



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

### Candidate Questions – Salmon Arm Municipal Elections 2022

In the last few years, we have witnessed severe weather across the globe, from heat domes, drought, wildfires, atmospheric rivers, tornadoes and hurricanes to destructive flooding. The role of climate change in the severity of the destruction and loss caused by these disasters has been front and centre. This underscores that we must double down on our efforts to avert the worst impacts and costs of these catastrophes. We know that municipalities are hardest hit by climate change but also directly or indirectly influence roughly half of Canada's GHG emissions. Never has there been a greater need to elect leaders who both understand and will act to protect communities from the effects of the climate crisis.

As part of our ongoing efforts to inform our community, Shuswap Climate Action Society has contacted all the candidates and asked four climate-related questions. Their responses will help voters decide which of the candidates has the vision to steer the community through the climate challenge, making the community more sustainable and resilient to current and future impacts. In this upcoming Salmon Arm municipal election there are three mayoral candidates and 11 people vying for six councillor positions. Below we present the responses to our questions that we received from the candidates, none of which have been edited or altered in any way.

The following candidates chose to address all four questions in one reply:

**Daniel Bardy (candidate for council)** – I believe that climate change is a natural process on the planet and how humans affect this process is still very questionable. We must do our best to understand the law of nature and respect that. Create a symbiotic relationship between the planet and people. What is the real problem is the wasting of natural resources and pollution. That we all should focus on.

**Nancy Cooper (mayoral candidate)** – Recently, the term 'forest bathing', also known as Shinrin-Yoku, came to my notice, a term which means the calming benefits of spending time in nature.

As a council, I believe, we need to keep in mind the necessity of green space when choosing when, where, and how to approve development. It would include the consideration of the transportation methodology of reaching that development, whether it were residential, commercial or industrial.

Education is another component of council's duty to uphold its commitment to climate and environmental awareness; if more people rode the bus, for example, it would become more self-sustaining, and the city could offer more service and more frequency on some routes.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

As an Emergency Support Services volunteer for more than 20 years, wildfires and floods are a top priority. Last year alone our group assisted our Kamloops group with fire evacuees from Lytton, more fire evacuees in the Sicamous area near Two Mile, as well as the 500 flood victims from Merritt that we sent here to Salmon Arm, so I agree major events are of great concern.

Conservation can be a significant part of mitigating these catastrophic events. Working with well established agencies to underscore their efforts in preventing soil erosion, water loss, and participating in Fire smart efforts are a good beginning.

We can all be a part of the solution with recycling, looking for the Power Smart stickers on new appliances, and paying heed to sprinkling restrictions when in effect.

Spend time in nature, take advantage of forest bathing, but leave the matches at home during the heat of our summers.

Because we all live here, and Salmon Arm matters.

**Kevin Flynn (candidate for council)** – I find the questions and answers all inter-related so will do one broad answer. Here it is.....

In my opinion the biggest threats to the Shuswap and Salmon Arm residents from the impacts of Climate Change are wildfire and water concerns, either potential flooding of our rivers and lakes, or potential drought conditions. Clearly, recent wildfire seasons have been challenging for our Province, and the water level and water quality of Shuswap Lake is always a concern. There is no question that we need to be more proactive to improve our preparedness for climate change issues.

The difficulty of the complex issue of Climate Change is our lack of funding and limited resources. A smaller community like ours, relying solely on property tax revenues, can only allocate so many dollars to making changes. We cannot make material changes and improvements on our own. The Federal and Provincial governments must be at the table with money, resources and expertise.

That being said, we have been doing a lot of things to make a difference. We are slowly replacing our vehicle fleet with Hybrid vehicles where and when we can. We are working hard to reduce emissions from our buildings. We are piloting solar initiatives and any future buildings will be designed for maximum energy efficiency. We have been working on significant Firesmarting initiatives with Provincial funding and new developments are being asked to look at Firesmarting and water efficient landscaping.

Another project that will provide guidance for carbon emission reduction is the recent Active Transportation Task Force work on creating a comprehensive plan. This has been



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

a significant community project, 2 plus years in development, that looks at alternative transportation modes like biking, walking, running. Obviously, the goal is to reduce our dependence on vehicles and we are about to release the detailed plan that will guide how we become more alternative transportation friendly. The Greenways Liason Committee, Shuswap Trail Alliance, and the new Active Transportation Plan are all focused on improving walkability and bikeability.

An example of the focus on alternative transportation is that the planned Lakeshore Road upgrades that will include significant parallel walking/cycling infrastructure. The Underpass also has been designed with walking/cycling in mind. Further, we worked with the Province to ensure all the recent highway improvements west of town have significant alternative transportation options. Connectivity in our new subdivisions is also a focus of Council and our planning team

Time, money, limited resources and land constraints are all challenges. I think we are making progress and we are looking for Climate Change solutions and funding resources all the time. This important work must continue and we must all work together to reduce our impacts on our Climate.

**Question 1.** *What do you believe are the main risks to Salmon Arm - its citizens, its infrastructure, its economy - from climate change impacts? What specific actions do you think the municipality should take to reduce emissions, adapt to these risks, and build a more resilient community?*

### **Mayoral Candidates**

**Alan Harrison** – The biggest risk to Salmon Arm, from climate change impacts is wildfire. I know when smoke blows into our region, everyone's stress level increases. Breathing becomes more difficult. Tourists stay away. The City of Salmon Arm has recently completed a Wildfire Prevention Plan, with Fire Smarting, including fuel mitigation as an important tool. In cooperation with the Columbia Shuswap Regional District we have also built an emergency response plan.

**Luke Norrie** – No response to date.

### **Council Candidates**

**Debbie Cannon** – I think one of the most direct risks climate change poses for our community is forest fires. I would continue to promote and support the fire smart program. I also support changes to our watering schedules to ensure we are using



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

efficiently. In terms of emission reductions, I would like to see our entire city fleet be EVs, and we should look at ways to support more electrification initiatives like the Fall Fairgrounds, and solar projects like the Art Gallery.

**Brian Fletcher** – No response to date.

**David Gonella** – The risks to Salmon Arm are multi-level and will require Federal and Provincial leadership to provide support and resources to combat successfully. For the residents of Salmon Arm the risk of food insecurity, extreme heat events and forest fires are real and present. In the short-term the community and leadership must continue to focus on reducing our individual carbon emission output, support regional food security initiatives, and invest in emergency preparedness precautions and planning.

**Deb Haukedal** – No response to date.

**Robert Johnson** – No response to date.

**Tim Lavery** – Thanks to SCAS for posing these important questions. I'll provide summary responses here from my platform of Four Pillars of a **Liveable, Reliable, Affordable & Sustainable Salmon Arm**. Please check out [timlavery.ca](http://timlavery.ca) for further information related to all of these questions.

I believe that I am a climate-sincere local politician who is trying to make a difference amidst significant restraints of funding. I read extensively on this and attend every federal, provincial and regional session that I can to more fully understand what communities our size are and can be doing.

Climate change is real and here! Larger scale risks of inadequate storm water infrastructure, wildland urban interface fire exposure and food security are at the top of my mind. There are many other concerns as well but these current community-wide risks stand out for me.

Work is underway to assess and address improvements to our storm water capacities, harden our critical infrastructure, incorporate FireSmart principles in new builds, reduce fuel load build up in public spaces and encourage homeowners and neighbourhoods to become FireSmart. These initiatives are taking a beginning hold and need to expand. I support ongoing funding to advance them. I have played a key role – with the support of council - in getting the city to where we are now on fuel load mitigation. There's a lot



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

more to be done for sure and lots of conversations on how to best implement these actions but they have begun in this current term.

We need a Not-Net-Loss tree bylaw for our urban trees and forests. I'm looking forward to the upcoming report from the EAC and have researched how other communities are implementing similar bylaws as well as including natural environmental systems into their asset management plans. We need to do this too.

I have long been an advocate for the city to develop a Food and Urban Agriculture plan to increase our resiliency to climate change. I've been unsuccessful so far in convincing a majority of council to have this as a short term goal but I will continue to not only strongly argue for this but also to seek funding to get this done asap.

There are many more aspects to this question. Please check out my site and do feel free to contact me at [twlavery@gmail.com](mailto:twlavery@gmail.com).

**Sylvia Lindgren** – I think that, long term, both fires and floods are real risks in our area. We saw flooding in our area in 2014 where the Armstrong Askews was flooded up to it's front door. Many areas had similar experiences. Forest fire is just a matter of time. We have had fires all around us for several years in a row and our turn will inevitably come. The extreme weather events that are causing natural disasters across the globe are predicted to increase in both frequency and intensity. To be ready we need to continue fire smart treatments around our community. I know this is not popular with some residents but I believe its the only way we can protect ourselves from a Lytton type disaster. We can protect infrastructure such as roads and water treatment but improving the way we build them and building in protective infrastructure where necessary. A fulsome Emergency Response Plan in conjunction with community partners will be needed to react in a timely fashion to the eventual occurrence of one or both of these events. Short term we will likely need easily accessible cooling shelters for extreme heat events as well.

**Louise Wallace Richmond** – Frankly, it's less about risk and more about reality. It's the cumulative effect of climate change that concerns me most and mitigation and prevention measures must consider the entire eco-system rather than focus on a single risk. Take the summer of 2021 for example, the heat dome led to severe drought, the drought led to forest fires. The atmospheric river was made worst by drought conditions because the soil could barely absorb normal precipitation never mind an actual river of rain. I believe it prudent to take a three prong approach; emergency planning for catastrophic incidents, climate mitigation planning for all city assets and infrastructure and community messaging and support around the role we must all play to minimize climate change's impact.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

Specific actions include continuing to measure our municipal GHG emissions and using the resulting provincial funding to resource climate resiliency initiatives such as electrifying the city's fleet of vehicles and moving to renewable energy wherever possible. That data piece is critical to measuring impact and improvement and transferable to other organizations. This is where community groups like Shuswap Climate Action play a critical role inspiring local households, organizations and businesses to undertake their own GHG reduction plan. I would advocate for robust partnerships and specific measurable plans. Only a cumulative approach to climate action can minimize the cumulative effect of climate change.

**Kristine Wickner** – Before I answer any questions about addressing a rapidly declining habitable planet I want to acknowledge that our current government system is based on the assumption we have the right to steward these lands which is fundamentally untrue. These are stolen lands and there is no solution to the climate crisis that doesn't involve us reconciling with Indigenous people across Turtle Island that have been doing this work since time immemorial. We must find a way to walk this path together as we were meant to.

I believe the risks to Salmon Arm and the wider globe is that our political systems are far too slow and under-resourced to react to the intersecting crises we are facing (climate, poisoned drug supply, housing, mental health) at the speed and scale required to beat the clock that's been set at the next 10-15yrs. Recent climate solutions implemented by the city like composting recycling and the plastic bag ban place a heavy responsibility on individuals to do their part to solve the crisis while the city doesn't put an emphasis on doing the same. They are individual solutions, not collective ones. My garage, like many people I'm sure, operates as a 24 hr sorting center for all our garbage. My climate anxiety is so bad that I wash and dry the plastic wrap that comes over meat packaging on a drying rack made for baby bottles, throwing food away makes me sick to my stomach, I refuse to buy my children new clothing, and yet I can't go to a community event or public space that has the appropriate receptacle for composting, plastic bottles, paper recycling, etc. We all play our part in the solution yes but people get frustrated when there are such high expectations for citizens to do more and more and more while governments do nothing to hold the private sector (of which they claim they have no jurisdiction over which is not true), or worse even their own public institutions, accountable to those same standards. My generation has been reducing reusing and recycling for thirty years because we were told that was the solution. Anyone living in the Shuswap for the last five years has borne witness to the evidence that we are not going to recycle our way out of this- especially not as individuals. It's time for the city and all levels of government to step up and provide collective solutions. The receptacles are just one of a hundred solutions to a just transition but the question will always be how do we pay for it? See the next question.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Question 2.** In August 2019, Salmon Arm City Council declared a climate emergency and formally “recognized that climate action is a strategic priority to be considered in decision making and investment moving forward”; furthermore, Council recognized the “urgent need for a Climate Action Plan and corresponding action for the City of Salmon Arm”. Council followed up by having a Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) prepared and published in March 2020, providing the foundation for a climate action plan. *If elected, what do you see as the next steps needed to expedite the development and implementation of a comprehensive climate action plan?*

### Mayoral Candidates

**Alan Harrison** – There are two parts to this. The first is the City lowering its green house gas emissions. We have been successful in this by moving to electrification of the City fleet, introducing street side recycling and composting, implementing innovations at our pool and arena and expanding our trails network. The second is making it easier for residents to lower their carbon footprint. Ensuring higher levels of government provide incentives to residents for changing heating and cooling of our homes to alternatives like solar or heat pumps, and continue to make it more affordable to move to electric vehicles and bikes.

**Luke Norrie** – No response to date.

### Council Candidates

**Debbie Cannon** – We need to work towards implementing recommendations from the CEEP study. At this time, we do not have the funding to hire a full-time climate sustainability coordinator, however it is something that I think would be beneficial if we were able to acquire grants to help support the position.

**Brian Fletcher** – No response to date.

**David Gonella** – Although not a perfect document, the CEEP is a worthy work in progress and a positive starting point the City can lead with the support of the community.

**Deb Haukedal** – No response to date.

**Robert Johnson** – No response to date.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Tim Lavery** – The CEEP plan has been an introductory step but a more comprehensive and prescriptive plan of climate action best-practices needs to happen – and soon! With new and increased provincial funding just now available, we first need to prioritize developing such a robust plan over the other worthy priorities competing for local funding.

There has been some debate over how a new comprehensive climate action plan should best be developed. **I support contracting recognized-expert consultants** to help develop a modern Climate Action Plan and *then* **determining our approaches for implementing the best-practice initiatives** identified through that process. This consultancy approach has been highly successful in developing our Housing Plan and the soon-to-be-delivered Active Transportation Plan. The new provincial funding referenced above is sufficient to accomplish this. That's my first priority for those funds!

I also feel that it's important to recognize initiatives already underway – something that can be either missed or under-emphasized in our conversations. Salmon Arm, because of its curbside organics collection program, has seen our lowest GHG emissions in the past two years since counting began 12 years ago. This is no small matter. On top of that, the diverted tonnage to the landfill has significantly extended the timeline of its capacity. Many local governments are still either still considering implementation of something similar, or in a pilot or early implementation phase (e.g. Kamloops or Vernon). It's been a game changer and I feel that this fact should be front and centre in all of our conversations. There is more to do for sure but actions are underway.

**Sylvia Lindgren** – I think the next steps for the city are to assign the work of a climate action plan to someone, whether that is a new staff member, an existing staff member, or an outside agency. This can be done through grant funding in my opinion. I don't think we will ever have a comprehensive approach to climate action without the overarching plan. Council has supported a Cultural Plan, an Active Transportation Plan, and others. Clearly they know that a comprehensive plan is necessary to a successful approach and climate is the biggest threat to our community right now.

**Louise Wallace Richmond** – The CEEP

([https://www.salmonarm.ca/DocumentCenter/View/3998/2020\\_CEEP-SalmonArm-final-Nov2020](https://www.salmonarm.ca/DocumentCenter/View/3998/2020_CEEP-SalmonArm-final-Nov2020) ) lays out the current state of affairs and the way forward focussing on six areas of mitigation; zero emission transportation, zero emission buildings, closing the loop on waste, organizational capacity, sequestration and actions to build for big moves. In addition, it lays out the budget implications. Our tendency to focus on the cost of doing things rather than the cost of not doing things creates resistance. It's my view that all climate action initiatives have a valuable cost benefit and I'll continue to focus on





## Shuswap Climate Action Society

that if re-elected (and even if not). Clearly, the cost of not moving forward is far greater than the investment of building climate resilience. The next step is to continue to implement the initiatives laid out in the CEEP Report and explore the viability of building in a community climate planner role within the City or contributing funding of one through a like-minded organization

**Kristine Wickner** – I'm not a climate scientist but we have lots of them working on our climate action committee. I don't see my job as being the expert to come up with the plan. I will trust the consultant's and committee members' recommendations. What I do think is the responsibility of the council is to source the funding. Any project plan has three competing values- scope, time, and budget. We know the timeline is urgent, we know the scope is massive, and we need the budget to match. Many current councilors have highlighted that the work has been slow thus far due to the constraints of a low tax base. I have a plan. In a poll conducted during the last federal election, 75% of Canadians agreed our governments needed to do more for the environment and 75% of Canadians were in favour of some form of a wealth tax on the ultra-wealthy to pay for it. Whether it is large grocery chains, fossil fuel companies, real estate corporations, the pharmaceutical industry, or online retail distributors we need to hold major corporations and CEOs accountable for their part in this. It's time they pay their fair share and help fund the just transition to an economy that takes care of people and the planet. These companies were already not paying rates in line with what average Canadians do, or small business owners for that matter, and it only got worse during the pandemic. At a time when we all pulled together to help each other out and many are still struggling financially the corporate elites have increased profits and wealth hoarding. The answer is not increasing taxes on the average Canadian or even the moderately wealthy as that only serves to take money out of our community. Most people I know in our community that have more than they need recognize that and give back. Whether it's rotary, women who wine, the construction industry, or the community foundation I see individuals acknowledging their privilege and responsibility to create an inclusive and sustainable community every day. On the flip side, the 16 wealthiest families in Canada that have no ties to the community take our hard-earned dollars and keep them in offshore accounts and tax havens. Taxing the ultra-wealthy is the only way to meet this moment in time in a way that is fair to us all. They have spent thirty years shirking their responsibility to use their profits for the betterment of society while simultaneously taking government subsidies with no accountability to how those funds are used. This problem has again only gotten worse during the pandemic. These are the conversations being had at the environmental movement level and like all social movements, they are starting to make their way into electoral politics through things like the climate caucus ( a group of local government officials working together on climate solutions). With my strong connections to both (movement and electoral) in our province, I will advocate for and actualize funding for a just transition by ending corporate welfare and securing our share of those funds for our community.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Question 3.** Like many municipalities across Canada, the largest proportion of Salmon Arm's GHG emissions come from transportation (driving fossil-fuel powered vehicles), and the second largest proportion comes from buildings. *What do you see as the most effective ways of reducing the emissions in these two sectors?*

### Mayoral Candidates

**Alan Harrison** – In addition to the information shared in the previous question, local governments have tools through the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw to densify housing closer to services. By having people live closer to services, alternate transportation to vehicles is more realistic. In Salmon Arm, we have developed an Urban Containment Boundary, and modified our OCP and Zoning bylaw to encourage densification close to the town core. We recently also expanded our transit services, and will need to expand further as we grow.

**Luke Norrie** – No response to date.

### Council Candidates

**Debbie Cannon** – We need to work with community stakeholders to expand our active transportation network and make our community more bike/walk friendly. The Shaw Centre and Recreation Centre are two of Salmon Arm's largest GHG emitters. As we move forward with the planning of our new pool, we need to ensure that it is an environmentally-friendly build. Any other future city infrastructure should be low-carbon as well.

**Brian Fletcher** – No response to date.

**David Gonella** – The scale of the solutions necessary to adequately address the climate crisis are beyond the capacity of a city of 19,000 residents to solve alone. We will need the Federal and Provincial governments to set standards and augment resources to lower municipal carbon output across Canada and BC.

On the local level the City, under my leadership, will focus on the opportunity to reduce emissions through capital purchases, adjustments to the building bylaws, and developing more public/private transportation options.

The next phase to addressing the climate crisis must include input/buy-in from all members in our community. Expecting one group to convince another of the risk of the climate crisis is a bygone era, as we are all on this planet together and need to unify to solve it long-term.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Deb Haukedal** – No response to date.

**Robert Johnson** – No response to date.

**Tim Lavery** – These two sectors are indeed large sources of emissions. I'll distinguish between corporate emissions and those of citizens and I recognize that my answers here may not please everyone. The city has just begun to decarbonize its fleet. That's a good thing. That'll continue where appropriate. We need to extend those expectations to contracted service fleets as well. I support and monitor this decarbonization.

What is perhaps more debatable for me is the exact role of the city in encouraging changes in the adaptive behaviours of residents. We all need to change our consumptive habits. Incentivization is a topic that is front and centre and comparables with other jurisdictions are often brought up.

Here's where I stand. The city needs to take a greater role in education and providing information for sure. While many local governments provide some incentives, it's rarely mentioned that in most cases of jurisdictions our size, the amount and number of those incentives are capped at relatively small amounts.

I believe that the main focus of city funding needs to be on the larger community-wide risk concerns referred to in question #1. These are big ticket items that have community-wide implications. It's about protecting critical public infrastructure imo. I want to see residents who can and should be making changes to their own daily habits be celebrated and take advantage of incentives offered by higher levels of government. My main focus is on planning and adequately funding our local critical infrastructure exposed to climate change risks.

**Sylvia Lindgren** – Vehicles are huge emitters of GHG and we are all going to have to work together to reduce our transportation needs and move to zero emission vehicles. In my first term I encouraged the city to start replacing the vehicle fleet with electric cars and they bought their first fully electric vehicle for the bylaw officers. I hope to see more vehicles replaced with electric over the next few years as they come up for replacement. Two level 2 chargers were also installed in the parking garage in preparation for conversion to some electric cars. However, its going to take far more than the city's vehicles converting and we are going to all have to play a part. As far as buildings, the arena and swimming pool are by far the biggest emitters of GHG. When the new pool is built I will encourage the city to build it as green as possible. There are many examples of this around the world and my goal is for us to be a leader in this. The



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

arena gets upgraded as often as possible to new technologies that are more efficient and I will continue to support this trend.

**Louise Wallace Richmond** – Salmon Arm, for a relatively small city, has a large land footprint (second only to Vancouver) thus creating a dependency on personal vehicle travel. As we slowly move to electrification of vehicles, there are still steps we can take to change the way we move around our city including ongoing efforts to densify neighbourhoods especially those close to the core, thereby reducing transportation emission. Car sharing, increased transit and more robust cycle routes will also have a positive impact. Fully half of the new housing units approved in the last four years, are multi-family. To create the much needed substitution effect (substituting personal vehicle travel for other lower GHG emitting options such as walking, cycling and transit), requires that we cast a climate lens on land use decisions so as to create neighbourhoods and business districts that are dense, walkable and well-serviced.

**Kristine Wickner** – Buildings- Retro-fitting has to be a huge priority. Like so many climate solutions retro-fitting is not just good for the planet but it's good for the economy and solving other problems too. Having a publicly invested retro-fitting plan for city properties will provide good living wage work in our community. It concerns me when the solution to a depreciating asset like the rec center or the indoor soccer field is to just build something new. I was talking to someone on the campaign trail that said "what happened to making the best out of what you have?" I couldn't agree more. I'm not saying no to these new projects but they need to be considered carefully. I am thrilled that the city has followed suit with other municipalities and that it has an asset manager now. I would want council to work closely with them to make sure that the decisions about whether we tear something down and start new at significant cost to taxpayers and potentially the planet or we retrofit an existing building is evidence-based.

That is on the public side of the building's conversation. On the private side of the discussion of the building, there needs to be clear direction and expectations outlined in the official community plan about what we expect new development to look like in terms of our collective responsibility to address the climate crisis and then have accountability mechanisms in place to make sure those standards are met. This is a critical election for Salmon Arm because that official community plan is coming up for review and so this is the council that will set the direction of land use over the next decade. The last community plan became irrelevant very quickly because of how much our intersecting crises were accelerated in the last five years, some of which was foreseeable and some that was not. but even if it had been adequate the last several years have seen far too many approvals of variances that are not in line with the community plan and not enough overseeing that standards are being met. We got



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

ourselves into a situation where we were so desperate for development we were beholden to developers and that's when people can take advantage and do what's best for themselves and not the community on whose land they are using for profit. There's a lot of work to do on this file. I am pro-responsible and ethical development that is in line with a reasonable, evidence-based official community plan.

As the population grows, and it will keep growing there is no question, we will need to thoughtfully plan infrastructure to avoid the congestion issues we see in other cities with similar geographical restraints like Kelowna for example. Being surrounded by lakes and mountains gives us only so many options. Rather than the intended plan to put a parkade on the Ross St plaza, I'd like to see commuter hubs at critical entry points to town from surrounding areas. Not only will the parkade be an eyesore in our beautiful downtown it won't solve the congestion and emission issues of people still driving into town. Creating private-public partnerships with businesses (Askew's uptown, Walmart) or public land (rec center) that is already zoned for parking to expand and then having an effective, reliable shuttle service into the downtown core would drastically cut down on both emissions and congestion and increase walkability as not just people coming into town with cars could use them but also people that wanted to walk from their home say uptown to the commuter station at the rec center to get downtown for work or shopping without the hassle of parking.

Our current transit system is incredibly inefficient. Not only is it absurdly expensive to operate but it just doesn't work for the needs of our community. The problem is like many issues with government decisions, it's based on a model that is used in a large city center and doesn't take into account geographical context. Many current and past councilors think the problem is with a lack of awareness of the bus system. It isn't- it just doesn't work for the people that need it. We need a made-in Salmon Arm transit system that works for workers and is good for the planet.

**Question 4.** "Bikeability" and "walkability" in cities is becoming increasingly important not just for health reasons but also to address climate change. A high [walk score](#) in a city reduces vehicle traffic and congestion and improves air quality. Salmon Arm currently has an average [walkability score](#) of 21. A good score would be 70 or better and a score of 90 or greater would be considered a walker's paradise. *What will you do if elected, to improve these important aspects of climate mitigation and adaptation in the community?*

### Mayoral Candidates

**Alan Harrison** – Over the past two years, Councillor Lavery and I have co-chaired the Active Transportation Task Force. This task force is amongst the most high-functioning groups I have worked with. With 18 members, from all facets of the community, members have worked well together. Over the past 8 months, the ATTF has engaged the community, gathering input as we build an Active Transportation Network Plan.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

This plan will be completed this year. It will guide the community on the building of trails, walking paths, sidewalks, bike paths and non-motorized corridors throughout our City over the next 10 years. I am committed to supporting resource dollars at budget time, to help build these active transportation routes.

**Luke Norrie** – No response to date.

### Council Candidates

**Debbie Cannon** – I would like to see our city have a score of 70 or better. I think I have a proven track record of supporting and advocating for greenways and trail systems. Our topography poses a bit of a challenge for connection uptown with downtown, but I do believe there is an appetite in our active transportation and greenways committee to make our community more walk and bike friendly. I would continue to lend my support to these groups to see this happen.

**Brian Fletcher** – No response to date.

**David Gonella** – Beyond the direct benefits to lowering emissions and helping to reduce our carbon output, increasing “bikeability” and “walkability” in the City makes sound financial sense. Investments to increase bike lanes and trails increase the livability, improves the quality of life in the community and directly benefits Salmon Arm’s status as a marquee tourist destination.

Investigating adopting what communities with comparable topography challenges (i.e. steep hills, etc.) have implemented with things like bike sharing, ebike plug-ins, scooter rentals, walkability improvements, and increasing options to get folks back "up the hill" are all important pieces in getting folks out of vehicles.

At the same time, our city layout does not allow for the majority of citizens to shop and work within an easy "walking distance" to their home. Having a focus on incentivizing things like car-sharing, carpooling, and reimagining public/private transit options will be vital to increasing the travel options in Salmon Arm and creating a cultural shift in transportation norms.

**Deb Haukedal** – No response to date.

**Robert Johnson** – No response to date.



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Tim Lavery** – Great question and there's an imminent and exciting response to address this. I'd add that it's all about improving safe and connected infrastructure for All Ages and Abilities (A3) over the next 20 years.

For the past 8 months, there's been a huge amount of effort from the community and the city working with top-shelf AT consultants to develop an Active Transportation plan that addresses a wide scope of needed infrastructure and connectivity. The plan itself – one of current best practices - will be delivered to council by the consultants on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Some of you may have provided input to the process. Many residents did!

It is robust and comprehensive and contains not only suggested priority actions but a way to track progress. I have to say that this process has been one of the most collaborative and important files that I have worked on. Mayor Harrison and I have co-chaired the process with a large table of community organizations and citizens-at-large. There's been a huge amount of heavy lifting to get this plan to the public.

A close-to-final **draft** of the AT plan can be found at [www.connectsalmonarm.ca](http://www.connectsalmonarm.ca) - Click the links to review the [Draft Plan](#) , [Summary Document](#), and [Engagement Summary](#) ! Look for the final version of the plan on October 11th.

Thanks again for the great questions SCAS! Please check out my full platform at [timlavery.ca](http://timlavery.ca)

**Sylvia Lindgren** – Active transportation, transit, and densification all play an important role in reducing vehicle reliance. Allowing commercial development like grocery and convenience stores and pubs in neighbourhoods allows people to walk to stores. Currently there is great development in the Downtown and Bastion neighbourhoods and many people in the surrounding areas walk daily to do their daily chores. Hillcrest, in my opinion, would benefit from some small commercial conveniences in their neighbourhood. But we need to do more because many, if not most, of our daily driving is to go to work and back. I am in favour of more transit, both in routes and frequency. Bike lanes are long overdue in our city and the possibility of being able to bike downtown and then get on the transit to go home is very attractive. But its not just Salmon Arm's local population. Many people come to Salmon Arm to work from the outlying communities. Many of them would be happy to get on the bus and leave the car at home if it was available and convenient. I would love to see a partnership between the city and the school district to fund transit together so that kids could get to school, the rest of the community could get to wherever they are going, and bus drivers could get full time work (which is currently a huge deterrent to finding bus drivers for SD83....its hard to live on 5.5 hours/day).



## Shuswap Climate Action Society

**Louise Wallace Richmond** – Within the city itself, there are neighbourhoods and districts that are very walkable. Canoe, my neighbourhood is a prime example of a walkable neighbourhood. The downtown core, which is relatively condensed, is also very walkable. The connections between the 6 major neighbourhoods, 4 commercial and 2 industrial zones needs work. Our active transportation plan has been designed thanks to dedicated community members and subject experts will, with necessary investment and implementation, improve this.

The changing nature of work, high speed internet and work from home options will also change neighbourhoods themselves. In the last 50 years, planning was about compartmentalizing certain activities in certain zones - separating industrial, residential, commercial and institutional. I foresee a move towards the 15 minute neighbourhood concept, relatively high density (smaller footprint homes with secondary suites or duplexes), walkable residential areas with a central cluster of diverse land uses such as services and small retail. Part of the reason Canoe is so walkable is because we have a school, a post office, a daycare, parks, playgrounds, fields, trails and a full service village market. It keeps us from driving to town. It's an older style of planning that has shown itself to be resilient and regaining in popularity. The 15 minute neighbourhood concept reduces longer private vehicle trips thus reducing GHGs. It will take time, it will take planning and it will take a willingness to change the way we move around our city. In thinking about this over the last few years, I made a commitment to take local transit for a month if only to understand it better. It's changed my perspective so much so that I ended up using local transit for the better part of a year and still do on occasional user. I'm always struck by transit concerns from those who have never had the pleasure of taking the bus. I highly recommend it. And you might just see your city in a different way which is the first step to any improvement.

**Kristine Wickner** – This is an area I don't have too much criticism of in terms of the work already being done. The active transportation committee is a robust one with lots of highly knowledgeable folks guiding it. I think my idea for the commuter hubs fits nicely with this idea. Again, geography combined with four seasons make it very challenging to utilize some of our more organic walking trails which aren't super safe or accessible for everyone all the time so getting folks from where they are to the places that *are* safe and walkable is key. Where they can enjoy the benefits of fresh air, access services, and amenities they need for day-to-day life, and even maybe buy a muffin at a local business. Focusing on preserving and expanding the places that have the most walkability around necessary services and amenities while building infrastructure that gets people to those areas is key. Whether that is car sharing, scooters, e-bikes, etc. it is about meeting people where they are at and getting them where they need to go in a safe and healthy way.