

Tim Down Answers to the Rutland Residents Assoc. Questionnaire

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

My three principal reasons are:

First, public safety and quality of life. Residents should be able to use their parks, streets, businesses and neighbourhoods without routinely confronting disorder, open drug use or threatening behaviour.

Second, greater fiscal accountability. Kelowna is growing rapidly and so are municipal revenues, expenditures and capital commitments. Council needs clearer measures showing residents what services cost, how those costs are changing, and whether taxpayers are receiving reasonable value.

Third, managing growth more effectively. Kelowna needs housing, employment and investment, but growth must be accompanied by infrastructure, transportation, parks, public amenities and meaningful neighbourhood planning. Growth should improve the community, not simply increase its size.

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

Yes. I support reasonable term limits for both the Mayor and Councillors. I also support an upper age limit of 75 for elected municipal office.

Experience and institutional knowledge have value, but elected office should not become a permanent occupation. Communities need renewal and succession. Making room periodically for new voices brings different professional backgrounds, generations and lived experiences into public decision-making.

I also believe there should be reasonable minimum competency expectations for people entrusted with governing increasingly sophisticated municipal organizations.

Kelowna's 2026 budget is approximately **\$1.1 billion**. Council is responsible for major infrastructure investments, land-use planning, public safety, borrowing, procurement, utilities, risk management and decisions whose financial consequences can last for decades.

A maximum age of 75 would not be without Canadian precedent. Federally appointed superior-court judges are constitutionally required to cease holding office at age 75.

Competency requirements should not mean that only lawyers, accountants or people with university degrees can serve. Democratic government benefits from people with diverse backgrounds. But elected officials should be capable of understanding the responsibilities they undertake. At a minimum, I would support mandatory education in municipal finance, governance and fiduciary responsibilities, conflicts of interest, land-use legislation and major capital decision-making.

Current BC legislation establishes a minimum candidate age of 18, together with citizenship, residency and other eligibility requirements, but does not establish a maximum age or general competency requirement. These changes would therefore require action by the Province rather than Kelowna Council acting alone.

My principle is straightforward: **experience matters, but so do renewal, succession and the demonstrated capacity to govern.**

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

Where it produces demonstrably better value and appropriately allocates risk, yes. But not automatically.

Public-private partnerships and other alternative procurement models can provide expertise, capital and risk transfer. They can also become expensive if contracts are poorly structured or the public sector retains risks that were supposedly transferred.

For every major project, Council should compare credible delivery alternatives based on total lifecycle cost, financing costs, construction and operating risk, accountability, service standards and long-term taxpayer exposure.

The procurement model should follow the economics and risks of the project.

4. Are there too many staff at City Hall? Are there too many upper-level managers and directors at City Hall which taxpayers have to fund?

I would not responsibly answer that question simply by saying "yes" or "no" without measuring staffing against workload, population growth, service levels and comparable municipalities.

What I do believe is that taxpayers deserve much better reporting.

Kelowna's published budgets increased from approximately **\$854.9 million in 2024 to \$908 million in 2025 and \$1.1 billion in 2026.**

Council should regularly disclose and track:

- total full-time-equivalent employees;
- total employee compensation;
- management and supervisory layers;
- employees and compensation per capita;
- staffing growth compared with population and service growth; and
- comparable measures from similar municipalities.

If staffing or management layers are growing more rapidly than service requirements can justify, Council should address it. If additional personnel are demonstrably necessary for policing, fire protection, infrastructure or other essential services, that should also be clearly explained.

The test should be **value and measurable service delivery**, not simply head count.

5. Should taxpayers have more say in development in their neighbourhoods? Has the current process gone too far in eliminating resident voices?

Residents should have meaningful opportunities to participate in planning decisions that materially affect their neighbourhoods.

At the same time, provincial housing legislation has reduced municipal discretion over certain residential development decisions and public-hearing requirements. Kelowna has already revised its development processes in response.

That makes **early neighbourhood consultation more important, not less.**

Residents should be involved when neighbourhood plans, transportation networks, parks, infrastructure and land-use policies are being developed, rather than first hearing about major changes when an individual development application is nearly complete.

Consultation does not mean that every individual receives a veto over development. It should mean that residents can participate while their input can still materially influence the outcome.

6. What are you prepared to do about visible drug use, crime, public safety and neighbourhood dysfunction?

There needs to be a clear distinction between **health care, addiction treatment and social services**, which are primarily provincial responsibilities, and **public order, parks, bylaws, policing and neighbourhood impacts**, where the City has significant responsibilities.

Compassion for people experiencing addiction, homelessness or mental illness does not require residents to accept uncontrolled disorder in public spaces.

I support:

- consistent enforcement of existing laws and bylaws governing conduct and behaviour in parks and public spaces;
- effective coordination between RCMP, bylaw officers, fire, health and outreach services;
- measurable neighbourhood-impact standards around supportive and low-barrier housing;
- rapid response to repeated nuisance, violence, property crime and serious public disorder;
- appropriate enforcement of criminal behaviour;
- effective treatment, recovery and supportive services from the Province; and
- transparent reporting so residents can determine whether interventions are actually improving conditions.

Kelowna already has a Parks and Public Spaces Bylaw regulating activities and conduct in City parks and other public spaces.

The objective should not be to move problems from Downtown to Rutland, or from one neighbourhood to another. **Every neighbourhood deserves reasonable standards of safety and livability.**

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

I do not believe the objective should be the elimination of single-family housing.

Kelowna needs a range of housing choices, including apartments, townhouses, secondary suites, duplexes, small-scale multi-unit housing and single-detached homes.

Provincial legislation has significantly changed what municipalities may require or prohibit on many residential properties. Council therefore has to operate within that legislative framework. Within those constraints, density still needs to be coordinated with infrastructure capacity, transportation, trees, drainage, parking, parks and neighbourhood services.

Housing choice should increase, but good planning still matters.

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

Development should pay the costs legitimately attributable to growth, while the broader community should pay for benefits that serve the broader community.

Problems arise when either side is being required to subsidize the other.

Development Cost Charges, amenity contributions, property taxes, utility charges and other municipal revenues should therefore be transparent and based on defensible cost allocation.

At the same time, excessive development charges ultimately become part of the cost of producing new housing and commercial space. Those costs do not disappear simply because they are initially invoiced to a developer.

Residents should be able to get straightforward answers to three questions:

What does growth cost? Who benefits? Who pays?

That is more useful than assuming either developers or existing taxpayers should automatically carry the burden.

9. Should infrastructure be a priority before development instead of continually playing catch-up?

Infrastructure planning should generally precede or accompany growth rather than continually follow it.

That does not mean every road, sewer or park can economically be constructed years before demand exists. It does mean that land-use planning, infrastructure capacity and capital planning must be integrated.

Before substantial growth occurs, Council should understand the implications for:

- transportation;
- water and wastewater;
- drainage;
- fire and emergency services;
- parks and recreation;
- schools and other infrastructure involving senior governments; and
- the timing and funding of required improvements.

Residents should be able to see the infrastructure plan and financial strategy supporting the growth plan.

10. Fifteen-minute communities, parking and green space

Would you prioritize making neighbourhoods livable and enjoyable rather than forcing a 15-minute walkable bubble on communities?

I support **complete and livable neighbourhoods, not an inflexible formula.**

Being able to walk safely to groceries, parks, schools, services or transit is beneficial. But Kelowna is geographically dispersed, and many residents work in construction, trades, health care, agriculture, industry and other occupations where a vehicle remains necessary.

Planning should provide more transportation choices without pretending every household can or should function without a vehicle.

Would you increase vehicle parking requirements per development back to what they were several years ago?

I would review parking requirements **by location and demonstrated demand**, rather than impose one city-wide answer.

Reduced parking requirements may be reasonable where transit, walking and cycling alternatives are genuinely practical. In other areas inadequate parking simply transfers vehicles from private developments onto surrounding residential streets.

There is also an important provincial constraint. Within Kelowna's designated Transit Oriented Areas, including the Rutland Transit Exchange area, minimum residential parking requirements have been removed pursuant to provincial planning changes. Where municipal discretion remains, parking policy should reflect actual neighbourhood conditions.

Should green space be essential within a development's footprint rather than a 15-minute walk away?

Meaningful landscaping, trees and usable outdoor space should be incorporated into development wherever reasonably achievable.

But private landscaping cannot substitute for neighbourhood-scale parks and natural areas.

We need both.

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

Kelowna should secure strategically important parkland **before increasing land values make acquisition prohibitively expensive.**

However, I would not adopt an absolute rule that City-owned property can never be sold or redeveloped.

Public land is a community asset. Before disposing of it, Council should consider:

- future park and recreation requirements;
- environmental value;
- infrastructure needs;
- housing opportunities;
- alternative public uses;
- market value; and
- the long-term public benefit of retaining versus disposing of the property.

Once strategically important public land is sold, replacing it later can be extraordinarily difficult and expensive.

12. Should cultural infrastructure only be in the Downtown core?

No. Cultural opportunities and facilities should be available throughout Kelowna, including Rutland.

I would, however, clarify the premise of the question.

Kelowna's planning framework recognizes Downtown as the principal concentration of major cultural facilities, but current City policy also contemplates cultural activity and cultural spaces in other urban centres. Kelowna's new Cultural Plan, endorsed by Council on August 31, 2026, specifically discusses opportunities for cultural spaces across the city.

Rather than promising to repeal a blanket prohibition that does not appear to exist in that form, I would support practical opportunities for cultural facilities, programming and gathering spaces in Rutland and other neighbourhood centres.

Culture should not belong exclusively to Downtown.

13. Should more parking be made available so all residents can enjoy the Okanagan Lake shoreline and beaches?

Public beaches and waterfront parks are community assets and should be reasonably accessible to residents throughout Kelowna.

Access should include consideration of vehicle parking, accessible parking, transit, cycling, pedestrian connections and appropriate drop-off areas.

Where redevelopment or parking removal materially reduces public access to major waterfront amenities, Council should examine the **cumulative impact**, rather than looking at every property or development in isolation.

The objective should be practical and equitable public access to Okanagan Lake.

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

No. A legitimate resident association should be free to disagree respectfully and publicly with City policy and Council decisions.

I have concerns with language in the City's current 2026-2027 affiliation guidelines that excludes neighbourhood associations whose primary purpose, goals or objectives directly oppose or conflict with the City's community vision.

There is an important distinction between an organization whose primary purpose is simply obstruction and an established neighbourhood association that disagrees with City Hall over a development, supportive-housing facility, road project, park, budget decision or neighbourhood plan.

Receiving City affiliation or funding can reasonably require responsible governance, financial accountability, inclusiveness and appropriate conduct.

It should **not purchase agreement**.

I would support reviewing the affiliation provisions so that neighbourhood associations can advocate vigorously for their residents without fearing that legitimate disagreement with City policy will jeopardize their status.

15. What efforts will you make to include Resident Associations in consultation on matters affecting health, safety and well-being?

Resident associations can provide important neighbourhood knowledge, while recognizing that no association necessarily speaks for every resident.

For significant matters affecting a neighbourhood, I support:

- timely notice to the recognized resident association;
- access to relevant information before decisions are finalized;
- opportunities to meet with appropriate City staff;
- participation during neighbourhood and infrastructure planning;
- transparent reporting of the feedback received; and
- consultation methods that also reach residents who do not belong to an association.

The fundamental test is timing.

Consultation should take place early enough that it can influence the decision, not after the important choices have effectively already been made.

Thank you,

Tim Down, CCIM, RI
Commercial & Residential Real Estate Broker
Property Tax & Assessment Appeal Advisor
Writer & Commentator
Candidate for Kelowna City Council 2026

Experience | Independent Judgement | Community Leadership

www.timdown.ca

tim@timdown.ca

250-864-9140