

2022 LOVEGROVE answers Council Candidate Questionnaire

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?

2. Should all neighborhoods have small complex care housing as has been suggested by research?

Everyone does their part to contribute to a strong sense of community – all neighborhoods across our City. This is what residents and businesses of Rutland have said as I door knock to connect, but you have also said that Council has forced more than your fair share of ‘wet houses’ upon you. Complex care housing goes to the next level, wherein folks suffering from various mental health/addictions are under supervised care 24/7 over several months as they detox and stabilize. I have heard from folks with expertise in this area – researchers and others involved with Journey Home Society - that smaller ‘pods’ of max 8 residents with similar afflictions dispersed around the City (rather than one big institution in one neighborhood) in retrofitted existing homes would cost less, be implemented quicker, and result in better outcomes. This sounds like a win-win, following the science, costing less, healthier long-term success, and respecting Rutland’s wishes.

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?

Thousands of Rutland residents and businesses have said they feel dis-respected and dis-connected from decisions exactly like this – at Council level as well as Provincial. Rutland folks need to have somewhere they can go to find out about and discuss what’s going on that affects them. I would push for earlier 2-way communication BEFORE decisions like this come down, allowing for proactive planning to do it right (if at all). I’d push Council to immediately constitute a Task Force on Homelessness (with myself, staff, business, resident, Journey Home, UBCO researchers, police, mental health, Ministry, public participation) with mandate all matters homelessness to engage and listen to concerns like this. But with specific tasks and timelines, meeting bi-weekly and reporting back at each Council meeting as a standing agenda item. The joint Provincial/Mayoral announcement on Sept 20th repeat offenders contained recommendations – this TF must push concrete action to expedite their implementation wrt repeat offenders. For weeks in my downloadable PDF of my platform at lovegrovekelowna.ca I have called for Council to hold regular Town Halls in each neighborhood, including Rutland. Moreover, I plan to continue going door to door knocking and talking to folks after October 15th to personally stay in touch and hear from and improve my understanding of your concerns.

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?

I am strongly opposed to these recent changes, and would push to bring back NA access at Council meetings. Neighborhood Associations are critical for effective 2-way engagement of residents; anonymous e-mails from kelowna.ca are impersonal and promote a ‘fortress mentality’ that frustrates constructive dialogue with your City Hall. You are the local experts, you know the history, your neighbors, your uniqueness that makes Rutland the valued place to live and work for many students, seniors, and families. NAs promote community spirit – look at the ScareCrow Festival, wow! Our family so enjoyed that! For weeks in my downloadable PDF of my platform at lovegrovekelowna.ca I have called for Council to hold regular Town Halls in each neighborhood, including Rutland. If elected, I plan to continue going door to door knocking and talking to folks after October 15th to personally connect with, hear from, and improve my understanding of your concerns.

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?

I have heard this phrase, I have used this phrase. I live this phrase. I think folks need to be vigilante in protecting person and property; that’s where I draw the line. I am not a trained law enforcement officer, nor do I have the

authority to do so, but I do have self-defense training to protect myself and my loved ones if necessary. I don't see evidence of vigilantism.

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)?**

Immediately budget to implement our Community Safety Plan. Let's partner with our experts - our resident and business crime victims; RCMP Crime Prevention Thru Environmental Design (CPTED); Justice system; CMHA; shelters; OPS; and, our neighborhood Block Watch, Patrols, and Speed Watch volunteers. Kelowna's first ever CSP has five priority areas (crime prevention, domestic violence, housing, mental health/addictions, racism). I applaud it, especially the evidence-based links to mental health/ addiction, and housing/homelessness. I would push to adequately fund it, and, given my housing/safety/ CPTED expertise, to sit on its Stewardship Team – let's all do our part for a safer, healthier Kelowna.

7. **Do you support replacing the current Kelowna Theatre and what priority does this project have to you?**

I have NOT seen the condition report for the KT, including its costs to operate (versus revenues). I can't support it without knowing more; we have many other critical needs in our community related to homelessness, overdoses, repeat offenders, affordable housing, infrastructure (\$3/4 Billion deficit), Rutland middle school that would have a higher priority. Meanwhile, lets build community spirit by connecting and celebrating in our parks, and support the performing arts – music, theatre and cultural events – in our gurdwara's, churches, and temples, which I have all attended and are the heart and soul of Rutland. Partners, partners, partners, will come forward from all levels of government, from civic philanthropists, and businesses – we will get there with a new Theatre when the time is right. For now, there is only one taxpayer and we must keep the main things the top priority – healthy and safe neighborhoods.

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?**

See question 4 response. Prior to Covid, Council started restricting access and bypassing Neighborhood Associations, to e-mail folks directly. It got worse during Covid. I was very frustrated by lack of support for NAs as part of the City's Strong Neighborhood program. My platform at lovegrovelkelowna.ca details that I would push for annual \$1,000 to support admin and events coordinated thru NAs to keep strong 2-way resident engagement, very similar to the way the City supports URBA. Partnership-based relationships promote more positive outcomes.

9. **What are your 3 main reasons for running for Council?**

After a 40-year engineering career leading sustainable development and climate action projects, the last 20 helping start UBC's School of Engineering, what I'm offering Kelowna voters is very simple:

- i. my engineering experience,
- ii. liveability expertise, and
- iii. skill-set fit to current issues.

I've advised federal deputy ministers on these same issues (safety, affordable housing, transport, homelessness, ethics, infrastructure); I've taught and mentored your sons and daughters; our family invests in and attends church in Rutland; will you trust me with your vote?

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, see all my answers above, and to questions 3, 4 and 8 especially. It is time for a change. Rutland residents feel dis-respected and dis-connected – your words not mine – based on the thousands of conversations I have had with you/your neighbors. But what role and how much more value? It starts with more support of NAs as partners in a 2-way dialogue; most folks I asked just want to have their concerns acknowledged in face to face discussions and hear what can be done about them. Everyone realizes development is going to happen, and that Rutland is our next great re-development zone, which is exciting and scary at the same time. Unless we have a well discussed, widely supported community plan in place, any road will take us there. This is where NAs will play that key role, along with URBA, to promote a more balanced, constructive, inclusive, 2-way conversation so that

more voices are heard by City Council and staff. And then we must stick to that plan! I would push for Council Town Halls as a good start, hosted jointly by URBA and RRA as partners, funded by City Strong Neighborhoods.

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. I believe residents should have a valued voice equal to businesses. URBA and RRA are duly constituted under the BIA/Society's Act to fairly represent those voices, respectfully. The rub is that in the past there have been questions over whether URBA and/or RRA fulfill those legislated roles fairly. I contend they do, and need to be supported to increase their ability to engage a growing community in the face of impending re-development, as per my answers above (#4).

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'm getting repetitive, sorry. See my answer #4, yes a small \$1,000 Strong Neighborhoods grant I would push for!

13. 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 after thought when the planning is already well on its way to being completed?

The content and tone of your question aligns closely with what Rutland residents and business have told me regarding a strong need for more respect from, and connection with, Council in discussing its planning and development decisions. Absolutely a process similar to Imagine Kelowna is what I envision for Rutland sector planning, with in-person, on-site design charrettes and town halls, and, follow-up reporting to confirm what staff / Council heard before going forward to Council. And over several iterations – the RRA/URBA will be critical to maintaining engagement and momentum, to prevent 'fatigue' and apathy. Moreover, the community endorsed plan must be implemented as approved by Council, with minimal variances.

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.

In my sustainable development advisor role, I have been asked to sit in on the Provincial Development Approval Review Process meetings. A portion of variances are for minor aspects of development (e.g. backyard carriage house roof overhangs that impinge 6" on setbacks), these have been delegated to staff to save time. The most significant variances I am concerned about impact neighbors and neighborhoods – building heights, density, and operational aspects such as the example you cite) – my understanding reveals 95% have been approved by Council, and this seems way to high to me. I often hear they are approved to make the development economically viable, and that may be the case, but why should the neighborhood pay for someone else's mistake? Not only will I push for a longer pause and review, to ensure neighbors and NAs are re-consulted on such significant changes, I would also push for staff to prepare a fuller, public impact analysis of whether such a variance is too great a change, based on criteria reflecting: social equity, climate lens, neighborhood support, original intent, current resident quality of life impacts, traffic impacts, infrastructure impacts. I would also push to have developer promises folded into Covenant 215 (or some other legally enforceable language on title) commitment to deliver earlier in the review process, before any approvals are given, to ensure proponents more fully consider all costs of the project, and to ensure Council / staff are also more accountable to residents.

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 have seen first hand how devastating this can be, upzoning to flip while technically allowed, is unethical and not a good faith move. Fortunately, the court of public opinion often intervenes – via the developer's reputation in

future dealings in the community. I would love to see URBA and/or the RRA take the lead asking Council to overturn / revert the zoning in such circumstances, supported by the Province to preclude lawsuits. I will push for more inclusive, open and accountable development discussions on Council.

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?**

What an interesting thought, Kelowna is one of the most desirable places in the world to live because of its world-class environment, business acumen, and fun-loving residents. How are you going to stop them – not!? So then competition/demand for ever more scarce housing will drive affordability right out of reach of most of us, leading to 'gentrification'. Those of us that own (and have paid off our mortgages) will be fine, but those that don't – younger workers and families, will leave town for similar jobs in more affordable cities. Last time I checked its getting harder to attract skilled trades and professionals due to our hot housing market, lets not go there anytime soon please. To support BOTH our existing residents as well as our future growth, we need more social housing, more market rental housing, and, for those that can afford it, more new housing.

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?**

Well planned affordable housing and neighborhoods – SMARTer Growth I call it - is what I study, teach and do over my 40 year engineering career, the last 20 at UBCO School of Engineering. We must involve and respect existing residents – those that are already here. Built environment does not change overnight, typically cannot be retrofitted in less than one generation, or 20 to 40 years. So it all starts with engaging and listening to what people want, a visioning exercise. I can pontificate as an expert on this topic, but really, it is up to Rutland to decide what Rutland will be, in partnership with your City Council. In that context, I will offer what I have seen in my experience and travels that promotes affordable, well planned neighborhoods. (My websites: lovegrovekelowna.ca and sustainablecommunities.ok.ubc.ca – contain much more detail).

You also specify you want to focus ONLY on those who are already here. There is one example in the world, Houten, in The Netherlands (houten.nl – there is an English version), that I have visited often and is similar in population, look and feel to Rutland (with a strong agricultural heritage). They also were hesitant to accept any growth, and wanted to become a more affordable neighborhood. They have their own City Council – in Kelowna I'd push to look at a ward system. Facing growth pressures in the 1970's, Houten paused growth while undergoing a full community engagement process – in partnership with the Dutch government - to plan if and how they wanted to accommodate more growth and stay affordable. Today, Houten is a world-class, shining example of affordable liveability. How did they do this, and how are they run? The City planner, Andre Botermans, is a close personal friend and gives regular tours to visitors, as Houten has become a global planning case study due to its success. You are welcome to come with me and my PhD students next June 1st (2023) for our summer research tour, wherein I introduce my students to how sustainable communities in Canada can and should be done in a 'smarter' way!

Regardless of my Houten example, I would love Rutland residents to enjoy parks within a 1 minute walk of all homes, car-free shopping zones, high quality transit corridors within a 5 minute walk that connect to good-paying jobs and services, and, a full spectrum of housing choices (minimum 20% subsidized rental/co-ops, many cohousing equity communities, single family, multi-family). "Build more roads!" is one idea, but the research suggests that more roads just encourage more driving, more congestion, more noise, more safety problems, more air pollution, and more frustration, not to mention they cost \$20 million/km – that's not smart tax dollar spending – that's a 'tailpipe solution'. Let's reconnect by planning for more local parks to meet and play in, and, for more local choices to walk, bike, and bus to shop, work, and learn, so we don't have to drive everywhere. Less driving leaves more room for our businesses, and emergency services to keep us safe and sound.

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?**

I would love it, and be proud of our inclusive, diverse, livable and affordable city!

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?

Yes, residents need more say, but Council needs to do better planning so that major variances don't happen. Our angst over recent higher-rises and related variances is a symptom of unforeseen and rapid market changes brought about by climate change and pandemic crises. We've seen a market cooling as our federal and provincial governments step in to fix and stabilize those market failures – inflation is falling – which will reduce these building height and variance discussions somewhat. My colleagues and research travels worldwide assure me that these issues are not unique to Kelowna. One good example of how to deal with building height reviews (and sticking to the plan is the best way), is to keep to the plan until the next 5-year OCP review, with a proactive building height plan meanwhile. For example, Washington DC requires all buildings to stay lower than the Washington Monument. In the Netherlands, church steeples set the limiting height. Moreover, developers must be asked what form of social equity and investment is offered as part of their proposal. As a minimum, I would push Council to ask for public green space and parks – not concrete heat islands – and, social housing components (20% is a target in Rotterdam, 50% in Vienna) for all significant multi-family and/or commercial developments. For high rises, we need to go further, including consideration of green rooves, view corridors, shade / wind canyon / environmental impacts, infrastructure needs, to name a few.

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.)

This is part of my role at UBCO's School of Engineering, an ambassador to promote local industry and businesses by connecting our students and researchers to address emerging challenges and needs. Over the years we have been working with Rutland farmers on drip irrigation, vertical farming, KF aeronautical, security, builders, and other student service learning, capstone design, and research projects. I also personally have been volunteering as a community member as part of the RSS MAP graduation projects since 2010 when my own daughters attended. As I hope to transition from full-time at UBCO to City Councilor, I see myself as a bridge to deeper relationships between UBCO and the community, with great things ahead for bringing more well-paying, diverse industry and manufacturing jobs to the Rutland area, focused on higher tech engineering areas that fit in and respect current residents.

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?

Absolutely, it is our duty as Canadians to love our neighbors. My grandfathers and uncles fought in both world wars against tyranny, to defend our freedoms, and the right to peaceful enjoyment of our property. If I witnessed an incident of bullying, intimidation, or discrimination against anyone, I would definitely be willing to testify as a witness for them. And as we commemorate nationally on September 30th the wrongs – bullying, intimidation, discrimination, genocide – against our Indigenous/First Nations peoples, it is a solemn reminder that we must remain vigilante and respectful. Ghandi, I believe, suggested that a communities greatness will be judged by how well it treats the most vulnerable of its citizens – I aspire to this every day, and I thank you for taking the time to read all of my answers!