



Rik Logtenberg

answers Nelson Becker's questions...

Bio

How long have you lived in this area?

Since 2001, with a few gaps.

Do you live within Nelson City Limits or in Nelson's service area?

Nelson's service area

Present and previous employment

Timely Network Inc. CEO

DecisionTree, CTO

City Committees

Nelson Advisory Planning Commission

Other boards and committees

TAWKROC, The Association of West Kootenay Rock Climbers

BC Green Party, Nelson Creston Riding Association, President

Co-Founder, Taybeh

What's unique about you that you feel you can offer to the City?

As a tech entrepreneur and software developer, I bring a fresh perspective, informed by years of work in tech innovation. I have been trained to seek out hard problems, for the opportunities they contain.

What decisions did the last council make that you would not have supported?

I would have made any number of decisions differently; I'm a different person with a different worldview and I wasn't there to influence or be influenced. So I'm not going to litigate council's past decisions, especially without having all the information they did, or the full context. I think they behaved with honesty and integrity and made the best decisions they could, with the information they had.

My decision making will be based on a vision for the Nelson we want to become, as expressed in the Path to 2040 Sustainability and clarified with whatever new information presents itself. I intend to employ an evidence-based decision-making process and I'll encourage my fellow councillors to do the same.

I'll give you one example, and only one, on how this **might** have played out. I would not have raised the rent on Glacier Gymnastics by \$23k/year. I understand the need to pay for the facility's rising utility costs and rent had been held at the same level since 2004, but the sharpness of the increase put the non-profit club in crisis. (Sidebar: I think youth sports are critical to developing a well-rounded person, especially given the epidemic of screen addiction that faces our children. I think the city needs to continue to support the facilities that encourage these nonscreen activities. Connected to that, we have an affordability crisis in Nelson that extends beyond housing. Raising the cost of gymnastics and other sports places that affordability crisis more acutely onto low-income families and kids.) I would have

phased in the increases on a timeline that could be aligned with helping Glacier develop additional grants or fundraising.

What decisions did the last council make that you would support?

See the answer above.

Committees

Nelson has a system of committees. How important are these committees to our city?

Our committees are not particularly important to the city, and that's a shame. The Committee of the Whole is not a sufficient venue for dealing with all the issues that the city faces. The few other committees that we do have (ex. Advisory Planning Commissions, Housing Committee), have gone for long stretches without a meeting or lack a clear mandate.

I think we need to reintroduce a more active and distributed committee system. This improved committee system would be built on a new set of rules, designed to improve collaboration and efficiency while keeping them within the guardrails set by the Path to 2040 Sustainability.

I believe that these new/reenergized committees would attract people with the passion and expertise to effectively gather and analyse information within their domain, and make smart recommendations that Council could trust. I would like to see these committees aligned with the focus areas of the Path to 2040 (Arts, Culture, and Heritage; Energy and Climate Change; Food, Food Security, and Agriculture; Healthy Living and Social Well-Being; Land Use; Water, Waste Water, Stormwater; Transportation and Mobility; Solid Waste; Natural Areas, Recreation, and Leisure; and Local Economy). I think we also should have a committee focused on tackling Wildfire Mitigation, and another dedicated to Improving Communication.

Anything you would do to increase the efficiency and use of the committees?

Keep the focus on the Path to 2040 Sustainability. Encourage the use of weekly online check-ins and video conferencing. Provide required online courses on effective meetings for all committee members. Host an annual celebration/conference for all committee members.

What are the Council's and the Mayor's responsibility to its committees? What are the committees' responsibilities to council?

Committees are responsible for helping Council make the best possible decisions, by providing additional information, ideas and opportunities beyond what staff may produce. Council is responsible for giving their committees a regular and serious hearing and then reporting back to them what council and staff did with their work.

Street culture

Some people have been concerned about Nelson's street culture, panhandlers and people without homes. Does our City Government have any role to play in addressing these concerns?

The City Government has at least *some* responsibility for anything that happens within city limits, including health care, housing and other aspects of social welfare that are not technically within their sphere of *legal* responsibility. Whether they like it or not, Council and staff are constantly making decisions that have a direct impact. I believe that Council should strongly own that responsibility and work to improve the range of housing options available to the homeless. For example, the city owns land that could be sold for affordable housing developments; they could prioritize affordable housing permits and inspections, etc.

Business community

Some of our Nelson business owners have felt they have not been consulted appropriately about issues that affect them. What would you do to mitigate that feeling?

Better communication. More consultation. I am a business owner, so I feel that I understand the unique challenges of running a business and would work hard to rebuild trust and collaboration.

The downtown business community suffers from such issues as limited parking, increased parking rates, competition from online shopping and the mall. What actions would you take to let the downtown business community know you are pro local business?

As a software developer, I have lots of ideas about how to compete with online retailers. If we focus too much on competing for finite local or tourist dollars, we'll miss the opportunities that could come from collaborating online. Nelson local businesses could benefit from shared manufacturing facilities, shared purchasing, shared warehousing and packaging, shared online marketing, etc. I would use my position on council to rally local businesses to take advantage of the numerous opportunities that will come from collaboration.

Housing

Some businesses in the service industry are concerned about the lack of affordable housing for their workers. Can the City do anything to help provide worker's housing?

The Whistler Housing Authority has proven to be a resounding success for creating affordable housing for workers in Whistler. Despite what many think, the Whistler Housing Authority is available to anyone who works in the city, whether for the government, shops, resorts, etc. It's a model that we should seriously look at for Nelson.

Selkirk College has many students who need accommodation. This has put further demand on our already scarce available housing. Can the City do anything to help provide student housing?

Nelson should look at promoting more Seniors-Student Housing and consider selling more land for student residences.

Services

Does Nelson feel old and dated? Are you interested in improving the look and feel of our community?

Nelson does not feel old and dated to me, but I think there's always more work that can be done to improve our urban design.

Money no object, what recreational and/or cultural facilities would you like to see here?

Significantly upgraded Climbing gym, Concert Hall, Early 20th century Surrealist Art gallery, Surf pool, Diving platforms, Indoor track and field facility, IMAX 3d theatre, More mountain biking trails, High-speed Gondola to White Queen, electric go-cart + drone race track.

Would you do anything to help make Nelson more bicycle friendly and what would you do? Bike lanes?

Yes! Absolutely bike lanes. Electric bikes are here and many, many more are coming. They are a quick way to get to Baker St; they save on parking; they help us meet our climate change commitments; they're fun; they're getting more affordable all the time. **But** they are too fast for a car to pass safely and too slow to follow behind. If we don't set up some bike lanes, we're going to see some serious accidents soon.

Can our public transportation system be improved? How?

More vigorous partnerships with Kootenay CarShare and RideShare. Explore electric shuttles, trams and rickshaws. Work on getting more funding from the province. If they intend to meet their Greenhouse Gas emissions targets, they need to dramatically up their investment in public transportation. We need to get a bold and visionary plan ready and get as much as we can from the province to make it happen.

The Regional District of Central Kootenay and the City of Nelson

Over the years the RDCK and City have had conflict over jurisdiction and services such as the Nelson Municipal Library, and Nelson & District Community Complex . These conflicts caused many tough decisions over the years. Is there anything that can be done to encourage better cooperation between the RDCK and the City? Should we be one Regional District?

Are you asking if we should merge with Areas E and F? I don't think so. Seems like it would distract everyone from more important work at hand.

We should, however, get clear about our common regional vision. As it stands, I'm not sure many people have an idea of what our common future might look like and how we should be working together to achieve it.

Cannabis

Do you think the current regulations of quantity and location of cannabis retail stores are appropriate?

I'm not sure if you're referring to Provincial regulations. I think regulations on the quantity and type of any kind of business on Baker Street is appropriate. Baker Street is a shared space and we should regulate the businesses that occupy this premium space for the benefit of other businesses, tourists, and especially residents.

But as a matter of principle, I think cannabis is a medicine that a lot of people rely on to manage their pain and overall wellbeing. We should embrace our local growers, who create a superior product and help them get easier access to our local markets.

Climate change

What role does our municipal government have in helping to reduce the risks of local forest fires, floods and other environmental emergencies?

The BC govt won a new LNG terminal in Kitimat. This one terminal will result in an increase in LNG production and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) equivalent to 900,000 new cars on the road. If the BC government is going to meet its GHG reduction commitments, it needs to figure out how to get an **additional** 900,000 gas cars off the road (or equivalent). They can't do it alone. They need cities like Nelson to get on board in a much bigger way than we had already planned. This creates an opportunity for us: if we act fast and put together a stronger and more compelling plan to reduce our own emissions, I believe that we can win more grants from the BC and the federal government. We can use this money as seed capital to create jobs, lower transportation costs, improve parking, lower traffic noise, and feel good about doing the right thing.

What can be done to improve the City of Nelson's recycling system?

Introduce city composting. Support local upcycling.

Youth

Youth, while not yet able to vote, will be an important part of future elections. How will you involve youth in understanding and participating in our civic government?

Recruit youth membership on every new committee. Give them real responsibility.

How can the Nelson & District Youth Centre be improved?

I don't know. I'll ask people who do.

Final thoughts

Do you have a pet project you would you like to see happen in the next two years?

Ramp up wildfire mitigation. Develop and activate an updated plan to significantly reduce our GHG emissions. Kickoff new committee system.

How will you communicate with citizens of Nelson?

Online video. 3D/VR models. Online conference calls. Regular coffees with Rik. More posters and flyers.

What makes for a happy community?

Affordability. Respectful communication. Pride in the fact that we are a just, moral, and visionary city that takes responsibility for our actions. Natural beauty. Healthy ecosystem. Lots of recreational and cultural opportunities. Prosperous economy. Healthy people. Social stability. Lots of open and interesting conversations with people you like and respect.

Is there anything you would do to help the City government be more transparent and responsive to its citizens?

See above.

Do you see yourself as a leader, or a servant to the community?

Both.