

- 1. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 Standard states that 90 per cent of the time, four fire fighters should be on scene of a residential structure fire in four minutes of receiving the call, and 15 to 17 in eight minutes in order to constitute adequate protection of the public. *Should the Township be working toward this standard? Why, or why not?***

Yes. I believe it is important for the Township to set forth, and achieve, both scientific and aspirational standards with respect to fire safety baselines and benchmarks to meet the growing community need based on a continuous culture of improvement and evidence-based decision making by Council.

I have personally been very committed to working collaboratively with administration and unionized IAFF staff for the last 8 years to ensure that all standards and regulatory requirements are met with respect to service provision, public safety, and the ability to quickly and safely respond to fire incidences based on meeting the 1710 Standard.

If re-elected, I will continue to support budgetary decision prioritizing this funding to achieve this important goal. This reflects a commitment to the 2022 request that Council work collaboratively with the Fire Chief and the union in order to fund long-term safe staffing levels to adequately address current and future population demands.

- 2. Fire protection is not just a cost to the Township of Langley and its taxpayers, but an investment in the community. Adequate fire protection, as described by NFPA 1710, saves lives, reduces property loss, reduces the economic impact of commercial and industrial fires by minimizing job losses and reduces residential and commercial insurance rates. Do you agree or disagree that local government should strive to meet the recommendations in NFPA 1710? Why?**

Yes. It is critical that all elements of residential, commercial, and industrial users be protected against undue economic losses related to fire. Instances of substandard or deficient staffing can exacerbate the economic costs of any fire,

and most particularly, result in other cascading effects such as employment dislocation and other financial consequences related to business closure and the re-building process, if required, based on the severity of the loss and downtime for the business.

- 3. In your view, what things should the Township of Langley consider when making decisions about the number of firefighters on duty, the number of fire apparatus in service and the number of fire stations in the Township?**

I believe that the Township should take a number of things into account when making decisions about the number of firefighters on duty.

Firstly, the number of available personnel should meet the 1710 standard as outlined in question #1.

Staffing decisions also need to reflect the health and morale of the fire fighting team in order to ensure that our first responders are adequately safeguarded when advancing into a fire suppression situation.

It is important that mental health criteria be considered as undue stress generated by front line fire-fighting activities not supported by adequate service provisioning vis-à-vis insufficient staffing is not acceptable.

And finally, first responders must be protected with the requisite number of personnel in order to safely administer fire suppression within the context of how many members are available to enter into a fire scene in order to protect the crew and advance their over-all viability once engaged.

Secondly, the number of fire apparatus available to address a wide range of fire potentialities and other emergencies needs to be consistent with best management practices and industry standards. This calculation further needs to include the unique circumstances of the Township of Langley with respect to emergency calls and hazardous material incidences that requires specialized equipment. It is therefore important to ensure that there are timely reviews and

more in-depth analyses with respect to providing adequate reserve funding and making proactive and informed decisions with respect to the number, and types, of apparatus in service in order to meet the current and projected need.

Thirdly, The Township must continue to rely on evidence-based modelling in order to understand and evaluate where new fire stations should be located. This analysis is based both on existing historical data as well as updated population projections, traffic studies, and other criteria such as service radiuses which are necessary to make critical decisions regarding firehall siting.

Siting considerations must also include other improvements beyond our urbanized areas to include service designed to enhance rural firefighting. This should include operationalizing available new or emerging technologies and equipment to optimize results.

If re-elected, I will continue to advocate for all of the preceding as an indicator and litmus test with respect to our collective commitment to enhanced public safety, going forward

4. What changes, or additions, do you think need to be made to the Township of Langley's fire service?

I believe that the Township needs to move beyond the current five-year planning formula in order to create a more holistic and far-reaching framework to address the exponential growth being experienced through the accelerated introduction of new multifamily, commercial and industrial development throughout the Township.

As per the IAFF delegation to Council of September 25, 2021, this unprecedented growth has created an overwhelming demand for firefighting services necessitating more resources to meet safety standards.

In my opinion, amendments to our current planning should include strategies such as developing a focussed analysis based on the "return on investment"

approach of funding education and preventive staffing based on a proactive management mandate to reduce fire incidences in the longer term.

In addition, safe staffing levels as per scientific standards need to be met and maintained based on basic requirements to replace staff loss due to promotion, retirement, or other leave contingencies.

If re-elected, I will continue to commit to adequate funding for all of these areas in order to ensure the sustainability of our fire model based on all relevant criteria and standards for implementation.

5. With the increase in Interface/Urban/Wildland fires each year during the summer, and given the amount of park, forest & ravine space inside the Township; do you think the TLFD needs to expand its response training & capabilities from “firetrucks and hoses” to include a more specialized ability to fight basic interface fires/have the equipment to provide that service?

I believe that with more incidences of fire leading to increased risk within parks, forested areas and ravines, that the Township needs to expand its training and institutional capacity to adequately respond to this emerging trend.

An investment in training and specialized fire fighting infrastructure for this purpose will help to make the Township and its residents more resilient in the face of future vegetative fires that will inevitably arise as a result of climatic changes enhanced by localized drought conditions.

In addition, I believe that the Township should adopt “fire smart’ community standards in order to create an inter-departmental understanding and adoption of policy and planning tools designed to safeguard our community

from fire contagion based on a number of principles related to building design, siting, and other strategies such as removing combustibles from in and around building infrastructure.

If re-elected, I will continue to advocate for similar policy reviews and expenditures related to climate mitigation which would include strategies to protect the Township from climate-related fire incidences.

- 6. The sufficient fire protection in a community is one (1) Firefighter available to protect every 1,000 Residents. The current fire protection model used in the Township of Langley has one (1) Firefighter on duty for every 1,543 residents. Do you think it's important for the Township of Langley to increase its active roster so as to meet the Fire Service Industry's standard (1:1,000)? If so, how do you suggest this mandate be achieved?**

Yes. I think it is extremely important that we meet the fire Service Industry Standard.

The Township of Langley is one of the fastest growing communities across the province of British Columbia.

Based on this statistic, it is imperative that the Township commit to the industry standard which has been established in order to provide a policy framework ensuring adequate fire staffing and public safety.

In order to achieve this goal, Council must work with the fire department in order to prioritize each individuated need with respect to ensuring core competencies and internal promotion based on adequate training and opportunities to advance within the department. This level of commitment must be matched by budgetary spending within a focussed effort to attract, and maintain, fire service personnel in the Township.

As this is an interest in competition with other local governments, I believe that the Township should review opportunities to incentivize and enhance offerings related to employment with the fire department in order to achieve this goal in order to keep up with population growth.

If re-elected, I will support a review of our current recruitment strategy and request that staff create a matrix which would provide further data with respect to how to achieve needed numbers optimization in the next few years.

7. Under the current Fire Service model in the Township of Langley, emergency incidents in Brookwood will have an average response time of 13.5 minutes and Fort Langley response time of 14 minutes. Do you think this is reasonable? If not, what steps would you take as a member council to fix it, and when?

No. I believe that the current standard is deficient and that Council should act decisively to substantively reduce the average response time to an acceptable norm based on current industry standards.

Council will soon be adopting new neighbourhood plans for the Brookwood Fernridge area which will increase the community population to approximately 39,000 residents.

I believe that a substantive fire and public safety service plan and budget should be integrated into any new plan for the entire area. This plan should dictate the costs and timelines aligned with the development of a new fire hall which is centrally located in order to address new urbanization and population growth in South Langley.

Currently, the Fort Langley firehall is constructed to a post disaster standard and includes updated facilities which enhances its viability relative to other more dated halls across the Township. However, in order to address the sub-par response times as noted in the question, the Township must consider enhanced coverage for the area.

As the largest percentage of growth is expected in the west and northern portions of the Township, the fire department must be resourced to be able to meet increasing demand in and around the Fort Langley area.

In order to meet the demand for enhanced response capabilities, it has been proposed that a new fire hall be constructed near the intersection of 72nd and 232 street. This option could be combined with the potential addition of another hall sited around the intersection of 88th Ave. and 200th St. in order to increase coverage and reduce response times.

If re-elected, I will support a continuing review of these and other options utilizing data-centric analyses to ensure that any new fire hall decision maximizes our ability to provide enhanced coverage and to optimize response times to both of these populations.

8. Currently the Township of Langley Fire Department does not have the ability to execute high angle rescue (for emergencies on cranes, high-rise buildings, bridges and the like) on its own. This service is being contracted out to adjacent Fire Departments causing a delay in response. Do you think the TOL should invest in their own technical rescue teams? Why?

Yes. I believe that the Township's growth trajectory and development of high-rise building infrastructure in an around the 200th Street corridor, in particular, necessitates that we move forward in developing proficiencies in high angle rescues and accumulate the apparatus and equipment necessary to address issues such as crane emergencies and bridge extractions.

Reliance on service providers from other adjacent communities does not create a sufficient sense of certainty and timeliness with respect to responsiveness to these emerging issues.

I believe it is shortsighted to continue to rely on the expertise and equipment of others when we should be proactively developing the expertise and capacity to address these escalating risks as our community continues to grow.

In order not to fall behind, it is important that we address the need now so that we can adequately budget for the necessary equipment and develop the expertise needed so that we will be prepared, in real time, to address this need.

If re-elected, I will advocate for the development of our own technical rescue teams within a defined timeline and budget resources allocated for implementation.

9. Do you think the TLFD should expand to EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) level of training for medical response for firefighters?

Yes. I support enhanced training and a new funding model to defray costs for service provision from first responders firefighters through the Province.

As firefighters are often the first to respond to an emergency, it is important that they be provided with support and further resources to provide critical pre-hospital care and patient medical oversight until EMR arrival.

In fact, many of BC's fire fighting professionals are currently EMR trained and are able to provide significant help in gathering information and performing other functions whilst awaiting ambulance paramedics.

To particularize this growing need, the 2021 heat dome event highlighted our inordinate reliance on our first responder firefighters to meet the assistance needs of those most vulnerable citizens in our communities.

In light of these and other factors, I am therefore supportive of increasing fire fighter skills by formally enhancing the scope of practice for firefighters by acknowledging their de facto current role in important pre-hospital care.

If re-elected, I would support continued advocacy with the Province to secure a negotiated and fair agreement to fund this emerging model.

10. What are your public safety priorities for the Township of Langley and its residents if elected?

My top priorities for public safety would be making substantive headway on the need for more firefighting personnel as well as the development of new fire halls and a co-located emergency response coordinating centre.

Developing and sustaining stakeholder partnerships to include local government and other community agencies should also be the focus of any enhanced planning beyond what is currently envisioned.

This integrated approach will help to address anticipated significant increases in property and infrastructure loss due to climate impact changes related to flooding, wildfires, and other weather-related conditions.

In any emergency, first responders are critical because disasters occur primarily at the local level and governments must be prepared to act to reduce the vulnerability of people and property based on enacting policies to mitigate these impacts.

If re-elected, I will champion a resilient capacity model to include first responders, local government, and other relevant agencies in order to minimize our localized and regional vulnerabilities through funded resiliency planning.

Do you have anything else you would like to add about yourself?

It has been my honour and privilege to serve the Township of Langley as an independent and full-time Councillor for the last eight years.

During that time, I believe that we have made substantive gains with respect to enhancing fire fighting operations by hiring more personnel and developing a plan for needed firehall infrastructure.

During that time, I have personally visited all of our fire stations and am keenly aware of the opportunities to advance more safety improvements with respect to staffing, apparatus, and new fire hall provision.

On a more detailed note, I brought forward a motion that culminated in the development of enhanced fire safety plans as a result of the devastating fire at 208 and 80th Ave. in Willoughby. As we continue to grow in population density, enhancing fire safety during the construction phase is one of the critical ways that we can ensure public safety and protect property in and around construction zones.

In conjunction with this motion, I further investigated mitigation opportunities regarding building materials certified as fire resistant in other jurisdictions, as well as site designs to reduce fire spread and contagion to other structures. I believe that both of these strategies could have merit in the Township based on further analysis.

If re-elected, I will continue to put public safety first and to ensure that both our current and projected residents will receive the best value for fire services based on a committed approach to continual improvement in this regard.