

## 1. COMMITMENT TO EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

- Municipalities are important partners in planning for and supporting Early Childhood Development services for families.
- Childcare is being listed as a number one condition for successful recruitment and retention of employees locally and from outside of Terrace.
- Municipalities are responsible for many administrative tasks, such as development zoning and registering new businesses, and can:
  - Require that child care spaces be included in new buildings;
  - Reduce administrative fees for new businesses that benefit young children and families;
  - Require and protect green spaces and child friendly spaces.

***If you are elected to City Council, how will you:***

- a. *Ensure that our community is child-friendly? Influence the city to make decisions using an early childhood development lens. In other words ask in all of city plans and decisions “Will this be good for our children?”*
- b. *How do you plan to provide attractive conditions for increasing the number of available quality childcare spaces to encourage full employment of parental workers and decrease stress for families?*
- c. *Encourage residential and commercial developers to investigate the inclusion of childcare and/or other ECD services in their plans?*
- d. *Support non-profit agencies providing ECD services to keep their services affordable.*
- e. *Develop protocols for subsidized use of recreational facilities by ECD services?*
- f. *Support low-income families to allow them to attend ECD programs? Transportation is often the number one barrier stopping families from accessing services.*
- g. *Be actively involved in working with other partners on collaborative community planning for ECD: health, education, social sector and business in coordinating efforts.*

Your response:

In response to these questions, firstly I cannot claim full understanding of how children learn and grow. Many others have that expertise in Terrace, and I would seek their advice. I have participated in the Dr Hertzman EDI presentations and I am interested in any directions that could be inferred by the results. I can understand that the significant factor in families committing to Early Child Development would be families' ability to access services and the priority they place upon the development of their children.

I believe that as a City Council, we do have the ability and a responsibility to consider our actions through a discussion of the impact upon children and in fact all citizens of Terrace. In terms of Terrace as a child-friendly City, our Official Community Plan provides some direction and can be enhanced in this respect as the OCP is revised in the upcoming year. What is needed at this stage is to build upon the developing knowledge of how communities affect how a child develops. Your initiatives take us in that direction and create the platform to create significant changes in the Official Community Plan.

The City does have the ability to lobby the Province directly and through resolutions that we can take to the Union of BC Municipalities for debate. Your input would be required to ensure that such a resolution would hit the mark.

I cannot give you specific examples of what can be done to increase childcare spaces in Terrace. I do see the provision of childcare at the Sportsplex as one initiative that is an innovative use of a City facility.

In the EDI discussion, provision of safe accessible green space where children can play, get exercise and socialize is important to their development. Provision of transit to enable parent to take children to services and childcare is noted as important.

As noted above, the ability of families to access child care can be limited by family income. Council did support raising the minimum wage in B.C. But of greater impact would be improving the economy of Terrace, and generating more higher paying job opportunities. I believe that goal is fundamental to improving child development, and a range of other social initiatives.

Your last question is probably the key. Council can encourage organizations that work with child development by Council initiating a liaison role. More effective communication with the City Council and with staff will ensure that opportunities to address child development are considered.

## **2. SUPPORT IN TRANSITIONS FROM CHILDHOOD TO YOUTH AND ADULTHOOD**

- Civic leaders can emphasize youth-friendly spaces in areas such as parks, community centres, schools and libraries, and cities and towns can create more safe spaces for youth to congregate.
- Municipalities can create events that children and youth can help plan and be involved in, such as art shows, festivals, or performances.
- Cities can subsidize and increase accessibility to after-school programs offering sports and arts activities, homework clubs, and safe places to meet friends.

### ***If you are elected to City Council, how will you:***

- a. Support for universal access to affordable recreational facilities and activities throughout the city with well scheduled public transit?*
- b. Create a welcoming and inclusive environment for youth in our community where they will be actively involved in the affairs of their own community.*
- c. Create more public youth-friendly spaces?*

Your response:

Youth friendly spaces are important to the lifestyle and health of the community. I am concerned that the opportunities for meeting and recreation have limited what youth can do, and this should be given careful thought. Youth have ideas about what they want and need and these should be integrated with our future plans.

I believe that our Sportsplex will be a successful meeting and recreational space that creates opportunities for new and established skaters. The building is also an attraction to youth who come to support their friends and who just want to “hang-out”.

Our next project in Terrace for youth must be a plan for a Community Center. The ability of youth to participate in informal recreation, to meet friends and to learn in non-school settings is important to create a positive environment for youth to develop. During our long and inclement weather, an indoor facility is needed. An alternative to a central facility would be satellite centers in schools. We have not had agreement with the School District for unorganized use of School gymnasiums. Organized sports or City programs are underway after school hours in Schools; however wider use is an opportunity we should embark upon soon.

Recreation and activity programming in a Community Center will enhance the development and learning opportunities. However, clearly the cost and demand for those services will drive the extent of programming that could be provided.

Developing a large Community Center will take time, as community consultation, design and consensus takes place, as well as finding the funding for such a project. However, unless this work starts soon, the goal of a youth facility will not be met.

Another “youth friendly” initiative will be to look at neighbourhood recreation opportunities. Basketball courts, a relocated skateboard park, more bike trails and green spaces all enable non- winter places for recreation and meeting. Tot Parks are located throughout the City, and could be expanded as we develop new neighbourhoods.

### 3. INCREASED ECONOMIC EQUALITY

- Cities can pay their employees a living wage and can agree to only contract for services with companies that pay a living wage.
- Cities can support the development of affordable sustainable housing, provide incentives for landlords that do not exploit their tenants, and move towards discouraging of slum landlords.
- Municipal governments can advocate for reduced fare or free transit passes for low-income families.
- Municipalities can increase food security. Governments can ensure through zoning that neighbourhoods, particularly low-income areas have access to reasonably priced, quality fruits and vegetables. Cities can support community gardens and help develop and sustain local market. Municipalities can provide free or discounted recreational services and access to programs for low-income children, youth and families.
- Affordable Housing - universal issue facing most, if not all communities in BC Terrace is no exception. Here are some examples of suitable types of housing that Terrace would benefit from:
  - *Co-op housing* where the tenants can be trained and engaged right from planning phase to completion. These housing complexes would be open to diversity of tenants coming from different income levels, diversity of abilities, cultures, ages, types of families, etc. to create a model of vibrant community.
  - *Single occupancy housing attached to social services hub and employment opportunities* (eg. local recycling program, etc.).

***If you are elected to City Council, how will you:***

- a. Work towards bridging the disparity between neighbourhoods ensuring that we move away from ghettoization of Terrace?*
- b. Create conditions that attract development of more sustainable affordable housing, ensure that existing rental units are livable?*
- c. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities was instrumental in getting the Campaign 2000 agenda to eliminate child poverty into the federal spotlight. What is this municipality going to do to ensure that child poverty is not ignored?*
- d. Support food security and moving towards local production and markets; sustainability and growth of FoodShare Program, Good Food Box and community gardens.*
- e. Would you support the development of a Regional Food Policy Council? What would you see as their most important task?*
- f. What is your understanding of the homelessness issue? How would you go about solving it?*

Your response:

The creation of affordable housing in Terrace is a recognized issue that Council is working on through the Housing Task Force which includes many agencies involved in providing housing. Identifying the kind of housing, location and services related to that housing is less clear. The City is seeking a new assessment of what is needed as the basis for an encompassing strategy.

As noted above, work on a new vision for Terrace will be the focus of the Official Community Plan. A liveable, sustainable City hopefully be the result. “Ghettoization” is clearly not desirable, nor is low-standard housing that we see on occasion. Private developers, or perhaps not-for-profit societies, need encouragement and support to create attainable housing, and I would be interested in seeking workable solutions. Council has led that discussion with the Province.

Child poverty to my knowledge is a function of primarily family income. Improving employment through a diversified economy is where I would provide my long term emphasis. Support for literacy programs, job and business mentoring all enable individuals better skills to seek employment, and create short term abilities to improve the City. Although primarily a provincial responsibility, the City can lobby the Province with the support of local organizations.

Food security issues have come to Council through requests for support of the Food Share Program, and various food banks, and Council has provided support for these initiatives. We have two (at least) Community Gardens organized by the Anti-Poverty Society, and I would be interested in learning more of how these locations can be utilized more effectively. The developing thoughts about the “100 Mile Diet” are interesting and aside for support for the Farmer’s Market, I am not clear what other roles the City may play as most arable land is outside the City. One area that we are taking action on is flood protection precautions on the City’s South Side. Clearly the prospect of losing that land through erosion limits the possibility of locally grown produce from that area.

Homelessness is a recurring issue in many communities and Terrace is no exception. I have supported the development of shelter housing such as Ksan Society is building, and the provision of a damp shelter last year and this. These are required as humanitarian initiatives to protect the most unfortunate individuals in our City. These facilities must be considered as short term services as the longer term development of attainable housing is what is needed. Coupled with housing is the need for addiction services and supportive programs. Council has taken these ideas to the province on several occasions, and has been successful in gaining some funding.

#### 4. SAFE AND CARING COMMUNITIES

- Cities can encourage usage of their public spaces and parks by making them interesting, diverse and welcoming.
- Municipalities can support and promote free, low-cost and family-friendly festivals, celebrations, public performances and sports events.
- Cities can take action to promote neighbourhood safety by opening a community policing centre, adding improved lighting at night or taking traffic calming measures.
- Simple structures such as small walls, fountains, designs in the pavement, or water ways have a positive effect on children’s lives and are relatively easy for cities to work into their design plans.
- Creating more bike routes and including them in new road structures will positively affect recreation, health and community cohesiveness, and increase bicycle safety.

***If you are elected to City Council:***

- a. *What measures will you take to increase child and youth safety and active participation in our community?*
- b. *What steps will you take to make Terrace a welcoming and inclusive community for all?*
- c. *How will you ensure that the build environment is child-friendly?*

Your response:

As stated earlier, I strongly support youth friendly facilities and look forward to developing a Community Center concept. In my experience, a project of this magnitude needs intensive community involvement in the design, and in creating a community consensus. Clearly, the cost of a facility that I have in mind would take lengthy funding efforts.

In the meantime, I believe that a short term opportunity exists through multi-use of existing schools, and I would like to see that discussion proceed.

In our downtown, we have created a Downtown vision that has the potential of an exciting new look to Terrace. Local squares, walkways, bicycle friendly lanes, and traffic calming all are anticipated. That plan received great community participation and has been implemented as a Bylaw. Next, we will see infrastructure in developed as quickly as funding can be put in place.

Terrace Beautification has led several park and walkway projects that we all can be proud of. The City has a very close and supportive relationship with the Beautification Society, and we will continue to foster their ideas of beautification projects in Terrace.