

ALAN HARRISON - Incumbent Mayor

1. *Community priorities and leadership* What do you believe are the three most significant issues Salmon Arm will face during the next four years? What role should City Council play in addressing them, and what specific progress would you hope to see by the end of your term?
 - 1) **Our Economy.** In Salmon Arm we are fortunate to have a diverse economy, with 4 main sectors: forestry, agriculture, technology and tourism. We have to pay attention to all four. First, we have to be sensitive to taxation – yes, spend money on the needs, some of the wants may have to wait. Second: **Supporting the businesses/industries we have here now, is crucial.** Continue to fund EDS, and support policies and services that make running a business as easy as possible.
 - 2) **Homelessness.** Bylaws restricting panhandling and camping in public spaces need to stay solidly in place and enforced. A full staffing compliment of bylaw officers, working parallel with the RCMP is crucial to ensuring these bylaws work. Lobbying higher levels of government to tighten drug use legislation and including involuntary compassionate care facilities in hub communities should continue.
 - 3) **Highway Corridor.** Traffic travelling through our city continues to grow each year. The safety of our residents travelling north/south across the highway is a priority. We do a good job of looking after the roadways within our City, however we do not have jurisdiction over Highway #1 and 97B. Goals over the next term are to establish red light cameras at downtown Highway intersections, to ensure MOTT follows through with their commitment to redo the base/asphalt through town and to facilitate the 4-laning of the 2 lane section on the west end of town.
2. *Year-round economic vitality and resilience* Wildfire smoke and increasingly unpredictable fire seasons can significantly affect the summer economy that many Salmon Arm businesses rely on. At the same time, local spending alone may not be enough to sustain a diverse small-business community throughout the year. What role should the City play in building a stronger year-round economy, attracting customers and investment during the spring, fall, and winter, and supporting partnerships, infrastructure, events, and community amenities that help local businesses remain viable in every season?

The City can do a number of things to help. First of all we have to keep the downtown clean and attractive – a place people want to go to shop. This means continuing to spend money keeping the infrastructure updated, that's everything from asphalt to bike racks to erasing tagging and fixing vandalism right away. MRDT funds are a great help – we've applied to increase this hotel

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tax to 3%. We did this so there are more resources to attract tourists during the shoulder and off-seasons. Collaboration between CSA, DSA, EDS and the Chamber is working – gathering input from our partners before acting is important. Two recent examples are e-scooters on sidewalks (I do not support this) and patio accessibility. It is important to hear from our partners, before Council acts. Lastly, we play a role in promoting the importance of, “Shopping local.”

3. *Growing and protecting our downtown. Downtown Salmon Arm is one of the defining physical attractions of our community and continues to be an important draw for residents and visitors. Protecting its character and long-term vitality requires a healthy balance of commercial activity and thoughtful, higher-density residential development. What is your vision for growing our downtown, and what actions would you support to attract investment, increase housing, strengthen existing businesses, and maintain the qualities that make the area distinctive?*

We are proud of our downtown – one of the gems of SA. Funding everything from flowers to washrooms, roadworks to trees makes a difference. Event attraction, (this includes the weekly farmer’s market), helps keep our downtown vibrant, especially during the shoulder seasons. I support our new collaborative Tourism Salmon Arm initiative – it is working! More people living in the downtown is something we all want. I support increasing the housing zoning density in the centre core lot area, once the market makes it viable. The Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption, phasing in taxation over 10 years on capital improvements is one that I continue to support. Public art helps makes the downtown unique: murals, shade sails, attractive way-finding signage and giant treble clefs draw people downtown! There may be other opportunities. Lastly, parking is important – conscientious enforcement during the busy summer months makes this work.

4. *Infrastructure, economic growth, and community attractions Maintaining and improving municipal infrastructure is essential to the success of existing businesses and the broader community. At the same time, Salmon Arm must continue investing in amenities and attractions that enhance quality of life and help draw visitors, residents, investment, and new businesses. How would you approach these priorities, and what infrastructure or community investments do you believe should be advanced during your term?*

The City’s number one need is the Stage IV upgrade of our Waste Water Treatment Plant. We have to complete this project. The present plant is nearing capacity, the standards for releasing liquid effluent are increasing and getting rid of the odour will make everyone’s life sweeter! It is expensive. Our

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strategy is to access funds from the Build Communities Strong Fund, which would free up capital monies for other projects. The City has been lobbying hard with upper levels of government – they are very aware of this project, and how it fits perfectly with the BCSF.

The Recreation Center upgrade and Aquatic Centre replacement are the next large capital project in our Strategic Plan. Our present pool is 40 years old. We are upgrading and maintaining that facility, so it will remain solidly operational until we can move forward on the project.

An indoor soccer/pickleball/multiuse facility, to replace the old Memorial Arena is going to take a private/public partnership financial model to make it happen. There is interest in the community, however the economic times are not conducive to raising the capital needed to move forward. I am confident that when the time is right, it will happen.

5. *A safe, welcoming, and compassionate downtown Salmon Arm's street solicitation bylaw was controversial when it was introduced. In our experience, Bylaw 4273, together with an increased bylaw presence, has helped reduce persistent solicitation and loitering downtown, concerns that have become more pronounced across many BC communities. People experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges, addictions, and poverty require appropriate and compassionate support. At the same time, a healthy business and property base is essential to the municipal tax base and our community's ability to fund services. How would you pursue compassionate solutions while ensuring that downtown businesses and property owners are supported when dealing with these challenges?*

I was on Council when Bylaw 4273 passed. I was a strong proponent of the bylaw. It is imperative to keep this bylaw in place and enforced. Our zoning bylaws require all banking institutions to have their main branches in the downtown – this is very good for the downtown, as it brings regular traffic there. We have to ensure residents feel safe when coming/going from their bank. While it appears on the surface that homelessness is the problem, in fact addiction, mental health and brain injury drive much of the homelessness. (we are doing a pretty good job of helping those who are in need of housing due to other factors). I am a supporter of continuing to press the province for compassionate, involuntary care beds throughout the province. We need to help the relatively small number of people, who are not able to break the challenge they face on their own, get the help they need.