

2026 Municipal Candidate – Rutland RA Questionnaire

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

I'm running for re-election as a Kelowna city councillor; voters can learn more about my campaign at website: lovegrovekelowna.ca or by emailing me at gord.lovegrove@ubc.ca.

- The three main reasons I am running are:
 - i. I was urged to run again: Residents & businesses consistently say they value my practical leadership, willingness to listen, & ability to bring people together to get them results. They also know there is more work ahead; they want me to continue. Serving my first term on Kelowna City Council over the past four years has been an honour. I have worked to keep taxes affordable, improve public safety, & protect the quality of life in one of Canada's most desirable places to live, work, & invest. I have pushed for practical, results-focused solutions: restoring the community police office, adding Red Shirt ambassadors to help clean up Rutland commercial areas; adding bylaw officers to better enforce bylaws; and adding firefighters as we grow; strengthening neighbourhoods & parks, advancing affordable housing, pushing for mandatory care for people experiencing homelessness (PEH) that are so addicted/mentally ill that they are a danger to themselves/others; working with PEH that want help to get them re-trained & re-integrated back into contributing members of society, improving transportation, & building stronger partnerships with Indigenous, Provincial, & Federal governments to help address these pressing challenges on homelessness, crime & safety. As an engineer, professor & community leader, I bring a data-driven, collaborative approach to solving complex challenges. Voters have asked me to continue stewarding Kelowna's growth while protecting the lake, natural environment, neighbourhood character, farms & economic opportunities that define us.
 - ii. Restore Public Trust, Increase Safety, Address Homelessness - Rebuilding public trust requires timely action, accountability, public input, & support for victims & communities. Folks feel disconnected with City Hall actions & frustrated by lack of access to be heard at Council meetings. We need compassionate solutions to homelessness, mental health, & addiction challenges while keeping neighbourhoods, businesses, & public spaces safe. Council can influence policing, housing, public spaces, partnerships, & advocacy. While 1/3 of unhoused people can be successfully rehoused through targeted supports, about 2/3 face serious mental illness &/or addiction, requiring more intensive intervention. I will continue pushing the Province to establish a compassionate mandatory campus of care at the near-empty OCC; advocate for criminal justice reforms & additional Crown prosecutors; implement Kelowna's Community Safety Plan; & ensure earlier ongoing public engagement. I will push to hold Council meetings regularly in Rutland and other neighborhoods around the City!
 - iii. Liveability – Kelowna's quality of life depends on, among other things, good infrastructure. Growth has outpaced our infrastructure & created affordable housing & traffic congestion challenges. Council controls zoning, the OCP, transportation investments & infrastructure priorities required to support growth & liveability. I support development where roads, utilities, transit, walking, cycling & services support it. I support housing diversity, limiting sprawl & gently densifying neighbourhoods. I support ALR & parks. I support growth well integrated, not imposed. I will ask: Will the infrastructure support it? How are City-wide DCC & tax rates impacted if not? I support a regional transportation strategy to increase affordable, higher-capacity, inter-city mobility choice. I support Kelowna investments that solve real problems & are good value for future taxpayers.

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

Absolutely! I would like to see a two-term limit on both Mayor & Council.

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

Major projects are contracted out in order to get qualified contractors at the best price for taxpayers. Smaller projects may be done by City crews if capacity is there, but normally City crews focus on maintenance and repairs and inspections.

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?

Perhaps, but Kelowna taxes are 2nd lowest in BC, so we are getting good value for the staff we have in maintaining service levels. The question in my mind is, are the staff we have focused in the right areas? Crime, safety & homelessness is still a problem. I think we need to do a line by line budget audit to see where the money is being spent, where savings can be found, and re-deploy to address civic priorities. Moreover, we need to continue exploring pros/cons of a City vs RCMP police force. We need more bylaw enforcement. We need more system capacity to improve response times and bring order back to our streets.

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?

Absolutely yes and yes. I am very disappointed that the Province took away public hearings on developments that comply with the OCP, I would push to bring them back. I would push to bring back the Heritage Advisory Committee, and some form of Planning Commission, both open to the public.

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?

See my answers above, to summarize:

- More Red Shirts & Bylaw enforcement for Rutland & other areas
- Complete study & implement recommendations on RCMP vs City Police force
- Homelessness – mandatory care for the 2/3 that cannot help themselves, in Oliver Correctional Centre (its 75% empty, retrofit it); for the 1/3 that want help retrain them to re-integrate back into society. I will be posting a 5 minute video on this shortly, based on my research from UBCO Homelessness Research Cluster (I published UBC's 1st PhD in this area)
- Regularly hold Council meetings around our community, hosted by Resident Associations like Rutland's.
- Re-establish Development & Heritage Advisory Committees to address neighborhood 'fit'

Other ideas I have to restore residents' pride in our City are to work with RA to hear what ideas they have, and, if there is community support, restore festivals/events in each part of our neighbourhoods. For example, whatever happened to the ScareCrow festival? The Winter Festival? The Kelowna

Float? Given we have smokey July/August due to wildfires, we need to look at shoulder season tourism.

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

No, I am in favor of gentle densification that respects the character of existing neighborhoods. For example, in my single family lot, I designed and built the Ok Valley's 1st net zero carriage house, with full support of my neighbors. It provides a mortgage helper opportunity thru gentle densification. We have major roads and transit corridors to use to build low rise (4 to 6 storey) apartment buildings, we don't need them in the middle of single family neighborhoods.

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

Hmm, I recently found out that developer's pay \$45,000 per unit toward Development Cost Charges (DCCs), to pay for all the infrastructure provided (roads, gas, power, sewer, water, etc), which is roughly 80% of the cost. So taxpayers are on the hook for about 20% of City growth & development. Is that 80/20 split a reasonable amount is the question. I would keep it where it is at given our tough economic times and high unemployment; our property taxes are 2nd lowest in the province. Developers provide employment for the trades. But its important that the City use those developer DCCs to build the infrastructure in support of that growth!!!

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?

I would love to see that! We have a plan, its called the Official Community Plan (OCP), the Transportation Master Plan (TMP), and the 10 Year Capital Plan (i.e. infrastructure!), all of which involves extensive community input. Lets implement it. But lets remember we can't spend what we don't have, and, new buildings always need new service connections that sometimes involve digging up roads no matter how well we plan! One tactic that works can be to install road paving in two lifts. The first lift when initial services are installed, and, the final/second lift of pavement when development is complete. Borrowing from the Municipal Finance Authority is a smart affordable way to effectively 'mortgage' long-lasting infrastructure (i.e. like a house, but in this case watermain, sewers, etc) that is funded by benefitting taxpayers who use it for many years. This keeps our tax rates low.

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?** Sure, livable / enjoyable neighborhoods are where people live when they are not a work. Rutland is very spread out, lacks sidewalks, bike lanes, and corner stores. You have to drive everywhere, except perhaps to school and local parks. You need major infrastructure improvements. As I said above, lets do that budget audit and see what we can find and re-prioritize to address these shortfalls!
- **Would you increase the amount of vehicle parking required per development back to what it was several years ago?** I am willing to consider this, but it will make your housing more unaffordable! Remember, each new on-site parking stall adds \$50,000 to the cost of housing.
- **Should green space be essential within a development's foot print rather than a 15 minute**

walk? Most every neighbourhood already has green space within walking distance. As above with parking, be very careful, because a well-meaning bylaw requirement that ‘all developments must have on-site green space’ will add to its cost and create affordability issues. And the City already does require on-site amenity space. Regardless, during my 1st term on City Council I always checked to see if the developer was providing enough on-site green space & amenities, because after all, the priority should be a liveable community, including your home.

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?

The City has a Parks & Recreation Master Plan that indeed includes a plan to purchase new parkland for all citizens. In this past 1st term as a City Councillor, I had the honour of supporting all such purchases. Moreover, I pushed hard (but sadly lost) to save ALL of the Kelowna Springs wetlands from being paved over. I kept my promise to save all of it, despite several of my Council colleagues NOT keeping their promises!

Now to land currently OWNED by the City, I cannot agree to prioritize ALL of it for green space, because the City is a major land owner, for a myriad of reasons – future utilities, tree nurseries, future roads, future parks, and so forth. Again, the basis of these City land reserves is based upon citizen input into our OCP, with maps showing all future park locations (see Land Use Maps). We purchase and/or develop those parklands as budgets permit, again, with timelines set out in our 10 Year Capital & Parks plans, all with an interest to keeping tax rates low.

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?

This is a good question. I only found this out during this my 1st term on Council. I am a firm believer that all infrastructure – including cultural – should be located where it most makes sense. While the current OCP sets out its current downtown restriction, future OCP updates can be changed based on citizen input, so get involved! I would love to hear what Rutland residents want to see located where in Rutland? What is your vision for arts, culture & heritage in Rutland? We should also ask all the other areas. And then let's make an informed decision based on key factors including: natural setting, supporting infrastructure, access & parking, access to services & synergies, transit service, demand & opportunities, costs & benefits.

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?

For folks that need to drive and park, there are enough parking spaces at City Park, and all the way down Pandosy to Lakeshore and beyond. I would hate to see more precious taxpayer dollars spent, and more land used, to build parkades – remember, it is all pay parking! I would much rather see those that can carpool, get dropped off, take a family bus ride, or bike to the beach – make a day of it. Now before you throw me under the bus for forgetting about all your beach apparel – towels, picnic baskets, kids toys, and so forth – these are the folks that should be given priority parking! Families & handicapped & seniors – those that truly have no choice and need it! But to the other 75% of us, folks, we have no excuse – let's take pride in keeping our City green, & our beaches free of massive parking lots! Get some exercise, ride the bus, carpool & pay for parking, ride a bike. There is NOT enough space (or money) if we all want to drive & park.

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?

I have NEVER been against freedom of speech, and, I support respectful discourse, including views that differ from mine and/or the official City Council position! I pushed hard in my first term to get Resident Associations more engaged and funded! But I am concerned about the Affiliate Agreements, especially if they muzzle RAs, that was NEVER my intent, so I will indeed push to remove those restrictions. Please articulate the changes that you would like to see and I will be your ally and advocate!!

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?

I commit to push for an inclusive, transparent & accountable Council – I have had this sentence in my campaign platform since 2018! So I will CONTINUE to push for a more inclusive Council in my 2nd term if elected. As noted above, I will push to hold Council meetings throughout the City, hosted by Resident Associations, with the express purpose to invite all residents and businesses to attend and present to Council and staff on issues that matter in your neighborhood, with follow-up reports back on progress. Moreover, I will push the Province to repeal legislation so that residents can attend and speak at more public hearings and other ways to provide input on matters of health, safety and well-being. I will also push to have Interior Health provide prior-consultation opportunities to residents before locating health facilities!

It has been a pleasure to serve you this my 1st term; I hope that my service, together with my answers to this survey have provided enough evidence to grant me your vote on October 17th to a 2nd term. More details are available, including my 16 page downloadable platform document, from my website, at Lovegrovekelowna.ca, or by calling or e-mailing me at gord.lovegrove@ubc.ca, & 250-808-9377.