

Al McDonald – Oct 15, 2010, revised Oct 21, 2010

I first would like to thank you for encouraging and engaging our community in the election process. I would like to thank you, as well, for this opportunity to address these concerns and questions.

I have voted in every election since I was 18 years old. I can see a lot of time and effort went into this survey and I believe the results represent our community thoughts.

Question #1 Vision My vision for our city is to create a vibrant community that leaves no one behind. My goal is help create a community that cares and values what we are all about. I want a community that provides opportunities for all of our citizens to succeed. I want a community that it's citizens are proud to call home and a community that respects each other's opinion and works to finding solutions to challenges in a respectful manner.

For our City to be successful, there needs to be balance, understanding and having our citizens engaged in the process. Our parks and green spaces need a community plan. Our sports and recreational facilities are important and need to be affordable for all. Our citizens need job and career opportunities, and opportunity for advancement.

Question #2 Communication Communication is always a challenge. As individuals we receive our information from many sources. These include local newspapers, radio, television, online, internet, national newspapers, social media sites, and even our own City website. We also need to understand that we seem to be busier than ever these days. We are either caring for children or elderly parents, working or travelling. All organizations, community groups and governments struggle with communications. Anyone who is involved with any community group knows how hard it is to get their message out and how costly that can be.

Some of my ideas include, having a public relations officer on staff who can get information out to the media and community in a timely manner. I want interested citizens that would like to be kept informed to provide city hall with their email addresses so that they can receive all relevant communications. It is my goal also to keep all community organizations part of this communication system, so they could share the information with their members.

We need to partner with all local media to develop a strategy to get our message out. I believe as well, we need to be realistic and understand even with the best intentions, that the message will not get out to everyone. However, my commitment to you is to take all reasonable steps to keep you informed and to receive your views on all issues and to provide you with opportunities to be part of the process.

Question #3 Environment I propose a Mayor's committee, made up of interested community members to study our parks and green space. This committee will hold public meetings to order to get your input and to study best practices of other cities and report their finding and recommendations to Council. This plan should reflect the hopes and dreams of our citizens.

We live in a beautiful area with many beaches, trails and parks that we value. Protecting our environment is the responsibility of everyone. I have found that if our community takes ownership of the things we value, then the community will do everything in its power to protect it and to keep it out of harms way.

Bike Lane- as a cyclist I have found the struggles between bikes and vehicles are sometimes difficult. Each year there are more cyclists on our roads. It is an issue that our community needs to address. I understand how complex the issue can be. I believe however, it is time that our community takes a look at this issue and that is what I intend to do.

Waste reduction Progress in our community has been made in waste reduction in recent years. We need to constantly look at new methods and new ideas. This will be an ongoing process.

Question #4 Controversy. Controversies will arise from time to time. In most cases this is due to lack of communication or lack of understanding. If they occur we need to step back, listen and find solutions together. Controversy is not necessary a bad thing, it says to me that you care and are engaged. In my experience, citizen engagement often leads to excellent solutions.

Sincerely

Al McDonald