

JBNA All-Candidates Forum : October 27, 2014

Candidate Questionnaire

All candidates standing for Victoria City Council are invited to participate in an All-Candidates Forum. As a requirement of participation, candidates must submit responses to the 5-6 questions below by October 21st to JBNA: Responses to marg.jbna@shaw.ca AND coyle.tom@gmail.com.

Similar questions were posed in the 2008 and 2011 all-candidates forums. To review and compare responses of the Mayor and Councilors who were elected in 2011 and currently sit on Council, go to www.jbna.org and click the button on the lower right side of the home page.

QUESTIONS FOR ALL CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR AND COUNCIL

1. Victoria has the lowest household income in the CRD and the highest tax burdens. How do you see Victoria financing core city problems and infrastructure restoration without putting additional burden on property taxes?
2. What measures should/could the City undertake to mitigate the environmental, noise and congestion impacts on James Bay created by bus traffic associated with over 200 cruise ship visits to Ogden Point from May through September?
(Note: many if not most of the buses used are decades old highway buses.)
3. To create a healthy and vibrant downtown, Victoria needs the 20,000 residents within walking of downtown to frequent shops and services. Regional groups supported by the City, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Victoria, and the local DVBA, create priorities and policies that may be in conflict with resident priorities. None identify residents in mission statements or have linkages to near-by neighbourhoods. Working together, downtown would be stronger. How could this gap be overcome?
4. Many cities, particularly in Europe, have created vibrancy in their city cores by creating pedestrian zones. In Victoria some support pedestrian zones while others state they would create deadzones, citing Ottawa and Calgary as failures. Would you support the designation of Government Street from the causeway to Johnson Street as a pedestrian zone from May to Thanksgiving?

QUESTION FOR NON-INCUMBENT CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

- N5. What do you understand about the neighbourhoods within Victoria, and the role of neighbourhood associations?

QUESTION FOR INCUMBENT CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

- I 5. What grade would you assign to your fulfillment of commitments to the community as provided in your response to the 2011 JBNA All-Candidates Questionnaire?

QUESTIONS FOR MAYORALTY CANDIDATES

- M5. Why do you feel that you would make a better mayor for the City of Victoria than other candidates?
- M6. Ogden Point, Fisherman's Wharf, and part of the Inner Harbour are situated in James Bay. Do you see a need to create a bigger role for the residents of James Bay, and the City, in the decision-making process of GVHA? Should the City use its zoning and licensing authority to oversee use of harbour lands?

JBNA, 2014 Candidate for Mayor Response to Questionnaire

Candidate for Mayor: **Lisa Helps**

1. *Victoria, finances and tax burden:*

My Plan

Overhaul City Hall and create an innovative, creative work culture where front-line staff are empowered to innovate and look for cost savings. Working with [The Pacific Institute](#), the City of Saskatoon did this between 2004 and 2009. In 2009, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses named Saskatoon the most business friendly city in Canada. **And, between 2004 and 2009 Saskatoon saved \$56 million dollars.** Not by cutting and slashing services, but by working smarter and encouraging cooperation and innovation throughout the organization. And yes, it's a unionized workplace, just like the City of Victoria.

With City Hall working and new revenue from new development coming in *and* with innovation, creativity and cost-savings realized, we will have more money available to address core infrastructure needs and to build sustainably and for the long term.

With regard to infrastructure, we don't need shiny new top-of-the line everything! Within six months of being elected I invite public participation on capital planning to both share information and gather input. The City has several major infrastructure projects we need to deal with in the next five to 10 years. I want to know what your priorities are. I would like your input on prioritizing all major capital projects that are planned for the next ten years according to timing of the project and relative options for each project in comparison with others.

Currently, capital projects are considered one at a time, without seeking detailed feedback from residents about the relative priorities and needs across all projects. This has resulted in irresponsible decision-making and little consideration of the bigger picture.

2. *Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:*

The City must be a key partner in working with the James Bay Neighbourhood Association, the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority and the bus lines. The City is currently engaged with the GVHA and the bus operators to develop a ten-year strategy. This is a good start. But any 'strategy' needs an accompanying action plan with targets, deliverables and goals. How much will congestion be reduced by? How much will pollution be reduced by? We can set targets and work to ensure that they are met.

Once they are set, the City can help to meet these targets by:

1. Considering alternative routes than those currently used, or a rotation of routes on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.
2. The City could work with partners to locate a 'transfer station' outside of the James Bay and downtown areas. All passengers would get on transit buses. Those going downtown would go downtown. Those continuing on to destinations outside the City of Victoria would go by transit buses to a transfer station and then would transfer to highway coaches to head out of town. Mayfair Mall parking lot comes to mind as a possibility, which could benefit the stores in the mall as well. This idea needs input and consideration from all involved.

3. *Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:*

I am going to answer this question by sharing information from my website (below). I have had the privilege of being the councilor liaison to the Downtown Residents Association and as such, have worked closely with them. I've learned more about what it means to live downtown and some of the challenges and opportunities. I'm also *very* heartened to see the relationship developing between the Downtown Victoria Business Association and the Downtown Residents Association. This sets the tone for closer collaboration. Now, the City needs to join the party!

To be prosperous for the long term, downtown needs to attract a diversity of people, including young families. To do this, we need to gather their input on what makes a liveable downtown for a family. Downtown needs public spaces that are alive and buzzing with energy, not only in the summer months. To help make all this happen, City Hall must play a leadership role.

In the first year of my term I will establish a "Downtown Prosperity Project" comprised of staff from relevant departments, downtown residents and business owners. Set deliverables and timelines for a prosperous downtown and **map out a four-year action plan** on how to get there. Explore best practices and easy wins from other cities. Foster a spirit of experimentation and implement pilot projects to test concepts before spending a lot of money. **Foster and support resident-led initiatives.** Support public markets, festivals, food carts and other uses that make downtown public spaces alive.

I will work with you to make downtown public spaces attractive, inviting and accessible **for a diversity of people including children and young families** by investing more money through the City's capital budget and developing the downtown budget in partnership with the Downtown Victoria Business Association and the Victoria Downtown Residents Association. This last bit is particularly important.

4. *Government Street pedestrian Zone:*

Honest answer: I would not support closing Government Street to vehicle traffic from May to Thanksgiving right away. I do support closures for events. And I would support closures on a pilot basis, as long as the street was 'programmed' in some way – Sidewalk sale? Business demos?

What I've learned from listening to Government Street business owners – and many business owners downtown – is that the *first* order of business is to fill up store front vacancies, support business starts ups/relocations to downtown and have more foot traffic downtown in general. Once our downtown is bustling and thriving again and, once the vacancies are full, and once we have a high pedestrian count throughout downtown, throughout the year, we might consider – working with the Downtown Victoria Business Association, the Government Street Shop owners and regular patrons of downtown – a longer-term closure of Government Street.

The first question I would ask – and I'm grappling with this myself – is, "What problem are we trying to *solve* by closing Government Street to car traffic?" Of course we want a walkable downtown; right now, Government Street *is* one of the most walkable streets in our downtown.

M5. *Better mayor for the City of Victoria than other candidates:*

For the past 17 years I've worked in the community in a number of leadership roles, brought people together from a diversity of backgrounds, built strong teams, and taken action on issues that matter to Victorians. I've worked to fill storefront vacancies in my own neighbourhood. I've built affordable housing. I've worked to create local jobs and to prevent poverty through Community Micro Lending – Canada's first peer-to-peer micro lending program that I founded.

For the last three years I've been at the Council table. I've worked hard. I've asked tough questions. I'm seen as someone who listens, who is inclusive – even of people with divergent views! – and as someone who gets things done. And I've seen enough to know City Hall could be doing a much better job on your behalf.

Victoria is ready for a change. The current mayor has been in office for six years and at the Council table for 12. That's a lot of time to have gotten things done. None of the other candidates have sat on Victoria City Council.

The change that is needed is not just a change of mayor and council, it's a change in approach to running the city, a change in what City Hall can be and do. It's a new kind of politics that puts people at the centre. As your mayor I will ensure that the City continues to provide all the things you expect from a City – that we spend your money wisely and that we provide high-quality services that contribute to your quality of life.

But I'll do more than this. As your mayor I will ask for your input and I will listen to you, at the outset, not after we've already made a decision. I'll make City Hall into a place that fosters and supports innovation, that welcomes creativity, and that works with residents and business owners to seize opportunities and to make things happen that will benefit Victorians in the short, medium and long term.

M6. Role for the residents of James Bay, and the City, with GVHA:

Q: Do you see a need to create a bigger role for the residents of James Bay, and the City, in the decision-making process of GVHA?

Short answer: yes. I have been amazed and confused in the past three years on Council that a non-profit society has so much and such seemingly unlimited control of public assets. From the moment Councillor Gudgeon was rejected as the GVHA's representative, something has not sat right with me.

The big question is a governance one. How do we fix this? Drawing on my response to Question 5. One of the things that distinguishes me from the other candidates is I am a collaborative leader, with a track record of bringing people together with seemingly divergent interests, finding a common goal and vision and taking action. One bold idea is, once elected, to ask my Council to appoint me, as Mayor to the GVHA Board of Directors. As a board member, I will work with the other board members to try and re-establish a connection between the GVHA and the public, especially the residents of James Bay who are the immediate neighbours to almost all of the lands stewarded by the GVHA.

Q: Should the City use its zoning and licensing authority to oversee use of harbour lands?

In short, I prefer carrots to sticks and would prefer to reform the governance of the GVHA, reconnect the organization to the community and create a good working relationship with the City and the public. Zoning and licensing decisions need to be made on a case by case basis and I would not use these tools as sticks but would give consideration to the proposal in front of me.

JBNA, 2014 Councilor Candidate Responses to Questionnaire

Elected to Council: Alto, Coleman, Isitt, Loveday, Lucas, Madoff, Thornton-Joe, Young

Candidate name: **Marianne Alto**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

Dealing with core city issues and infrastructure relies on a complete plan for enabling prudent budget management and making Victoria more affordable. My plan has four parts that are complementary and interdependent.

I'll create a more affordable community by limiting property tax increases to annual inflation rate plus 1%, and investing to create jobs and more housing. I'll take care of infrastructure by renewing and resourcing the City's 20 year Capital Plan, and rebuilding tourism facilities like the Belleville Terminal, Ogden Point, and the Harbor Pathway. I'll grow our economy to pay for critical city services by stimulating business growth and social development through revitalizing our 'Main Street' (Douglas Street), streamlining land use development policies, investing in arts and culture, and continuing to improve health services for vulnerable Victorians. And the city works best when our neighbourhoods are strong, safe and thriving, so I'll strengthen neighbourhoods by accelerating neighbourhood transportation and land use plans, traffic calming neighborhood streets, and increasing residential density downtown.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

Neighbourhood livability (including the quality of our environment, amount of noise and congestion, traffic concerns, pedestrian access, open space etc.) creates a healthy community. As the city grows, balances must be found to accommodate the reasonable expectations of current residents with new population and uses. The City has authority to restore and enhance some infrastructure and also to and regulate some uses, but it must also work with the federal government, province, region, and GVHA to monitor air quality and noise pollution and find ways to mitigate the effects of those irritants on residents.

Council has pressed, and continues to press, the GVHA, Ministry of Environment and Transport Canada to review and assess air quality in James Bay, particularly as it relates to ships in port. I was disappointed to learn that GVHA rejected implementing local on-shore power for cruise ships, since so many ports have found this to be an efficient power source for ships in port, resulting in noticeable reductions in port-area pollution.

I support requiring more fuel-efficient buses (large and small) in transporting passengers from cruise ships to the city centre and beyond. I also applaud alternative transport options such as small ferries, and enhanced pedestrian wayfinding markings to guide our cruise visitors through James Bay in a manner which allows for their appreciation for the neighbourhood's history and culture.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

This gap can be overcome by each group re-examining their mandate and role in light of a growing expectation by residents for cooperation and engagement. I've worked with the Downtown Victoria Business Association on two strategic planning initiatives, to encourage them to reach out to, and involve, downtown residents in collaborative ways. I'm excited to see that this collaborative relationship is being pursued, as the DVBA and the Downtown Residents' Association have come together to organize events and planning sessions. This is a model that should be duplicated by larger groups like Tourism Victoria and the Chamber. As the city encourages downtown residency, and as those residents arrive, make homes in the downtown, and create an increasing demand for local residential services, advocacy groups must turn their attention to how they can work with residents to create a complementary community, together.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

I'd support creating a pedestrian zone on a smaller scale for a shorter time, as a trial period, during which active programming could be undertaken to create vibrancy in the corridor. Once that is done, an analysis would need be undertaken, in collaboration with local businesses and residents, to determine its effect on the neighbourhood and economy.

I 5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

I was elected to City Council in a 2010 by-election, and re-elected to Council, and also to the CRD, in 2011. I've been told me that I was returned to Council because of what I accomplished in that first partial term, which created some confidence in my ability to act on the pledges I made. I often look back at those pledges, to see how I did.

In 2011, I pledged to create more affordable housing.

So I supported new housing developments in every neighbourhood, including an innovative co-housing project in Fernwood, and fought to protect Victoria's Housing Trust Fund.

I pledged to create a more open, accessible city government.

So I instigated a whole package of open data systems at city hall, including an online open data catalogue, searchable records, live and archived broadcasts of city council and committee meetings, and more resources to process Freedom of Information requests faster.

I pledged to help improve and integrate health services for vulnerable people.

So I coached service providers, Island Health, and the Victoria Police Department to overhaul and redesign those services, with new resources, services and opportunities for Victoria's most vulnerable residents.

I pledged to limit tax increases and find new revenue sources.

So I reduced 2012 tax increases to 3.25%, fought hard to get them lower, froze Council salaries, cut out free lunches for councillors, and created a sponsorship policy to get money from ads in parkades and names on some buildings.

This is what I pledged – and I kept my word.

I believe keeping true to your word is an integral part of being a city councillor. And another part is seizing opportunities. When unpredicted chances came to make a difference, I did. So I also

- Secured \$250,000 in matching funds for Victoria High School*
- Put amalgamation on the ballot*
- Initiated Victoria's Plan B – a local sewage option, should the CRD plan fail*
- Increased transit service in the region, and proposed enhanced service for James Bay and the downtown*
- Expedited completion of cycling, pedestrian and road improvements*
- Brought the First Nations Witness Blanket to City Hall*
- Persuaded the CRD to bring First Nations to tables of regional governance.*

There is always room for improvement, so I'd give myself a 'B'.

JBNA, 2014 Incumbent Councilor Candidate Response to Questionnaire

Candidate name: **Chris Coleman**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

Your question misses the also important aspect of the City's reserves (used for replacement of the \$1.7B worth of City assets). In this respect, Victoria is better positioned than all the other municipalities combined. The mitigating aspect, however, is the reality that the City's assets are also the oldest in the region!

There are a couple of strategies that would be helpful in addressing the concern you do articulate:

a) In the last two terms of Council, the rate of municipal tax growth has slowed significantly. That slowing trend must continue. As we move forward, I think we can address the concept of "tax predictability" with a guideline of a maximum annual lift of "A Cost of Living increase + 1% contribution to the City's reserve accounts". Last year that would have meant a maximum lift of about 2.4% – 2.6%.....lower than the actual 2.75%

The "Cost of Living" apportionment, however, needs to be tailored to municipal purchasing.....developing an MPI (Municipal Price Index). Edmonton seems to be the lead Canadian municipality on this concept. This would then allow ant citizen to assess whether they are receiving "value for their tax dollar invested";

b) We have usually been very conservative in our budgetary projections about "new construction revenue" & often exceed the projection, sometimes dramatically. As a principle, then, we should continue with the allocation of part of this surplus to reserve accounts, part to addressing any "critical, but unanticipated" issues & part to reducing the tax lift;

c) We need to review all the services we offer (as we did with our Parking Services this year and Garbage Collection last year) to see if there are more cost savings we can consider; &

d) There is always the notion of finding "new revenue", & while we shouldn't over estimate the prospects of this, there are some significant opportunities (witness the new agreement for natural gas delivery on Vancouver Island, benefitting all island municipalities, but particularly the City of Victoria.....estimated at a positive position of \$750K annually)

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

I think we need to work harder with the GVHA & the cruise industry & other orders of government to see:

a) some staggering of ship arrival times,..... addressing part of the congestion issue;

b) the acceptance of regulations for "lower sulphur content" fuel to complement the installation of "scrubber technology" (which can breakdown); &

c) the replacement of older model buses with upgraded rolling stock which will address substantially the emissions issue, but may not reduce the noise concern.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

The City's OCP does envision 20,000 new residents in the next 20 years (half in the Downtown Core & half in the neighbourhoods, focused around the concept of "village centres"). There will always be some conflict/discussion about how these plans find a sense of congruence that satiates different perspectives....that is the stuff of Planning & Public Engagement.

The JBNA has done an admirable job of making sure its voice is heard at City Hall (not always with the result wanted.....but the input always heard & it has made a difference in the final results). It must be recognised that this work is done, however, very much through the goodwill of a few dedicated volunteers.

The question posed, however, highlights the shared goal of a stronger Downtown. Much as we can project for the possible development of the South Block, benefits would clearly accrue to both James Bay & Downtown. In order to enhance this type of symbiosis.....City Hall could enhance the neighbourhoods'

involvement in the larger planning for our shared Downtown. But if it is truly to be symbiotic, it may also require the neighbourhoods to identify the Chamber, the DVBA & Tourism Victoria (& others) as possible partners in the conversation (as well as their recognition of adjacent neighbourhoods).

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

I am open to the discussion on this, but the logical first step to do it with late afternoon/night-time closures first (as was done during the Commonwealth Games). Building on that experience, then, it might be easier to consider full closures.

I would not stop at Johnson Street, however, as I think pushing the present street treatment up to Fisgard Street, while costly, would act to draw more pedestrians/tourists up to the "Gates of Harmonious Interest" (& Chinatown).

1 5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

I might be so bold as to give myself a "B/B+". This is based partly on a review of my answers to your questionnaire in 2011, to initiatives that I've been involved with in the James Bay Neighbourhood, & to a general perspective of how I engage:

Review of the 2011 answers:

- 1) We did make some advances in "village centre planning" and have begun the Harbour Plan.....but both of these initiatives have much more work needed;
- 2) We have seen a demonstrable lowering of air quality impacts from cruise ships, but the episodic "spikes" in cruise ship emissions are still very troubling. We have also witnessed an increase in the number of cruise ship passengers "walking in" to Downtown from Ogden Point....but it has not hit the levels of participation we had hoped for; nor has it seen the diminishment of bus traffic that was anticipated.
We also witnessed a greater reliance on "Runway Bravo" for seaplane take-offs, but still have not achieved the targets that some would like.
- 3) While we did not move to include neighbourhood representation on the "Special Events Technical Committee", there has been a much greater degree of communication between event managers & Neighbourhood Associations, in advance of the events occurring.
- 4) There has been some movement on the planning/implementation of Harbour Pathway projects, but the issue of taxis transiting through the neighbourhood is still an issue.
- 5) We have seen some advancements in housing options in James Bay, but it is still a difficult neighbourhood for young families (with the young children necessary to support James Bay's two elementary schools) to access. Some of the new construction may act to open up opportunities in older housing stock; in turn, that older stock may be paired up with new opportunities for "secondary suites" or "Garden Suites", making housing more affordable.

Some other Initiatives I've been involved with in James Bay:

- a) I have assisted the James Bay New Horizons Centre Society in accessing a \$20,000 Provincial grant to put greater planning & implementation to mobility/scooter issues;
- b) I helped liaise with the Bank of Montreal in implementing their "Hearing Loop" system to assist those citizens with hearing impairments;
- c) I initiated a national programme giving books of children's literature to elementary school libraries (called "Le Canada en Livres.....Canada By the Book"), & a local version of the programme that saw more than \$7000 of support for the 2 James Bay elementary school libraries (and another \$3000 dollars to the youth library associated with the new Songhees Wellness Centre).

General perspective of how I engage: I believe this section of a report card would say that I engage well with others, play respectfully, try to assist in achieving communal goals.....& that I work hard!

JBNA, 2014 Incumbent Councillor Candidate Response to Questionnaire

Candidate name: **Ben Isitt**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

I favour the refurbishment of City assets and an ongoing maintenance program to avoid costly replacement mega-projects where possible. The Crystal Pool is a good example of a City asset that should be refurbished unless a condition assessment indicates that the asset is beyond repair. The Oak Bay and Esquimalt recreation centres are examples of municipal facilities that were refurbished with substantial renovations, augmenting services to reflect changing patterns of recreation, while saving taxpayer dollars. Ongoing maintenance of water and sewer infrastructure and municipal buildings, roads and rights-of-way can also save substantial capital costs over the long run.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

The City should use its regulatory powers over vehicles-for-hire and parking stands on City roads to encourage the rapid transition to electric fleets of vehicles to service cruise ship passengers. Old diesel buses should no longer be eligible to use parking stands on City streets. The City should also encourage walking through James Bay and around Victoria Harbour between Ogden Point and the Downtown, through the completion of the Harbour Pathway and wayfinding signage in the James Bay neighbourhood. Increased BC Transit service and on-water shuttles should also be explored in discussions with the Greater Victoria Harbour Pathway, to mitigate the negative impacts of cruise-ship related ground transportation to the greatest extent possible.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

The City should encourage stakeholder organizations such the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Victoria and the Downtown Victoria Business Association to make provision through their constitutions and bylaws for resident representation on their governing bodies. The City should also advocate for the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority through its member agencies to allocate additional Board representation to the City (beyond the current single director position), with strong consideration given to the appointment of a citizen representative or representatives from neighbourhoods most impacted by harbour-related transport and other activity.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

I support the establishment of a pedestrian zone on Government Street between Humboldt and Johnson on a trial basis for the summer of 2015. Food carts, temporary sidewalk cafes, public art and street performers can be encouraged to use the public right-of-way to animate the pedestrian plaza during the trial period. The trial would be reviewed by Council and staff in the fall and winter of 2015-2016, with input from the public and merchants, to inform possible permanent changes to the design and regulation of the Government Street right-of-way. I also support the implementation of a protected two-way bike lane along Government Street from Superior Street to Bay Street, as a safe, enjoyable and convenient alternative to the high volume of motor-vehicle traffic on Douglas and Blanshard streets.

1 5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

8.5

JBNA, 2014 non-Incumbent Councilor Candidate Response to Questionnaire
Candidate name: **Jeremy Loveday**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

Proper, long term planning allows us to prioritize our needs and anticipate our costs. City Council must ensure that there is a full inventory of our infrastructure and carefully plan for our future needs. In the past, we have neglected to maintain some of our city's core infrastructure. We must make maintenance a priority so that we can get the longest life out of our investments. As a City Councillor, I will work to place public participation at the heart of our much needed long term infrastructure planning.

Our current infrastructure was built with support from the provincial and federal governments. We should engage in conversations with these governments as well as the CRD and neighbouring municipalities to ensure that all levels of government are paying their fair share.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

On City Council, I will advocate to lower the environmental impacts of cruise ships on James Bay and its residents. The City of Victoria should *work* with all stakeholders to foster creative solutions that mitigate the impact of negative externalities from cruise ship traffic on local residents while ensuring that Victoria can continue to receive the economic benefit that cruise ship tourism brings.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

To create a healthy and vibrant downtown, Victoria needs the 20,000 residents within walking of downtown to frequent shops and services. Regional groups supported by the City, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Victoria, and the local DVBA, create priorities and policies that may be in conflict with resident priorities. None identify residents in mission statements or have linkages to near-by neighbourhoods. Working together, downtown would be stronger. How could this gap be overcome?

Decisions that impact the downtown, or any area of the city, should include consultation from all stakeholders including local residents. The groups mentioned have a particular perspective and so do residents. Sometimes those perspectives are similar, sometimes they are in conflict but its important to hear from everyone impacted. To make sure residents are heard, we could consider creating a neighbourhood representative to sit on the boards some of those groups or create other channels for residents to give direct input.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

Many cities, particularly in Europe, have created vibrancy in their city cores by creating pedestrian zones. In Victoria some support pedestrian zones while others state they would create deadzones, citing Ottawa and Calgary as failures. Would you support the designation of Government Street from the causeway to Johnson Street as a pedestrian zone from May to Thanksgiving?

Yes. Government Street from the causeway to Johnson Street would be an ideal pedestrian zone. During the summer and high tourist season from May until the end of September or early October much of the mentioned areas on Government street already experiences high pedestrian traffic. Driving through those those areas take time and can be a risk given the frequent movement of pedestrian across the road. If closed off from traffic the area could be a vibrant part of downtown and an attraction to local residents as well as tourists. It would be an ideal spot for street performers and food trucks.

N5. Neighbourhoods within Victoria, and role of neighbourhood associations:

Neighbourhood associations play a vital role in fostering grassroots democracy in Victoria. A key plank of my platform is "cultivate lively neighbourhoods" - neighbourhood associations are at the centre of my vision of greater connectivity and community building. As a City Councillor I will actively seek to meet regularly with neighbourhood associations across Victoria as well attend VCAN meetings when it is appropriate.

JBNA, 2014 non-Incumbent Councillor Candidate Response to Questionnaire
Candidate name: **Margaret Lucas**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

We need to focus on revenue generation, small business development and work hard to fill empty storefronts downtown and in the village centres. We need to concentrate on affordable housing and continue to encourage secondary suites and garden cottages. Large-scale events are so important to our community – they bring vibrancy and excitement for our visiting tourists and to our community as a whole. The dollars generated from the tourism industry is our #1 source of economic stimulus. It provides over 22,000 direct jobs in the downtown core and this does not include indirect jobs created by tourism.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

Victoria is a “Walking City” and we should continue to invest in walking networks that benefit both the citizens of James Bay and connect with the Inner Harbour to encourage cruise ship visitors to walk and experience our beautiful harbour. We need to continue to work with our partners, GVHA and the Ministry of Environment to ensure air quality standards are being monitored and adhered to. Better enforcement is needed to ensure taxis and buses are respecting the neighbourhood guidelines for safety.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

I believe that if we work collaboratively with these partners we will be closer to our objectives to the question/answer #1. The JNBA is in the business of ensuring a livable and healthy community for their residents. The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce is committed to small business creation and to advocate on behalf of businesses to the Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments. Tourism Victoria is in the business of creating revenue generation through Tourism programs, and the DVBA is in the business of ensuring that businesses in the downtown core thrive and are successful. We are all working towards a common goal and we should meet to ensure we are speaking “With one message and with many voices.”

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

I would facilitate discussions with the neighbourhoods and the business community to ensure that whatever decision was made would be beneficial to all. I think we should start with a test run, possibly choosing one or two days per week during our peak season. If that was successful we could add days – if it was not successful then we would re-evaluate and possibly choose another area.

N5. Neighbourhoods within Victoria, and role of neighbourhood associations:

Neighbourhood Associations were created by concerned and dedicated volunteer citizens who care about their neighbours and the quality of life for all. I believe the greatest asset that the Neighbourhood Associations bring to Greater Victoria is their strong advocacy/voice to maintain and build upon their area’s uniqueness. The NA’s people are young and old, they come from all walks of life, they volunteer their time to benefit all who work and live in their community. They are involved and care deeply about their community. City Hall should encourage them, listen to them, and respond to their ideas and concerns.

JBNA, 2014 Incumbent Councilor Candidate Response to Questionnaire

Candidate name: **Pam Madoff**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

Council must continue to pursue both provincial and federal funding programs for infrastructure repair/replacement. The federal government offers grants for infrastructure projects but, unfortunately, the funding is not consistent and is based upon federal priorities. Consistent funding would allow for prudent and systematic planning on the part of the City. In addition, the City's current practice of adding to its own infrastructure/capital project reserve fund puts us in a position to be better able to respond to grant opportunities when they arise.

Being a core city presents both opportunities and challenges. In the area of policing a regional approach is very desirable and it occurs, in a limited manner, specific to large, special events. We are also seeing a new approach in terms of the leadership at VicPD with the decommissioning of the police marine unit and agreements being forged with other providers. A voluntary approach to regional cooperation, in particular related to policing, could evolve into required cooperation that would necessitate structural changes and improvements within the police forces in the region.

Victoria is seen as the entertainment centre for the region and it would be prudent to further investigate how to better align policing costs with the activities created by licensed premises, for example.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

This is an area that requires on going improvements and on-going monitoring. Some improvements have been made but there are many other opportunities that need to be acted upon. It is encouraging that the percentage of cruise ship visitors who are walking is increasing. Improvements to the harbour pathway and the installation of more robust directional signage will be helpful. An on-ship program that would celebrate the walkability of Victoria could further increase the numbers. Easy access to, and promotion of, bicycle rentals, pedicabs, etc. is also an important component of any program that seeks to decrease bus/taxi movements in the community. A more ambitious triple bottom line approach by the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority would result in more up-to-date rolling stock being required than in their current plan.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

The current leadership at Tourism Victoria clearly recognizes, and understands, that visitors want to visit a city where they would want to live, a city that inspires them with its forward-thinking policies related to planning and the environment. Increasingly the tourism industry is recognizing that a city that tourists choose to visit is a city where residents live and flourish. In simple terms, visitors wish to go 'where the locals go'. If one embraces that approach the divide between visitors and locals can be significantly narrowed. This approach is simply common sense. Downtown would be even stronger if there were no areas that locals have no need, or desire, to visit. Business would benefit from year round customers rather than depending on the unpredictability of seasonal tourism.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

While many pedestrian malls have been failures in cities such as Vancouver, Calgary and Ottawa, Government Street has often been lauded as one of the best mixed use streets in any urban centre. A street where pedestrians, cyclists, motor vehicles, pedicabs, etc all feel

comfortable. The comfort of the pedestrian is clearly illustrated by the wide sidewalks and the ease by which people freely jaywalk!

I would favour the consideration of closure for special events or on a particular day of the week but not a general closure.

I am concerned about the impact of non-local transit buses on the Government Street mall. There are times when the buildings are even obscured by the sheer size of the vehicles, not to mention the noise and fumes that are generated.

My goal would be to see the mall itself extended a number of blocks to the north, to the area of Chinatown and, perhaps, beyond to Pembroke Street in anticipation of the development of the Hydro lands at Pembroke and Government. Enhancement of the pedestrian realm beyond Pembroke Street would also be desirable as this is an area that is particularly inhospitable to pedestrians.

I 5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

This is a question that is likely best answered by the engaged citizens of James Bay, rather than by me! But then, I am an engaged resident of James Bay!

I would give myself an 'A' related to my support for neighbourhood plans in decision making. A C+ when it comes to issues relating to impact of the cruise ship industry but I am not giving up when it comes to identifying/requiring methods to lessen the impact on the neighbourhood.

Improvements have been made in the areas of traffic planning related to special events in James Bay, in particular the timely provision of the detailed impact specific to each event. Feedback from residents is included in the debrief analysis which takes place after each event. I also make a practice of informing staff of the impacts I observe or those that are shared with me. Grade – B-,

Increasing the number of affordable family housing units in James Bay continues to be a challenge. There has been some success with the City's secondary suite policy. There is yet to be an application for a garden suite and the tight grid of the James Bay neighbourhood may not make this choice practicable.

The number of demolitions that have occurred in James Bay over the last three years is of particular concern to me. It is very distressing to see perfectly viable housing being demolished to make way for residences that will sell for well in excess of \$1M. The City has no mechanism in place to control these demolitions. Vancouver is looking to craft a by-law that would lower the existing entitlement related to the size of the replacement building.

Non-market housing providers are locating their projects in neighbourhoods where the land costs are lower. James Bay used to be one of these neighbourhoods which is why we are fortunate to have the non-market units, including CRD housing, co-op, etc.

I would give myself a 'B' in this area as I am constantly reminding Council of the factors that have led to the current situation in James Bay relating to affordable housing. In addition it is very important not to provide further incentives, via variances, rezoning, etc. that work to further inflate land values in our neighbourhood. It would be helpful if there was a strong message from the community, when faced with the demolition of buildings that provide affordable housing, that this is an issue of neighbourhood concern. There was a time when this type of proposal would have resulted in scores of residents turning out, often on-site, to express their concerns.

JBNA, 2014 Incumbent Councilor Candidate Response to Questionnaire

Candidate name: **Charlayne Thornton-Joe**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

It is challenging being a core city and a Capital City. There are costs which Victoria taxpayers are burdened with such as higher police costs, the cost of managing homelessness, mental illness and addiction, supporting tourism, to name a few. In our 2013 Citizen's survey citizens told us that they prefer tax increases over service cuts. The vast majority of citizens say that the overall quality of life in Victoria is good and they tend to hold positive perceptions of the downtown area and of their neighbourhoods. They also told us that they are satisfied with municipal services and operations and that they generally believe that they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars. That being said, the 2014 Victoria Foundation Vital Signs indicated that the cost of living, housing, mental illness, and homelessness were some of the major issue that brought concerns to citizens of the Capital Region. It is important to keep finances/taxes in check and continue to do our best to make living in Victoria affordable for all those who choose to live here. Part of the solution to financing core city problems is to do more prevention work. For example, solving homelessness (providing housing and supports) costs the tax payer less than managing homelessness through shelters, food banks, hospitals and jails. Council has been working for many years to increase our infrastructure reserves to ensure that we can repair and/or replace necessary infrastructure through our reserves, applying for Federal and Provincial grants and by borrowing where possible.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

The cruise ship industry, although it brings economic value to the City of Victoria, due to the success of the industry, the James Bay Neighbourhood has been impacted by the many issues which affects the quality of life for those who live there. There are concerns about the emissions that the ship produce, which greatly affects air quality. Other concerns is the amount of vehicular traffic, in particular taxis and buses which supports the cruise industry but impacts the neighbourhood by their sheer numbers, the speed which they travel through the neighbourhood and the pollution they produce. We must work with groups such as the cruise ship industry, the Victoria Harbour Authority, Island Health and the Ministry of Environment to address these concerns. We must find a way to balance the concerns and the quality of life for the neighbourhood with the importance of protecting the cruise ship industry. With new technology, we must insist on more updated ecofriendly vehicles.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

Businesses and industries contribute heavily to the City's revenue which benefits all. Communication is key, and relationship building is paramount. In any relationship, it is important to recognize the benefits that each brings to the vibrancy of our community. But it also must be recognized that there may also be impacts. There must be efforts from all parties to participate in dialogue that finds win/win opportunities for all.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

I believe that many of us would like to see Government Street as a pedestrian zone. This has been discussed for many years. This is only something that I could support if I could ensure that it would be a success. Fortunately, the DVBA (whose sole mandate is to “be a proactive champion for Victoria's downtown business community, promoting sustainable economic vitality through direct action and advocacy,” has had the opportunity to examine this more closely, and has looked at other cities where the closing of a street to be made into a pedestrian zone has occurred. They have looked at the reasons for their success and the reasons for their failure. Understanding that if this were done and failed, the impact on the businesses would be devastating and would take years to fix. Currently, it has been found that the population using the downtown is not sufficient to make this work. Also, unless funds were used to program the area with buskers, etc. it would not necessarily attract people to this area in a way that would actually enhance the area. I do believe we will close it in the future, and we currently close it for some events, but for today, I do not think the change would be successful. Having some pilot opportunities that might eventually lead to a May to Thanksgiving closure could be considered.

5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

B--Always room for improvements. Still some outstanding goals to achieve, but continue to strive to be a committed and conscientious worker. I continue to listen to the concerns of others, and to make decisions to the best of my abilities. My main frustration is trying to address the concerns of all the citizens of Victoria and not being able to take on as many issues as I would like.

JBNA, 2014 Incumbent Councilor Candidate Response to Questionnaire

Candidate name: **Geoff Young**

1. Victoria, finances and tax burden.

We must be more businesslike in our approach to providing services. We must be more realistic about the City's ability to provide social services for which the burden should really be shared across the region, or that are fundamentally Provincial responsibilities. A vibrant downtown makes the City more livable, but it also provides more tax revenue to pay for services.

2. Environmental, noise and congestion impacts of cruise-bus traffic:

I think the City has been on the right track in working with the Harbour Authority to encourage cruise ship passengers to walk downtown or into James Bay. This keeps them in Victoria and reduces the need for buses. Buses are still needed, though, and the idea of requiring busses to meet higher environmental standards is worth exploring.

3. Linkage gap between CoC, TVic, etc and near-by residents to downtown:

Victoria's downtown needs to attract residents of downtown and nearby neighbourhoods, but if it is to be truly vibrant and attractive it also needs residents of the entire region to use it. This is the role the business groups are trying to fill. We are fortunate that for the most part their interests are the same as those of local neighbourhood residents.

I do think that business groups may overestimate the need for automobile access to the downtown. I would argue that experience shows that improving vehicle access mostly helps suburban malls and big box stores. Downtown employees are better served with good public transit.

4. Government Street pedestrian Zone:

The Government Street mall is one of the most successful shopping areas of the City and one of the best pedestrian environments. Instead of asking how we could change it, we should be asking how we can make other blocks of the downtown just as successful. Perhaps we should have similar malls on lower Johnson or Pandora, or even turn Douglas Street into two one-way malls using a center walkway.

5. What grade would you assign to your past performance vis a vis commitments:

I was overoptimistic about the possibility of a rapid transit line into James Bay and shore power for cruise ships. Neither looks likely in the short term. However, regulations requiring cleaner cruise ship emissions are imminent. I have not heard concerns about the very noisy piston Beavers lately, although the jet-fuel smell of the turbo props is still an issue.

My concern about the potential conflict between the new OCP and neighbourhood plans has materialized in a couple of controversial rezonings. I think stability of successful and long-established neighbourhoods takes priority over the goal of densification, and I have voted with that in mind as these issues have come to Council.

Where events are concerned, I still think that organizers could consider relaxing full road closures sooner. These events are good fun for non-competitive participants, but they don't require the rigid road closures the seriously competitive people need.