



LEAP Thunder Bay Candidate Survey Lori Paras

1. What contribution to making Thunder Bay a better place to live are you most proud of?

My most recent business The Hub Bazaar located in downtown Fort William is actively helping in the revitalization of the area. We are a retail business incubator that helps entrepreneurs proof their business plans in a low risk /no risk model before venturing out into their own brick and mortar store. Using a community of businesses format we can keep the overhead low so that the entrepreneurs can take home a wage almost from the start.

2. What are three priorities that would guide your work on City Council?

1. Building Economic Growths and Prosperity
2. Community Care- Mending the Social Fabric
3. Improving Communication and Citizen Relations

3. What three community organizations in Thunder Bay are you most interested in supporting?

My business and I support Evergreen, Regional Multi-cultural Youth Council and LU Radio through financial Contributions. We recently held a Food Drive for the Shelterhouse and the RFDA and we will be working with the Rural Cupboard Food Bank starting this November. I have supported many other organizations in my life here in Thunder Bay and in Nolalu, ON where we opened the Riverhouse Resource Centre for the children and youth of the community. It is now called River House Kids and has been running for over 15 years.

4. How would you build relationships between the City of Thunder Bay, Indigenous residents and neighbours?

I am a Pipe Carrier and have been honoured to be taught by the Knowledge Keepers of our Indigenous Communities for close to 30 years now. I am currently involved with Chief Dinah Kanate, Mary Ellen Thomas and Angelo Petta who helped initiate the Friendship Agreement between the City of Thunder Bay, Fort William First Nation, North Caribou Lake, Thunder Bay Police and the Thunder Bay Police Services Board. I helped host one of the Community Stew and Bannock Feasts in the south core of the city and in the planning stages to host an event in the Windsor community with Mary Ellen Thomas.

5. What should the City of Thunder Bay do to pursue reconciliation with Indigenous peoples?

The city needs to have better understanding of the Indigenous communities and work to educate themselves and the citizens about the true Indigenous history. It is one of my top priorities as written in my platform that I have attached. The door must be truly open for change with the Indigenous Community leading the discussion on what they need from the settler society to move forward.

6. The city of Victoria, BC recently removed a statue of Sir John A. MacDonald from in front of their City Hall due to his role in starting Indian Residential Schools. What is your opinion on this?

As a majority of people in the Indigenous Community saw this as a first step to reconciliation it is my duty to open the door for these events to happen.

7. Is the City of Thunder Bay doing enough to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

I think the city of Thunder Bay signs their name to a lot of initiatives in the city and then drop the ball. There is much more that can be done including adapting to climate change and also moving the Thunder Bay Food Strategy forward.

8. The City of Portland, Oregon voted to ban all new fossil fuel infrastructure. Would you vote to do the same in Thunder Bay?

I like to see a plan to limit and eventually ban fossil fuel infrastructure.

9. The Nuclear Waste Management Organization is currently looking at Ignace as a possible site to bury nuclear waste from southern Ontario. Would you vote to prevent the transportation of nuclear waste through our city?

ABSOLUTELY!

10. Would you be willing to get arrested at a protest to protect our natural environment?

Yes. ☺

11. Tell us one example of how you would reduce homelessness and increase housing in Thunder Bay.

I would continue to work with Indigenous Communities who are willing to build housing within the city for the homeless by donating land and other feasible inducements to such projects. I will also lobby and keep this issue front and centre in city council chambers.

12. Would you appeal to the Province to re-instate the Ontario Basic Income Pilot? If so, how?

Yes, and I am pleased with the support from the city, MPP Michael Gravelle and MPP Judith Monteith-Farrell advocating on behalf of the Basic Income Pilot. Keeping this

issue front and centre and working with the other communities affected by this incompetent decision would be my pleasure.

13. Tell us one thing you would do to support local businesses.

As my platform states, I would build a citizen/customer centric culture within city hall that is business friendly. Having owned and operated businesses in the city since 1989 I understand the frustration of opening a business here in Thunder Bay. It is challenging to say the least and there is an attitude within city departments of ultimate authority that drastically needs to change.

14. Tell us one thing you would do to support local food production.

We need to support having urban gardens and I will lobby to have backyard chickens.

15. Tell you one thing you would do to improve the public transportation system.

To be honest I will have to get up to speed with this.

16. Do you support lowering bus fares?

Yes.

17. Would you work to have the Memorial Link, a proposed bike lane linking Port Arthur and Fort William, built within three years?

Yes.

18. Tell us one thing you would do to help Thunder Bay neighbourhoods become safer and more vibrant.

I will advocate strongly to get an appropriate number of "Feet on the Street" in the north and south core downtown communities. I will also advocate for the resources necessary to maintain community policing stations and programs in these neighbourhoods. I am also in favour of community policing partnerships in our most vulnerable neighbourhoods in the city. I will help build partnerships with organizations within the city that have a community policing model built into their strategic plans and with the other Ward Councillors help in organizing grassroots neighbourhood policing teams. We can only be recognized as a strong and vibrant city when our most vulnerable are healthy and safe from harm.

19. Tell us one thing you have done to support racialized people, to increase accessibility, or to support LGBTQ+ people in Thunder Bay.

I opened Cirque du Manger in downtown Port Arthur that quickly became a favourite spot for the LGBTQ community. Ruby Moon and Cirque were proud in our reputation of not discriminating in our hiring practices, and we clearly identified ourselves as a supporter of the LGBTQ and multicultural community.

20. Tell us one thing you would do to support urban infill.

As I relay in my platform, we need to establish an infrastructure policy of redevelopment and repurposing of existing infrastructure. Utilize what the city already owns when possible before taking on expensive capital expenditures

21. How would you put pressure on the province to proceed with the planned safe injection centres in Thunder Bay?

Keeping this issue front and centre and having a strong voice to move it forward. Get involved, stay involved and don't give up 'til it is done.

22. Is there anything else you would like us to know about the vision you have for Thunder Bay?

<https://www.loriparas.com/the-platform>. Thank you for the opportunity.