

2026 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire — Teresa May, Candidate for Kelowna City Council

1. What are your three main reasons for running for Mayor or Council?

My three priorities are:

Public safety, homelessness and addiction: Residents and businesses deserve to feel safe in their neighbourhoods, parks and downtown. I support appropriate enforcement and accountability, combined with prevention, treatment, recovery and better coordination of existing services.

Housing, affordability and responsible growth: We need more housing choices for young people, families, workers and seniors, while ensuring growth respects neighbourhood context and is supported by infrastructure.

Fiscal responsibility and accountability: Taxpayers deserve careful stewardship of their money, transparent decision-making and clear priorities. I want residents to have a meaningful voice before major decisions are made, not after.

2. Are you in favour of limiting the number of years an individual can sit as Mayor or as a City Councillor?

I am open to examining reasonable term limits. Experience on Council has value, but so do fresh perspectives, new leadership and opportunities for more residents to participate in local government.

Any change should be carefully considered, with public input, rather than imposing an arbitrary limit without examining the consequences.

3. Should major city projects be done using public/private contracting?

Public-private partnerships can be valuable when they provide taxpayers with better value, appropriate risk-sharing and access to expertise the City does not have internally.

I would not support a blanket policy requiring every major project to use one model. Each project should be evaluated on its merits, with competitive procurement, transparency, clearly defined costs and risks, and accountability for results.

4. Are there too many staff at City Hall? Are there too many upper-level managers and directors?

Before saying there are simply "too many," I would want the evidence.

I support reviewing staffing levels, management structure, duplication of responsibilities and consultant spending to determine whether taxpayers are receiving good value.

City Hall should be appropriately staffed to deliver essential services efficiently, but growth in administration should not become automatic. Every department should be able to demonstrate its purpose, performance and value to taxpayers.

5. Should taxpayers have more say in development in their neighbourhoods?

Yes.

Kelowna needs more housing, but increasing housing supply and listening to neighbourhoods should not be treated as opposing objectives.

Residents deserve meaningful consultation early enough that their concerns can actually influence a project. Density, building massing, traffic, parking, infrastructure, privacy and neighbourhood character all matter.

Public consultation should not mean that every development can be stopped, but residents should know what is proposed, understand the trade-offs and have their concerns genuinely considered before decisions are finalized.

6. What will you do about visible drug use, crime, public safety and neighbourhood impacts?

This is one of my highest priorities.

Residents should be able to use parks, sidewalks and businesses without feeling unsafe. Compassion cannot mean accepting dangerous behaviour, open drug use, crime or ongoing disorder in public spaces.

At the same time, enforcement alone will not solve addiction or homelessness.

I support a coordinated approach: appropriate RCMP and bylaw enforcement; consistent standards around public behaviour; treatment and recovery pathways for people who want help; supportive and transitional housing with appropriate management; prevention and mental-health resources; and clear accountability for service providers receiving public funding.

I also want neighbourhood impacts considered when services and supportive housing are located. Residents and businesses need a meaningful voice, ongoing communication and a clear process for addressing recurring problems.

Our objective should be both **compassion and accountability**—helping people move toward stability and recovery while protecting the safety and quality of life of the broader community.

7. Are you in favour of increasing elimination of single-family dwellings in previously single-detached neighbourhoods?

I support increasing housing choices, but I don't believe every neighbourhood should be treated exactly the same.

Kelowna needs duplexes, townhomes, secondary suites, apartments and other forms of housing. The question is **where and how** they are built.

Density should consider neighbourhood context, infrastructure capacity, transportation, parking, building massing and proximity to services and transit.

Responsible growth means accommodating more people while designing development that works with the neighbourhood around it.

8. Do developers get too many breaks at the expense of taxpayers?

Development should pay a fair share of the infrastructure costs created by growth.

At the same time, we need to recognize that excessive costs and unnecessary delays can ultimately increase housing prices.

I would evaluate incentives, development cost charges and concessions based on evidence: What public benefit are taxpayers receiving in return?

If an incentive produces affordable housing, needed infrastructure or another measurable community benefit, there may be a case for it. If taxpayers assume costs without a clear public benefit, it deserves reconsideration.

9. Should infrastructure be a priority before development rather than constantly playing catch-up?

Infrastructure planning must keep pace with growth.

Kelowna's own OCP recognizes the challenge of balancing aging infrastructure with new infrastructure required by growth.

We need better coordination between land-use approvals and transportation, water, sewer, emergency services and other infrastructure planning.

That doesn't necessarily mean every piece of infrastructure must be completed before development begins. It means Council should understand the infrastructure consequences and costs **before approving significant growth**, with clear timelines and funding plans.

Growth without adequate infrastructure simply transfers today's development decisions into tomorrow's congestion, disruption and tax bills.

10. Fifteen-minute communities, parking and green space

I support **complete, walkable neighbourhoods as an option, not restrictions on people's ability to travel throughout their city.**

Kelowna is geographically diverse. Someone carrying tools to a construction site has very different transportation needs from someone living and working downtown.

Parking: Requirements should reflect actual neighbourhood conditions. Where residents remain dependent on vehicles and transit alternatives are limited, developments need adequate parking. A single parking formula will not work everywhere.

Green space: Yes, meaningful green space should be incorporated into development wherever practical. A park fifteen minutes away does not replace trees, landscaping, gathering areas and usable outdoor space within a neighbourhood.

The goal should be choice: walking, cycling and transit where they work, while recognizing that many Kelowna residents will continue to need vehicles.

11. Should the City prioritize purchasing parkland and protecting vulnerable green space?

Yes, strategically.

As Kelowna grows and land becomes more expensive, opportunities to acquire significant parkland become harder to recover once they are lost.

I support identifying future park needs early, protecting environmentally sensitive areas and expanding public access to parks and waterfront where financially responsible.

City-owned land should not automatically be sold simply because development could generate revenue. Before disposing of significant public land, Council should consider its long-term value for parks, recreation, infrastructure and other community needs.

12. Should cultural infrastructure only be downtown?

No. Downtown will continue to be an important cultural centre, but culture belongs throughout Kelowna.

Rutland, Glenmore, the Mission and other neighbourhoods should have opportunities for community gathering places, performances, public art and cultural activities.

Kelowna's existing OCP already permits smaller cultural spaces in suburban neighbourhoods while directing larger facilities toward Urban Centres and the Core Area.

As the city grows, I would support examining opportunities for appropriately scaled cultural and community facilities throughout Kelowna rather than assuming every cultural investment must be concentrated downtown.

13. Should more parking be available so all Kelowna residents can enjoy the lake and beaches?

Public access to Okanagan Lake is extremely important.

As areas such as Pandosy-Lakeshore become denser, we need to ensure public waterfront access does not unintentionally become less accessible to residents who live elsewhere.

That doesn't necessarily mean paving valuable waterfront land for large parking lots. I would examine a combination of strategically located parking, accessible parking, improved transit connections, drop-off areas, cycling infrastructure and other solutions.

The principle is important: **Kelowna's public beaches and waterfront belong to the whole community and should remain reasonably accessible to everyone.**

14. What are your thoughts regarding Resident Associations and Affiliate Agreements? Should Resident Associations be restricted from speaking against City decisions?

Resident Associations should be able to represent the concerns of their members, including respectfully disagreeing with City decisions.

Healthy local government requires constructive disagreement.

An affiliation agreement can establish responsibilities and expectations, but it should not prevent an independent community organization from raising legitimate concerns about development, traffic, public safety, parks or other issues affecting its neighbourhood.

The relationship should be based on communication and mutual respect not an expectation that community organizations simply agree with City Hall.

15. What efforts will you make to include Resident Associations in consultation affecting their communities?

I would support involving Resident Associations **early in the process**, particularly when proposals have significant implications for neighbourhood health, safety, infrastructure or quality of life.

That means providing understandable information, reasonable notice and meaningful opportunities to identify concerns before decisions are effectively settled.

I would also encourage regular communication between Council, City staff and Resident Associations rather than relying only on consultation when a controversial proposal arises.

One of the commitments I have made throughout this campaign is to **listen first**. Consultation should not simply be a box that City Hall checks. Residents may not always get the outcome they want, but they deserve to know they were heard and understand how and why a decision was made.

With Kindest Regards
Teresa