



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES – MARY- ANN GRAHAM

- 1) Nearly two years ago, the City of Kelowna initiated a Comprehensive Development Zoning process to jump start revitalization in a vital section of our downtown. Do you support the Comprehensive Development Zone? Please explain.**

The downtown needs revitalization plan to enable it to be a vibrant center for Kelowna. A CD zone is a very important tool to get this done. The multi-use high rises are vital to the work, live, play and shop concept, The CD21 zone appears to increase the public amenities in this four block area. This plan is flawed even to those who are in favour. After a lot of consideration and the knowledge that it has the ability to come back in the future with the necessary revisions to address the concerns of the public, I would have to say no. The downtown needs a plan but it would be irresponsible to put one in place that is in need of revision and has so much negativity surrounding it. There is still time to get this right. An alternative to consider is rescinding the second and third readings.

- 2) For some time the prospect of developing a business case for a convention centre in Kelowna has been the subject of discussion. What is your perspective on the feasibility of a convention centre in Kelowna?**

There is enough rationale to pursue development of a business case for a convention center. Kelowna is a large enough destination city to be attractive to major conventions. Tourism is a major economic driver and we need to provide facilities that are able to handle larger groups. Alternate locations outside of the downtown should be included in the investigation. A convention center would increase the availability of jobs outside of the tourist season.

- 3) There is currently a lack of affordable housing in Kelowna, and prior to the economic downturn, Kelowna had the lowest rental vacancy rates in Canada. A lack of affordable housing has a direct impact on the ability of businesses to retain current employees who have difficulty in meeting their housing needs. It also impacts the ability of businesses to recruit new employees into the region due to high housing costs. How would you address the issue of affordable housing in Kelowna?**

The housing situation in Kelowna is devastating to the future prosperity of the city. It is hard to attract clean industries that provide good paying jobs if we do not have the appropriate accommodations. The densification of the town centers

is a vital aspect of correcting the affordable housing issue. It is a matter of supply and demand. We were not prepared for the influx of people who came to town after an aggressive global marketing strategy. Property values went up exponentially because the demand was greater than the supply. Rents went up for the same reason. By creating enough supply the cost of housing for both rental and purchase will lower to a more reasonable level. City Hall could enter into partnerships to address the rental situation by using public land that others develop and manage. There should be no more stratification of rental buildings at this time.

4) The cost of congestion on business/tourism in Kelowna remains a key priority for the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce. What are your priorities relating to improvements to the transportation infrastructure along Highway 97 in the Kelowna area?

First, after an appropriate period of time, the HOV lanes should be reviewed to ensure that the concept is doing what it should for alleviation of traffic congestion and the quick movement of transit.

Second, the bypass concept should be revisited so that those who really want to travel into Kelowna have a less congested trip.

Third, there needs to be a proper look at all the intersections along the highway in respect to advance left turns for onto and off the Harvey Ave. I know this is under provincial jurisdiction; however, it is up to the city to do a comprehensive business case for the roads that warrant special treatment.

Fourth, monitor the success of the overpass being erected across Hwy 97 by the Parkinson Recreation Center. Reducing the pedestrian traffic on the highway might reduce the slowdown of traffic.

5) To ensure future prosperity for Kelowna, economic, environmental and social considerations need to be addressed in an integrated way. If you were elected, how would you work to ensure this balance is achieved?

The future of Kelowna starts with a collaboration of the various stakeholders. The council, city staff, developers, business owners, residents and service organizations must work together as a team to create a positive environment to attract businesses that will enhance this city. There is a need to create optimism in the present economy to encourage the increase of the circulation of revenue that is already available. Our natural environment is attractive and we must maintain this by encouraging clean industry to invest in this region. Clean air, clean water and open spaces are drawing cards for our city. We must be able to offer the quality of life that is expected through proper housing and amenities. Residents are looking for a safe place to live. People living on the streets affect residents' sense of safety.

6) The Kelowna Chamber has concerns about the negative impact that crime by chronic offenders has on business in Kelowna. If elected, what

would you do to minimize the negative effect that crime by chronic offenders has on the business community?

As a councillor, I would spearhead a lobby to get the Community Court program implemented in Kelowna. Addressing the homelessness and poverty issues would help the crime rate and safety issues for residents and business. Graffiti is a major criminal nuisance and the police need more support in dealing with these culprits. Lobbying for the justice system to be less lenient on repeat offenders so that there is not a revolving door affect. We need to get tough. The RCMP need the support of the council, citizens and the courts to do their job. Why do offenders become chronic? What is it that they need to get off this track? We need to address the individuals at their level and create a more positive atmosphere for success. I am a supporter of the restorative justice program to help stop offenders become chronic.