

2026 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire TREVOR MCALEESE

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

We have major challenges on us today and coming down the road, economically and ecologically and infrastructurally. I'm someone who has worked hands-on in all kinds of industries around the Okanagan, from agriculture to hospitality to retail and education, and I believe that we need serious people who are in touch with the economic and social realities of life on the ground here to better steer city planning decisions. Representatives that understand the struggles that everyday folks are living through.

I want to ensure the same opportunities I've been fortunate to enjoy from kindergarten through to where I am now at the age of 40, now self-employed as a video game developer, are available in the community for everyone coming after me, and that the folks in our city struggling to make it work today, many of whom I've met at the door – hard-working families, seniors living on fixed incomes, and on – have homes they can genuinely afford to live in and a brighter future to look forward to.

I believe there's nothing in this city that we can't see improvement on, and I would be honoured to give back to the community that raised me by helping us realize these improvements from a seat on Council.

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

Yes, I am in favour of term limits. While I believe that a person's competence and mental acuity can hold steady long into advanced age, there is real value in ensuring the renewal of local leadership and bringing fresh perspectives into critical city planning decisions.

What we do not want are politicians who become more concerned with their perpetual re-election and prioritizing the interests of an in-group of supporters who have historically provided the politician with electoral success. With extended incumbency, too often do we see a dwindling amount of effort being put in to genuinely, truly represent the everyday people of a community, and a detachment from life on the ground.

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

As long as competitive bidding is ensured, budgets are stuck to, and timelines are met, private contractors are obviously capable of providing good value for taxpayer money in the delivery of city projects. When any of these breaks down, however, we obviously have a problem, and we don't want to see favouritism being displayed in the selection of which private contractors are receiving the lion's share of contracts. Past performance and delivery should always be factored in when evaluating who to award a contract for a city project to, and ensuring that fair/living wages are being paid to workers and that work is not being subcontracted out to contractors with less rigorous standards is key to preventing exploitation and unsafe working conditions.

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've heard at the door from many residents their concerns that City Hall administration is bloated and in need of trimming, but I've also heard from residents that their requests to City Hall for assistance or

information can be very difficult to get a satisfactory answer back for. I would support a human resources audit of City Hall to better determine where duplication of duties and gaps in service delivery exist before supporting major organizational change.

Outside of City Hall, though, I have spoken to many members of the Parks Dept. through my volunteer work with Kelowna Tree Protectors and Friends of Knox Mountain Park Society. I can say that there are some city departments, such as Parks, that are running with a minimum crew. These are hard-working folks out there in the city every day maintaining the beautiful spaces available for all of us enjoy, and I want to ensure these teams are adequately staffed to keep up with the strict maintenance schedule that exists.

5. Should Taxpayers have more say in the development of their neighbourhoods? Has the current development process gone to far in eliminating resident's voices and concerns about developments in their neighbourhoods?

Resident feedback should absolutely be taken seriously when major developments are proposed for their neighbourhoods, and I believe the city has a duty to consult and achieve buy-in from residents. This extends to road improvements, I have spoken with many residents who find themselves with challenging entry/exit of long vehicles from their driveways after the arrival of a protected bike lane on their street where accommodations could easily have been made.

Planning should be informed by resident input whenever possible, and I support re-establishing the Advisory Planning Commission with greater attention paid to recruiting citizen participation from all Kelowna neighbourhoods so that resident input around future land use can be given sufficient weight as preliminary work is set to begin on the 2050 OCP .

6. Many people are disillusioned and have lost pride in our community with the current state of street dysfunction and open drug use seen in many areas of our city. What are mayoral and council candidates prepared to do about visible drug use, comatose substance users, increased crime rates, feelings of lack of personal safety especially around low-barrier and transitional housing as well as in our public parks? How do you, the candidate, propose to mitigate the negative affects in neighbourhoods where there is daily dysfunction? This is not *just* a Downtown problem or a business person's problem. How will you restore our resident's feelings of personal safety, enjoyment of life in their homes and neighbourhoods, and renew resident's pride in our city?

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

I currently rent half a duplex in the South Pandosy area, and this part of town is experiencing a tremendous amount of gentrification where older homes are being replaced by quadplexes and long-term tenants are being displaced. This is a trend I am living on the front lines of.

My major concern with the elimination of older free-standing homes is that the housing taking their place is in nearly every case adding something less affordable than the housing being replaced. Infill development can be conducted thoughtfully, with proper respect paid to maintaining the character of the existing neighbourhood and ensuring that resident concerns around privacy and parking availability are taken seriously. The reality is that with the price of land and construction being what it is, new

single-family homes are almost exclusively being built and lived in by the wealthy due to the enormous costs involved in land acquisition and homebuilding.

My concern is also for the tenants being displaced and being unable to find affordable homes to move in to. I support a right of first refusal being offered to existing tenants of rental properties scheduled for redevelopment into new multi-family dwellings, but stronger protections may be necessary to ensure that residents are not thrust into precarious living situations due to unaffordability of housing.

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

There is certainly no shortage of incentives offered by the city to for-profit developers, but my major concern here is less to do with breaks being offered and more that the incentives are not resulting in the sort of housing that is critically in short supply. Deeply affordable, family-suitable, fully-accessible housing, and seniors-oriented housing is seriously unaffordable for many retirees who may find themselves unable to safely live independently. For this reason, I see value in council debating an approach to Inclusionary Zoning where practical minimums are set for particular housing criteria in new developments over a certain density, for example a 10-20% minimum set on below-market rentals or ground-floor wheelchair accessible affordable units or 3-4 bedroom units fit for families. Meaningful incentives need to be offered in such examples to ensure eager compliance from developers, such as expedited development approvals or tax deferrals/breaks or other sweeteners, but these public subsidies towards development would be intended to diversify the mix of housing on the market to fill the most critically needed demand.

9. Should infrastructure be a priority pre-development instead constantly tearing up streets and playing catch up, which seems the current protocol, considering the amount of growth that is expected in the future?

Infrastructure at the very least must keep pace with the rate of development, and we do seem to be finding ourselves in an endless game of catch-up. My mind immediately goes to our public transit system which is central to the reduced parking requirements for high density developments along transit corridors – I am a stubbornly committed transit user because I want desperately for the service to be improved, but I fully recognize that the service is not where it needs to be if we reasonably expect more residents to plan their lives around it. The amount of vehicle traffic on our roads has grown considerably, and proper investment into our transit system, including expending serious political capital towards the province to get funding for an expanded transit yard, is one very real approach we can take to help mitigate the

10. **The 15 minute walkable urban planning concept** works well in communities which have enough employment within that community. There are many neighbourhoods in Kelowna which do not have an abundance of employment opportunities in the 15 minute bubble so workers have to travel a distance to be gainfully employed. These same workers require vehicles to travel to work with equipment and/or supplies.

- Would you prioritize making our neighbourhoods livable and enjoyable rather than building to an ideal that *forces* a 15 minute walkable bubble on communities?
- Would you increase the amount of vehicle parking required per development back to what it was several years ago?
- Should green space be essential within a development's foot print rather than a 15 minute walk?

All neighbourhoods ought to be livable and enjoyable, and I believe each neighbourhood should be evaluated for its unique needs and challenges rather than automatically imposing a planning standard onto it. Convenient access to essential services and amenities is an admirable goal, though, and I believe that clinics, childcare spaces, and grocery options being available as close to home as possible is a very good thing for quality of life.

I would like to see more flexibility in the pre-approved building plans of the common infill projects we're seeing, where the "parking" provided is too small for a vehicle and is functionally a storage unit much of the time. These non-functional garages may check the box of minimum parking requirements, but they ultimately force residents and guests of residents to park on the street. Covered carports or uncovered stalls may lack the individual privacy/security of a locked garage, but these options may work better with the limited space available to provide functional parking where a multi-family dwelling is being squeezed onto a lot formerly occupied by single-family detached home.

There are major sacrifices that residents make when moving into an apartment, a townhome, a quadplex, etc., and one of them is often a lack of usable ground-level outdoor space. For multi-family dwellings, I think communal greenspace can be a major win for striking a balance between maximizing the amount of indoor living space while providing an outdoor space for leisure, socializing, gardening, etc. Including a practical amount of greenspace for residents to enjoy within a development's footprint and convenient, walkable access to public parks from all residential areas are both worthy of planning attention, the latter from developers and the former by the city.

11. Should the city prioritize the purchase of new park land available to all citizens, and in so doing protect vulnerable green space from being paved over and developed? Should land which is *currently* city owned be prioritized for green space instead of being sold to developers?

Expanding the amount of protected greenspace within Kelowna is in the public interest, and ensuring areas for outdoor recreation and leisure are readily available means big gains in resident quality of life. City-owned land within the urban core is precious stuff, and I would like to see the city prioritize expanding on arts & cultural spaces and other community-supporting amenities, public spaces that could easily include greenspace and trees, within our city centres rather than selling it all to private developers.

Protecting the existing parks, wetlands, and greenspaces we have from encroaching development is critical for ensuring ecological health and biodiversity, and we are seeing the impacts of ongoing sprawl through the migration of deer populations deeper into the city from the mountains, which poses greater risks of dangerous interactions between residents and wildlife.

12. Do you believe that all Cultural infrastructure should only be in the downtown core instead of shared throughout the city. Are you prepared to change the bylaws that restrict Cultural development to ONLY downtown?

The long-awaited new Performing Arts Centre is a good example of where I see real value in extending beyond the existing downtown Cultural District where suitably large lots and parking are scarce. The proposed location for the PAC at Roxby Square was, in my view, a compelling option that would not only demonstrate a real effort to invest in Rutland with a transformative city project, but also be the potential start of a second Cultural District. I would be prepared to reevaluate existing bylaws to allow

for the thoughtful spread of cultural infrastructure across the community, especially where locations outside the Cultural District would help solve serious logistical concerns.

13. As things are developing more in the Pandosy–Lakeshore area, parking lots are being turned into housing developments and parking is harder to find. Residents who do not live within a few blocks of Okanagan Lake can not easily enjoy their own beaches because of lack of parking. Yet these beaches are readily available to tourists and those who can afford to live within walking distance of the lake. Should more parking be made available so *all* residents of Kelowna are able enjoy the Okanagan Lake shoreline and beaches?

The pinch on available parking is certainly being felt around beach access. Not only that, we see the very unfortunate building of private docks and walkways across what should be publicly-accessible waterfront or access otherwise being restricted, such as with the well-reported-on controversy surrounding the El Dorado.

While it may be challenging to provide sufficient amounts of parking now with how limited land is becoming along the waterfront, improved transit access to our beaches could go a long way to providing consistent and convenient resident access. Something like a specialized beach shuttle route, for instance, with pickups from areas with ample parking could offer a sort of park-and-ride solution to improving access to our beaches.

14. What are your thoughts regarding Resident Associations and Affiliate Agreements? Do you think Resident Associations should be restricted from speaking against City decisions / plans which may adversely affect a Neighbourhood?

Resident Associations are a powerful voice for the neighbourhoods they represent, and I believe they absolutely have a place in organizing and voicing concerns at public hearing and other opportunities for submitting feedback on relevant city decisions.

15. What efforts will you make to include all Resident Associations in any consultation process where it relates to matters affecting the health, safety and well-being of residents within their boundaries?

On matters of health, safety and well-being, ensuring regular meetings and dialogue with the leadership of all Resident Associations and Neighbourhood Associations and city electeds could go a long way to ensuring feedback from the ground level is being taken seriously and weighted appropriately in city decisions as they relate to the neighbourhoods in question. I believe in maintaining ongoing open and honest communication between Councillors and Resident Associations, and input from associations should be actively sought out.