

Councillor and Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire: Individual Responses



Councillor: Shawn Berry

Ward: 7 - Linden Lanes

#	Question	Answer	Comments
1	The offering of a wide range of incentives, in a timely manner, can be a critical component in the negotiation to attract new business. Are you in favor of the development of a comprehensive incentive package, including performance parameters to allow for increased flexibility to address "calls of interest" at an administrative level in a timely manner?	✓	To Be developed on a case to case basis.
2	The City of Brandon is challenged in attracting business, in part due to the lack of unserviceable land, the access to land, undefined development plans, etc. Are you in favor of investment in servicing and / or land acquisition, as part of a business attraction investment strategy?	✓	With common sense and limits. Investing in servicing commercial land with the hopes that someone "may" set up shop as opposed to an interested entity that is committed to setting up shop and possibly on land that might have to be acquired and developed by the City.
3	Administration of the City of Brandon have referred to the concept of program and /or outcome-based budgeting and reporting, allowing for more transparency of the impact budget dollars are having in priority areas. As part of your mandate this term, are you in favor of making this a priority for administration to fully incorporate this approach into the budget process?	✓	I am as long as Administration is being openly transparent on their departments budgets and not providing information or achievable numbers for the sole purpose of padding their departmental budgets.
4	The funding of reserves is meant to ensure that as an asset is being used, funds are set aside to plan for its replacement. In recent years, increased tax revenues have not been used to proportionally build reserves. Are you in favor of reserves being proportionately funded in line with the percentage of increase in tax revenues in any given year?	✓	I have combed through these every year at budget time to question some appropriations and the need for such high reserves in some accounts with 10 year predictions for spending.
5	Citizens can only absorb so much when it comes to having the ability to pay tax. Do you support ensuring increases in taxes do not exceed municipal inflation, even if this requires adjusting the services currently being provided?	✓	I do believe strongly this is proper fiscal responsibility of City Council and can be done without necessarily affecting service for citizens the vast majority of the time.
6	In some municipalities, specific community services that are also provided by the public sector are identified and requests for public proposals are opened to determine if there are more cost-effective solutions that could be offered by the private sector. Do you support this concept of private, public partnerships to help improve the city's overall operating efficiency?	✓	If it can be done, is cost effective and provides the a high level of service to citizens then it is something Council should definitely consider.
7	The 8th Street Pedestrian Bridge has been identified as a solution for people to gain access from the "flats" into the downtown core at an approximate cost of \$8.2 million. A number of programs and partners have been identified, to assist in cost sharing this investment. If this project costs the Brandon taxpayers more than a third of the total cost (\$2.75 million), are you in favor of it proceeding?	✗	I don't believe it's only going to cost \$8 million as those estimates are 2+ years old. The only way I would support this is if there was a minimum 3 way funding split and the cost did not go above the first estimates given. It would only be for pedestrians and be useful or used by a small percentage of our residents.

8	The Keystone Centre has been identified as needing to explore and adopt alternative funding streams to become more self-sustaining in both its operational and capital requirements. Are you in favor of the Keystone Centre actively pursuing these alternatives?		Yes and as the previous Board Chair, some have already been implemented with others currently in the works. There is still the need to look at other funding and revenue alternatives as well.
9	The City of Brandon gave approval to move forward with the use of Development Cost Charges to build a reserve for growth related infrastructure. Are you in favor of funding growth related infrastructure as needed, as opposed to delaying these investments until the associated reserves are adequately funded through DCC?		If the need and demand is there then it should be acted upon. The reserves from DCC will take time to build and there are needs for infrastructure in the mean time that have to be addressed before this fund is healthy enough to carry the costs.
10	The City of Brandon has a significant infrastructure deficit. It is Council's role to prioritize where capital dollars are spent to ensure that critical infrastructure is taken care of ahead of the non-essential investment. Do you support prioritizing strategic infrastructure investment that would yield a return on investment or that would facilitate growth?		I believe all our infrastructure needs need to be dealt with strategically and not just just for return on investment. Some things that need replacing now and doesn't get done could cost plenty more in the immediate future when it has to be done.
11	The City of Brandon has started to explore the concept of developing and seeking the approval of the Manitoba Government to govern its own Charter, which would provide for similar autonomy to what Winnipeg currently has related to development, planning, rate structures, etc. Are you in favor of Brandon having its own Charter?		Yes I believe it is overdue that the City of Brandon has it's own charter.
12	The City of Brandon administration has said that they are "Open for Business", however there continues to ongoing complaints from developers, business owner, and citizens about the level of bureaucracy, regulation, and time associated with doing business in Brandon. Would you be in favor of identifying key processes and putting in metrics / measurement systems to gauge actual performance (i.e. approval time on a permit)?		I believe this is an absolute necessity based on delays that come before Council and some of the public hearings we have had over the past years.
13	Downtown Brandon continues to be a challenge, as more buildings have vacant storefronts, and the area has gradually been allowed to degrade in appearance (garbage, weeds in the sidewalks, graffiti, overgrown lots, etc.), resulting in some businesses choosing to leave the area. Are you in favor of investment being made by the City of Brandon to address these issues?		To a degree. Throwing taxpayer money at some of the issues faced in downtown may not necessarily solve the problems that exist.
14	Would you be in favor of the concept of charging a tax levy on downtown properties that remain vacant, as a means to encourage the active redevelopment of buildings in the area.		Without examining it in further detail, not sure I would support that at this point.
General Comments			
No Comment.			