



## **LEAP Thunder Bay Candidate Survey**

### **Margaret Wanlin**

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

I was the Coordinator for Fast Forward Thunder Bay. This was a community wide planning initiative. We had a steering committee of key community organizations. We led a significant community planning process – meetings, town halls, surveys. We developed an indicators report of key factors in community development. We developed a community strategy that the city and dozens of local organizations signed on to. The strategy was used with the provincial and federal government in describing the community's directions.

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

Triple bottom line: economy, community, environment

Economy: Strengthening the economy so that more people can get good jobs.

Community: Increasing social inclusion, safe neighbourhoods, making Thunder Bay a good place for people of all ages.

Environment: Continuing with EarthCare and its implementation as a partnership of City and Community, using a sustainability lens in decision-making.

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

As a citizen I support many community organizations: Shelterhouse, Regional Food Distribution Association, Roots to Harvest, Leadership Thunder Bay, Salvation Army, United Way and some cultural organizations. City Council receives project proposals from community organizations and there is a process for assessing them. I would be part of that process to ensure that the City's funds are used where they can be most effective in meeting community needs.

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

The City and Fort William First Nation have signed an Agreement of Cooperation. I would encourage the new Council to meet with the FWFN Council to discuss the current state of the relationship and plan for next steps to solve problems and strengthen the relationship. I understand that periodic meetings do occur. They need to continue as we are neighbours in a social, economic and environmental way forever. Thunder Bay is home to a number of Provincial/Territorial Organizations, tribal councils and Indigenous service organizations. Through the Aboriginal Liaison Office relationships have been built. This work needs to be invigorated and continued. Commitment to shared initiatives is important. Political leadership by

City Council is important in this work. We need to work to make Thunder Bay a safe and inclusive place for all of the people who live and visit here. This will take ongoing work. Help will also be needed from Ontario and Canada. City Council can lead by working to establish a climate of collaboration and mutual support.

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

The recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the recommendations of the inquest into the deaths of the seven students which are directed to municipalities are a good starting point. This work of implementation is already ongoing and needs to be continued in collaboration with Indigenous partners as described above. Reconciliation is about building relationships, meeting needs and solving problems.

**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?**

It was a good idea.

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

The City has a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Continued implementation is the key. This will be an increasing priority.

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

Reductions in demand are key to reducing the need for fossil fuel infrastructure. I support installing electric car charging stations to make it easier for people to use electric cars as well as using electric cars for city vehicles where practical. I understand that Portland banned new fossil fuel terminals greater than 2 million gallons and capped the size of existing terminals. The goal was to prevent the building of export scale facilities. I would vote in favour of that ban. I believe that some of our fossil fuels currently come from Superior, Wisconsin. Not an ideal situation so some smaller regional facilities may be needed. Going back to the first point the key is to reduce demand.

**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?**

Yes.

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

Maybe. I have a strong background in mediation, facilitation and conflict resolution so I would be looking for other avenues for finding solutions. Within the role of a city councillor other strategies other than getting arrested are more likely to get results.

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

I really like the concept of the 8-plexes for single people that the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board has developed. I understand there are now two. I am in favour of building more of them. Support services are needed so that hard to house people can be successfully housed. The provincial and federal governments also need to contribute as well.

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

Yes, I would. I would support getting the three participating communities together – Thunder Bay, Lindsay and Hamilton to develop metrics that demonstrate that the program works. Then, the three communities can make their case to Ontario to get this decision reversed.

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

I am a strong supporter of the Shop Local ideal and I would encourage the City to have Local Purchasing policies that encourage local procurement.

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

Make unused city land available for community gardens where there is neighbourhood interest and provide access to water.

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

The City population is always changing and moving around. Transit has completed a Master Plan and adjusted routes to address these changes. I would want to see updates on Master Plan implementation and I would want to see the results of regular passenger surveys to see how users feel that the system could be improved. I would keep the south terminal at City Hall. I think it's great that the city has created a civic space that is for everyone and is enlivened by the hustle and bustle that the buses and their riders bring.

**16. Do you support lowering bus fares?**

I don't know. I would need to look into it and compare our rates with other cities and with operating costs. I am glad that University and College student fees include bus passes. That helps students to get around and enjoy the whole city as well as making more areas of the city available for them to live. Students also provide much-needed volume which helps to fill buses in our sprawling city. Operating a bus system in a city with higher density is obviously more efficient.

**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 really like the idea of neighbourhood walking programs like the one that Evergreen does each week. These could be started in other neighbourhoods in the city.

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

I have been involved with Leadership Thunder Bay as a facilitator for 11 of its 15 years. A key learning area is regarding diversity and acceptance. We regularly have speakers and discussions on all accessibility and inclusion topics and we take the Leadership Thunder Bay group to the annual Diversity Breakfast. Education is a key step in improving inclusion.

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

This is very important. We need to rehabilitate and reuse brownfields and increase the density of the city. Timmins has a program to encourage brownfield redevelopment. We should look into that. Appropriate zoning and making available city lands for multi-residential construction are steps the city can take.

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

Work with the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy partners to develop materials that describe Thunder Bay's particular needs and issues. Assemble statistics from elsewhere that show the efficacy of safe injection sites. Then the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meet with the Minister of Health to make the case using a well-prepared presentation. If that doesn't work then a communications and lobbying strategy is needed including working with other municipalities and municipal organizations.

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

Strengthening partnerships is a key strategy for advancing our community. By working together to face our realities and make plans to move forward, progress can happen. This is my favourite community development quote – it comes from Inter Pares.

*“Communities are not built by outsiders with ideas no matter how good or money no matter how much. They are built by people from within who discuss priorities, make plans, organize themselves, allocate resources and build institutions to support their goals. Development is not a product. It is a process.”*