

1. Tell us about yourself and your family. Share some of your personal and professional accomplishments with us.

I've been a Mission resident for four years, after purchasing a house here (previously in Coquitlam) and moving my family here. My biggest personal accomplishment is easily my kids, of whom I'm very proud, and family is extremely important to me. Professionally, I have had a very successful 20-year career in high-tech during which time I've worked in everything from support to sales to operations.

2. Some people believe that driving community change is easier done from the outside than within a council forum. Tell us about some of your recent initiatives that illustrate your efforts in community change in terms of involvement, contributions and ties to any community initiatives.

I have had involvements with certain groups (Christmas Dinners for the Homeless, Assistance groups, and the like) – but the biggest success I had was with Mission BC & Neighbours on Facebook. The group started its rise during a random “gifting” of a bicycle to someone in need for a birthday present, and continued to grow into something that helped others, involved the District, and became a major social hub in Mission. This group page is strongly “pro Mission” business & district focused.

3. How many council meetings have you attended over the past year? What were they relating to?

I attended two in person, one related to Polygon, the second related to the Best/Steve development. I have also watched others online on Missions website.

4. Have you ever been a candidate or sat on City Council, the Regional District or School Board in the past? If elected, how long and where did you hold the office?

No – this is my first candidacy.

5. Who would you say are your supporters in the community? Who are the constituents likely to support you in office?

My supporters are varied – I have had considerable support from other council members on this endeavor as they appreciated my efforts and how I approached others in the community. I have had many kind words of support from supporters of all mayoral candidates.

Currently I believe my strongest demographics are in 18-50 year demographic.

6. How do you differ from the other candidates in this race?

I am a relatively unusual candidate for this race – being known “by name” online, but not all that well known in person. I have considerable social influence, and am a good communicator. Over the past 3 years, I have spent considerable time learning the needs & issues around Mission. I have cultivated relationships with almost all current council members, some district staff, and various social workers and this has been very helpful in preparing for this race.

7. Define what you believe makes for a healthy community.

A healthy community is one where all demographics are proportionate (a good mix of youth, adult, and senior), where there is a good work/life/recreational balance, and a thriving local economy. It must be a compelling place to be, regardless of your current place in life, and an area that attracts investment and growth.

8. What has been Mission's biggest success in the last four years? Mission's largest failure?

Mission's biggest success has been the revitalization of the downtown. While many have derided the investment, it is a true investment in the core of our community, and sets the framework for an outward realization of increased investment into the downtown core.

The largest failure has been the business license issue – which caused an unnecessary shock wave through business owners across Mission. It was poorly received, and council acknowledged missing the email attachment which had been provided to them.

9. If elected, what would be your primary goal for the next year?

As a new councilor, my primary goal is to learn the operations and procedures of governance, while listening and gathering input from staff & community leaders. The information provided and existing experience of these people will be key in assisting me in getting as quickly up to speed on Mission as possible.

10. Being a city council member requires curiosity in what's happening in the community, insight into what's good for the future, fairness in dealing with all interests, understanding that a community's services are far-reaching (anywhere from police, fire, public works, water, etc.), all the way to waste disposal and social programs. In this regard, what knowledge and professional qualifications make you a good candidate for Mission council?

I have been incredibly interested in what goes on in this community and have made sure to have observed an amazing amount of our city's infrastructure over the last few years. From the planned sewage twinning across Fraser, to the necessity of changing the waste pickup (even if not ideal), there was always a good reason behind the scenes as to why. A good candidate puts the importance of the individual aside and looks at the issue from the point of the community as a whole; making the best decision, not the most popular one. A key way to ensure success is to always leverage the key people available in fire, police, district staff, and the unions to help ensure we can make the best and most informed decisions for the community – as a whole.

11. Why are you running for this position? What positive attributes would you bring to the position you are running for?

After over 3 years of watching and listening to the community, talking to District Staff, council, mayor, health workers, and others – I felt the time was right. Mission is an amazing town, one which I have been proud to help display the last several years. With the current change in council, it seemed like a great time to be nominated.

The positive attributes I bring are a willingness to work together, the ability to think ahead and plan- to think “outside the box”, a desire to find the best solution for the majority not the few, and a very strong community ethic. Council members should bring their strong opinions and different viewpoints from various points of life – and use that to build a vision that guides Mission into the future.

12. What do you believe are the critical issues currently facing your community?

Critical issues facing Mission are our homeless (both addicted, and those homeless due to lack of affordability). We have issues dealing with property theft. We have a lack of seniors housing – and are losing seniors to other cities. Another issue is the lack of commercial and industrial development in Mission, causing taxation to be primarily residential based. We have an upcoming contract to negotiate with CUPE, and possibly the RCMP nationalization which will impact District finances as well.

13. What is your position on free collective bargaining? Do you support the principle? Why?

I support free collective bargaining, as it is an effective and useful tool to ensure a healthy and strong relationship (when both parties are negotiating in good faith) between an employer, and its union. The union's job is to look after the well-being, fair treatment, and fair pay of its workers in their job roles. I have a spouse who is also a union employee, so I understand very well the benefits and security that a union can bring its workers.

14. What do you think about the use of legislative restraints to limit collective bargaining?

If an employer and the union are both negotiating in good faith – legislative restraints are not needed, as a fair compromise can be arrived at. Mission and CUPE 1267 have successfully negotiated two agreements consecutively without any issues, and I hope the same will occur for 2020. Legislative restraints essentially “poison the well” and would negatively impact the relationship between CUPE and the District of Mission.

15. Do you support the use of public employees to perform public work? Why?

Yes –That is the agreement with CUPE and it needs to be followed. Unless the work performed was outside of the skillset or role and/or authorized by the union – public employees are a valuable asset and should always be utilized.

16. What do you think about the contracting out of public services? Why?

Contracting of public services usually leads to a general downturn in service quality to the consumer. We have all experienced something similar when jobs that were previously done by a public sector employee are modified to a private contractor – which is usually a lowest-cost bidder.

While I would be bound to impartially consider all options and determine whether it would be in the best interest of the District, my preference would be to utilize our existing public employees.

17. Do you think public infrastructure is best owned and operated by the private or public sector? Why?

Public infrastructure should remain publicly owned. When giving up “ownership” of infrastructure, a city will lose the determining rights (for example, Mission gave up animal control to the FVRD, and animal control bylaw tickets now have to be argued in Chilliwack). This puts the city (and its residents) at a disadvantage as they no longer own the infrastructure – and unless that contract is exceptionally well negotiated, the experience will be unsatisfactory.

18. What do you think about the use of Public Private Partnerships (P3's) in your community?

P3's were a popular way to “buy infrastructure but not pay” in the 1990's but have started to fall out of favour. The cost savings that governments hoped for failed to materialize, while the companies that negotiated them did very well. Where possible, we should encourage local, regional, or provincial use of available labour forces, before risking using a private companies.