hand and if the balance of council would not allow them to speak I would have done my best to make their concerns known. From the information I have I would have voted no.
9. What are your 3 main reasons for running for Mayor or Council
Crime and community safety, I have children and I want them to live in a safe city. Affordable housing, too many expensive housing developments and high rises, time to make housing for the rest of us so my kids can buy a house here when they are older. Traffic, time to stop talking about traffic problems and start doing something. We should do whatever is necessary to eliminate the first three intersections coming into Kelowna from the Bridge. No more abbot to Hwy 97 access and a couple of shallow underpass overpasses to eliminate both Water and Ellis intersectiopsns that would be a good start and then start looking at some access roads further into town to improve flow out to the airport.

10. Do you believe that residents associations should play a bigger role development and planning within their areas, should their voices be given more value?
Yes

11. URBA and possibly the Downtown Kelowna Association receive funding from the City and are often called on to speak as stakeholders for an area. Do you feel that Neighborhood/Sector Residents Associations should have a valued voice equal to the business association voice?
Yes

12. The residents' associations would not want to be paid for by the city because their voices need to be kept separate and responsive to residents' but do you feel small grants from the City could be allotted to keep the voices of citizens in neighborhoods heard?

I believe that the city should only be paying for what the residents of Kelowna need. If it was demonstrated to me that it was in the best interests of all the residents of Kelowna and I received input from lots of residents that thought spending their money this way was a good idea I would say yes.

12. If elected, how would you work to have resident's associations voices involved at the beginning of planning and development in their areas rather than an afterthought when the planning is already well on its way to being completed?

I would have all the residents associations contacted and would have information sent out on new developments looking for comments from the beginning.

14. If elected, would you look at why so many variances are made after the initial development approval where neighbors have some input? Variance which can change the whole character of the initial proposal are approved without further resident/neighbor input. For example: Neptune/Mercury Road was to have a development of townhouses to be owned by purchasers which close neighbors agreed with so didn't present anything to Council. After approval the developer changed this to be a rental development where tenants do not own the property and possibly will not have the same initiative to look after the property.

Variance requests should be forwarded to any interested parties and they should be given an opportunity to challenge them. As in this example that change would almost definitely affect the neighborhood.

15. If you are elected, how would you address that development permits which include zoning changes are then allowed to sit idle sometimes for years until the property is sold, based on that change to zoning, with a totally different developer/development than what caused a zoning change?

I would suggest we put a caveat that the change is for this proposed development only and that the city has the right to change it back before approving a different development. The classic bait and switch should not be used in land development, seems dishonest and shady.

16. If Kelowna does not build for 40,000 people who want to come here by 2040 what do you think those people will do? Move to a different city? Become homeless?

I would suggest they would move somewhere else if I want to move from Vancouver after selling my property for 2 million there I don't think I would come to Kelowna and live on the street.

17. How would Kelowna be run differently and look if we were not focused on building for the multitude of people who want to move here, and instead built well planned affordable housing and neighborhoods for those who are already here?

I think it would improve our city, things would be focused on the people that are here and that is how it should be. Keep building for newcomers but let's prioritize for who is here, after all we are the ones paying for everything why should we get priced or crowded out of our own city.

18. What do you think Kelowna would be like if we planned affordable neighborhoods with as much care as we plan our more expensive neighborhoods?

It would be better. And everyone deserves to have the same care taken for where they live. That being said we are stuck with what has been built in some places, but I think we can still make changes to make our older more established areas more livable.

19. Our latest OCO (2040) has increased the heights for many areas, but developers still want to build higher. What do you believe is important for assessing increased building heights? Should residents in an area be given a chance to speak to major variance changes when they are presented to Council?

First the impact on our existing infrastructure higher means more density. Wind issues and temperature change from excessive shading and possible concentration of reflected sunlight as well as the impact on residents views, remember some people sacrificed in order to get a view and new development could seriously affect their property values And residents should definitely be given a chance to speak after all some of them may be directly impacted.

20. If elected, do you plan to bring more and diverse industry or manufacturing to our area where citizens can learn and progress from a ground level job to a well-paying job through education and work experience? (At this point, many of the people working in the service industry and at ground level jobs may have to work 3 jobs to even survive and there is no real opportunity to advance in those jobs.)

I will always lobby for more industry and manufacturing that would be good for our city, I believe the better off our residents are the better off the whole community is. Entry level jobs are great but people shouldn't stay in them forever, if they want more give them the opportunity.

21. If you witnessed an incident of bullying, intimidation, or discrimination against another Council member, would you be willing to act as witness for that Council member?

Of course.