



LUSH VALLEY

## 2018 COMOX VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SURVEY FOR MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES

### **RESPONSES FROM CITY OF COURTENAY MAYORAL, COUNCILLOR & SCHOOL TRUSTEE CANDIDATES**

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*Total Number of Surveys Sent to City of Courtenay Candidates: 22*

*Total Number of Candidates who Responded: 11*

**CANDIDATE NAME: BOB WELLS**

Candidate Position: Mayor

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I would work with existing coalitions that are focused on this issue. It is critical to make data driven decisions to move the dial. I would look for opportunities for success.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

Yes

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

Yes. I think there has been much success with the Homelessness Coalition and Child Care Collaborative. Working with all levels of government will help create policy and funding where necessary. The biggest food security issue I see is access to nutritional food.

LUSH Valley Food Action Society

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4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?

Yes

5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?

We already use Native Sons Hall and Comox Valley Exhibition grounds for farmers markets and I will continue to support them. I will support community gardens and think partnering with schools makes good sense so kids are taught the joy of growing their own food.

6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?

I will create a Homelessness Strategy and ensure the City is a partner with the Homelessness Coalition. I will work with senior levels of government to ensure policy and funding to combat food insecurity, poverty and affordable housing.

7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?

Thanks for providing these questions. Creating a Regional Food Policy Council and reviewing the 2010 Sustainability Strategy are part of my vision to create a culture of collaboration and cooperation between Courtenay and other governments and organizations that are already working on these issues.



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: ERIK ERIKSSON**

**Candidate Position: Mayor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**
- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**
- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**
- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant ‘food security actions’ outlined in the strategy?**
- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers’ markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**
- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**
- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

Thanks for this. All I can say in answer to your questions is that I am supportive of food security initiatives. I am certainly open to good ideas in this regard. I was a Director of the Food Bank Society for many years and I therefore have some hands on understanding of the issue. I toured your Community Garden and participated in the fruit tree program. Thank you for all your good work.



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: HAROLD LONG**

**Candidate Position: Mayor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**
- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**  
Yes
- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**
- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant ‘food security actions’ outlined in the strategy?**
- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers’ markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**
- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**
- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

Harold Long passed on regrets that he was not able to complete the survey due to personal circumstances.



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: DOUG HILLIAN**

**Candidate Position: Councillor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

This is certainly a challenge that requires us to work together at the local, regional and provincial level. I have been a long-time supporter of the food bank and of Lush Valley, two organizations I would like to see collaborating to address food supply and nutrition. I would continue to support these organizations, including with support grants for Lush as we have previously. If we support Lush, we can enhance their capacity to promote community garden produce, recovery from super markets and perhaps a meat supply through working with our Fish and Game Club. Beyond that, we need to pressure our senior governments for income security programs, school food programs and access to food as a right. I was able to meet several months ago with MLA Mabel Elmore who was working on the province's poverty reduction strategy and am hopeful that tangible results are coming from our provincial government this Fall.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

Yes. I've read the Food Charter and would support adoption in Courtenay.

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

Yes, this seems an excellent idea. There are many positive initiatives going on in what is essentially a very caring community, but a formal Council can bring people together to clarify priorities and maximize effort. There are many priorities but I would see child and family poverty as being a serious concern and the development of programming and advocacy to get nutritious food to those in need our top priority. I'd also like to see our Economic Development Society working to match young farmers with access to land so that we can produce more food on agricultural land currently lying fallow.

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- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant ‘food security actions’ outlined in the strategy?**

Yes. One of the goals of the Sustainability Strategy is a Food Policy Council, so I think such a body would be very useful in working with local governments to implement other goals. We would need such collaboration to prioritize and work through the practical challenges of some of the goals. We have come some distance in working with the construction development and conservation sectors and, although staff capacity is always an issue, we can strive for similar collaboration with the food sector of our community.

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers’ markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

Yes. Courtenay already provides land to Lush for a community garden and we can likely find more if we develop the capacity to manage it. The City has also co-operated with locating the Farmer’s Market when it sets up down town. I think our first priority would be assuring that food security is on our agenda and that we are engaged with the relevant agencies so that the many related issues can be discussed and addressed as a community. One idea I wonder about is trying to match people who have gardens but cannot work them (seniors, people with physical challenges, etc) with people who don’t have gardens (apartment dwellers, etc) but would work the land in exchange for produce.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

I have worked on Council to address homelessness and it has been a long struggle but we are seeing progress with the development of Braidwood, the 8th St supportive housing project and smaller projects fostered by our community agencies and the Homelessness Coalition, where I attend as the City representative. We have also given tax concessions and other support to local organizations providing housing like Habitat, L’Arche, Transition Society, Wachiay, Salvation Army and Dawn to Dawn. We have more opportunity to build on this progress and must keep the momentum going. Regarding awareness, the City’s involvement as a partner in food security and poverty reduction projects would help through our website and potential co-sponsorship of community forums and other events.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

I attended the last Lush Valley AGM and a tour of the community garden and am pleased to see the good work being done and the growth of the organization. If privileged to continue serving, I look forward to the opportunity to continue to work together. For further information, please see my website: [doughillian.ca](http://doughillian.ca)



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: KIYOSHI KOSKY**

Candidate Position: Councillor

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I am not sure how I will do this. I will need input from knowledgeable people to be affective. I am not very knowledgeable in this area and do not have enough information to have intelligent commentary. I am a hard worker and willing to seek out the information.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by Island Health). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

I would absolutely support this Food Charter.

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

I would support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council. I would advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues. The food security issue is a priority for this region considering the lack of locally grown food year-round. I believe we import 80 percent of our food to Vancouver Island. We need to grow more local food here. This will increase our community's social, economic, and environmental well-being as stated in the Community Charter.

- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**



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I will encourage the adoption of relevant food security actions in the Sustainability Strategy.

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your priority?**

I would absolutely support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems. I am not sure what would be my priority. First, I would **listen**. Then I would **learn**. Finally, I would **lead** and take direction from citizens on the priorities for local food systems.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

I will collaborate with community organizations and listen to the needs of the organizations already taking actions to reduce homelessness and poverty. I will collaborate with community organizations and push for a model like the Whistler Housing Authority to create affordable housing. The Courtenay Municipal Affordable Housing Reserve Fund has \$492,421 as of December 31, 2017. I will inquire about the Housing Reserve Fund developer contribution to qualify whether the amount they pay into the reserve fund is still appropriate given the current profits in the free market.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

This is one of my platform pieces contributing to creating affordable housing.

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*(Please note that LUSH Valley has not included campaign platforms in the compiled survey responses)*



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: MELANIE MCCOLLUM**

**Candidate Position: Councillor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I have a great deal of admiration for the work that Lush Valley does for food local security. I would support the expansion of community gardens and more food producing vegetation planted in city spaces. Could support education and promotion of fruit and nut tree planting on private and public land.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

Yes

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

Yes. Educating the public on the importance of food security and sourcing locally is something I would support at the city council level. I also know that Vancouver does an annual mass fruit tree purchase at their public works yard. Vancouver residents are invited to buy fruit trees at cost of \$10.00 - substantially less than a nursery purchase.

- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**

Yes



## LUSH VALLEY

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

Yes. I would support using municipal lands for community gardens. They have big community benefits and can be developed at a relatively low costs on available land.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

Engage with the public and inform when possible. It's also very important for our local government to advocate for funding and solutions from other levels of government to help fund local projects.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: WENDY MORIN**

Candidate Position: Councillor

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I'm thrilled that we have the LUSH Valley Food Action Society that provides such great programming to address food security issues in our community. I would like to see all municipalities and the Regional District expand collaborative efforts to support LUSH Valley programs. We live in a region rich with food production opportunities, and I think we need to do more to promote locally grown and produced food. This should be a focus of economic development that will also serve to increase access to healthy food for local residents. We also need to take action on items in our Sustainability Strategy that address food security.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

I think adoption of a Food Charter is a great idea and I would support that.

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

Yes, I would support the development of a Regional Food Policy Council and would advocate to work with other levels of government on food security issues. I think we have some amazing initiatives underway in the region and I would like to see better coordination throughout the region to be more effective in our efforts. I think a priority is to aim for at least 50% of our food to be grown/produced locally. This would not only improve food security, but would create economic benefits, and be better for the environment. We know that access to local food offsets fuel emissions and saves money on safe storage and refrigeration.

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- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**

Yes, I think there are many actions we can implement. Some of the actions I'd like to see are the following: support the creation of a year-round, permanent Farmer's Market and perhaps create smaller, satellite markets in neighbourhoods; promote buying locally through a comprehensive marketing strategy; consider bylaw changes to allow for keeping of small livestock/poultry within the City of Courtenay; consider the inclusion of fruit trees on city boulevards and public parks; and provide incentives for neighbourhoods and housing complexes that convert gardens and lawns to food gardens.

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

Yes, I would support using city lands for more community gardens. I would also like to see new multi-unit housing, ie. townhouses incorporate food gardens into the plans. As a municipality, we can make this a condition of new developments.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

As someone who has worked in social services for over 20 years, I know the importance of addressing poverty, housing, and food security issues. Some local politicians will say that it is not within a municipality's mandate to take action on these issues, but I disagree. The more we can do to mitigate these social problems, the healthier and more vibrant our community will be. There will be economic benefits as well. As a city councilor my job would be to represent all citizens. I will advocate strongly for affordable housing and food security actions, and will work hard to create partnerships with other local government, provincial and federal governments.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

I would like to see local governments foster Reconciliation efforts, in a variety of ways. One way that ties in with food security is to promote and support local First Nations with their efforts to produce and supply food sources. We can also create opportunities to partner with First Nations to deliver education and learn from traditional teachings.



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: WILL COLE-HAMILTON**

Candidate Position: Councillor

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

The root cause of food insecurity is poverty. As a City we can work to address poverty in several ways.

-Efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing will help to ease the burden of housing costs. This can be done through zoning changes which increase density by reducing setbacks, varying parking requirement for multi unit buildings, allowing more finished square footage on lots in the area around downtown, reducing development cost charges for buildings with high density rental units, and by simplifying the process of approving secondary suites.

-Seeking new partnerships with BC Housing to increase the number of supported housing spaces in the City

-Working with other municipalities through the Union of BC Municipalities and Canadian Federation of Municipalities to advocate for basic income guarantees

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

The VI Food Charter is a very comprehensive document - it brings together the roles of the federal, provincial and local governments as well as non-government actors (like colleges and universities) all in one clear and comprehensive document. Because it brings together multiple levels of government, no one level could adopt it in its entirety.

One of the provisions which is most clearly within the jurisdiction of local government is the one regarding food production, acquisition, consumption, recovery and waste.

In terms of food production, the City can contract with an organization like Lush Valley to offer a wider range of education programs for local residents who wish to begin growing their own food, or who wish to build their skills set. The same could be done regarding composting. These could be held on site at community gardens. Which would help to introduce community gardens to people who had not previously made use of them

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In terms of food acquisition, the city can work with the Comox Valley Farmers' Market (CVFM) - ensuring that the CVFM has access to the Native Sons Hall for the full winter season, promoting the CVFM year-round on its website. This would help people find out when it is at the CV Exhibition Grounds and when it moves to Native Sons Hall - it would also help to make people aware of the mid-week summer market downtown. Another way in which the City can help with acquisition would be to allow end of driveway sale of produce - if you want to sell apples or bundles of kale from your garden, the City should allow you to sell that directly to your community. Campbell River already allows this, and it has been a great success.

Food recovery and waste is an area where the City can help. We should begin pickup of waste food and kitchen scraps. Many people do not have the space to compost or are concerned about wildlife - we should allow them to put this waste out alongside their yard waste. This will ensure a rich supply of compost which the city could make available to community gardens and members of the community.

Another way in which City's can support the Food Charter is to protect and preserve lands and waters on which our food system depends. We need to ensure that the ALR is not encroached upon by development (like the proposed Agriplex). We also need to take action to care for our waterways and wetlands. Kus-Kus-Sum, which is a joint project of the City of Courtenay, K'omoks First Nation and Project Watershed is an excellent example. So is the recent purchase by the CVRD (of which Courtenay is a part) of 113 acres of land surrounding the east end of Comox Lake. This will help to preserve our access to clean and safe drinking water.

**3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

A CV Regional Food Policy Council would allow local groups working on food security issues to work together collaboratively. I envision a Council composed of Lush Valley, Island Health, the CV Homelessness Coalition, the CV Community Health Network, Community Garden groups, the CV Farmers Market and Wachiay Friendship Centre and representatives of local government. I would like to see the City support this would by promoting the initiative on the City's website and waiving fees for use of a City facility for meetings.

The City and the CVRD should work with provincial government bodies like BC Housing and Island Health, and federal bodies like Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to address issues which are closely linked to food security - specifically affordable housing and the health impacts of poverty and food insecurity.

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**4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**

The Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy (CVSS) is a planning document with over 500 phased, targeted recommendations covering the time period 2010-2050. The CVSS recommendations cover a range of actors from local governments, provincial government institutions (School District 71, Island Health), federal institutions (CFB Comox, YQQ) and non-government actors (CVEDS, NIC). There are many provisions which fall within the domain of local governments. As it would not be possible to promote all of them at the same time, I have selected 5 which could be a focus for action in the term of the next council:

- 6.1.1 a the creation of a Comox Valley Food Policy Council for the reasons set out in question 3
- 6.1.1 c within the RGS review process manage growth and preserve farmland
- 6.1.1 f promote efficient composting and waste management systems
- 6.1.3 b lobby provincial governments to include Farmers Market coupons as part of income assistance programs for individuals
- 6.1.4 a support community gardens in multi-unit residential developments

**5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

Yes, I would, and community gardens would be my priority. I would like to see community gardens in more locations around Courtenay. Giving all residents the opportunity to grow their own fresh, local food is a real and tangible contribution to food security. Community gardens also serve as informal hubs for food sharing, building support networks for vulnerable community members and as places where new gardeners can gain knowledge, skills and encouragement.

The City had a coop student map out potential sites for community gardens in 2013. They found 28 possible sites around the city. I have attached this report to my response. My first priority would be developing community gardens on some of these sites, starting with those in areas of greatest food insecurity.

**6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

In question 1 I addressed the issue of food insecurity and its relation to poverty. I also set out some steps that can and should be taken to address the shortage of affordable housing in Courtenay.



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I will, in my discussions with Courtenay residents and in deliberations in council seek to draw the link between these three factors (food insecurity, poverty and affordable housing). In our planning and decision making the City should try to implement related solutions to these related problems. An example would be to ensure that affordable housing projects have some space in their gardens set aside for food production.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: PENNY MARLOW**

**Candidate Position: Councillor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I am very supportive of the work done by Lush Valley and the Island Health Food Security Hub. These Community grass roots organizations and their work need to be encouraged and supported. It is only through community initiative and support that we can effectively share the region's food production at a cost that is affordable to all our citizens. As a City Councillor, I will ensure that municipal facilities and property are available as resources to this Food Share initiative. Land parcels that are unused can be made available to the society for food production, be that gardens or fruit tree planting.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

Yes. Food Security is part of our commitment to a Sustainable Society. We must all do our part to restore and preserve a healthy environment. Think globally and act locally. Our municipal governments can facilitate this drive for a sustainable environment by ensuring that our policies, such as zoning, allow this community initiative to move forward.

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

Yes, food security should be a coordinated island wide initiative. It cannot just be a single municipality, but there must be consistent policies across the region and the whole island. The local governments should not be the lead organizations for this initiative, but should leave that to other organizations that are better focused and prepared at the grassroots level to implement the local actions. The local governments are part of the solution and I will actively support our City's participation. The municipalities often have land that sits unused for short and long periods of time. These could be made available for gardens and fruit trees.

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- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant ‘food security actions’ outlined in the strategy?**

Yes, I support the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy, as well as the Regional Growth Strategy. Both of these community developed documents are about improving the quality of life and the environment for our citizens. I am certainly in agreement with Food System goals 6.1 and 6.2 and the stated local government actions, that are outlined in the Sustainability Strategy

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers’ markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

Yes, we need to do more to develop and promote locally supplied food. The vision stated in the Sustainability Strategy is still relevant today. The local governments can encourage community gardens, farmers markets and related facilities through their Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoning. As noted above, I would begin by having the City make available any suitable surplus lands for food production.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

These three issues (food security, poverty, affordable housing) are large and go beyond the City of Courtenay and the Comox Valley. We must have a strategy that includes our region, the island, province and national levels. However, we must initiate action locally. Further community discussion is required in developing an effective strategy. I support the leadership role that Lush Valley and Food Security Hub have taken. I expect that your organizations will identify the action steps and bring a plan forward to the City. I support affordable housing strategies (small homes, densification) that fit with our sustainable environment objectives. I would be pleased to discuss these in more detail.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**

We must not forget the impact that climate change will have on food production in our region. We should be planning and getting ready for this. I trust that your organization, along with your partners, will provide the leadership to the rest of us in the valley. Thank you for taking on this role. As you City Councillor, I look forward to working with you and your members. I hope that I can count on your support on October 20th. Penny Marlow. Candidate for Courtenay City Councillor.



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: JUDITH MURAKAMI**

Candidate Position: Councillor

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

I believe that access to healthy food is not only a right of all citizens, but critical to all ages, especially children and the elderly, who are most at risk. I would like to see partnerships between schools (including the child development centre, the LINK, and the Boys and Girls Club with stores so that food is not wasted and can help feed those who are hungry. I understand that the Sunshine Lunch Club is first class, and would like to see a training component offered, where people are able to learn skills. There are a lot of kitchens in community buildings that could offer cooking programs to help people learn how to cook, vs. eat canned goods. Partnering LUSH with home economic teachers, mental health workers (Eureka Society), and the Food Bank would reach the people who need these skills. Having the City of Courtenay partner with the United Way/Comox Valley Community Foundation to ensure funding for LUSH would help agencies get the biggest bang for their buck.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**

ABSOLUTELY!

- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**

YES! YES! Protecting and ensuring our agricultural land and supply of drinking water for home and farms.

LUSH Valley Food Action Society  
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CRA # 866653637RR0001



## LUSH VALLEY

- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**

Yes, although I'm not sure why the Mid Island Farmers Institute has not been included in this strategy.

- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

I fully support community gardens, (i.e. 6th & Harmston) where participants receive the fruits of their labour in exchange for their sweat equity. Food gardens should be mandatory at schools so that children learn not only where food comes from, but they can learn how to grow food as a lifelong skill. Food that is grown can be used to feed the students, and a cooking program that uses the produce is an excellent way to grow healthy eaters and provide training for a future career. Community Gardens should be part of community planning for all new housing developments.

- 6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

The supportive housing initiative could include space/tools for a community garden. Inviting members of the surrounding neighbourhood could build bridges with people who are currently concerned about the clientele. Some of the residents at the BC Housing development at Washington Inn are currently receiving delivery from the Food Bank. Would it be possible to have a community garden for residents there, which has the same benefits as #4.

- 7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**



## LUSH VALLEY

**CANDIDATE NAME: TOM GRANT**

**Candidate Position: Councillor**

- 1. In the Comox Valley, we estimate that 1 in 5 people experience poverty and food insecurity. Healthy food and community food engagement have been shown to lead to significant long-term health and well-being outcomes, especially for children. If elected, what would you do to ensure all residents have access to healthy food? How will you support community-based food security programs?**

Council can certainly work with ideas that members of non-profit groups bring forward. For example, as a member of Dawn to Dawn, I am proud to have championed the creation of the Community Garden on Harmston Ave. The City of Courtenay supplied land and water. It was an excellent collaborative effort.

- 2. A Vancouver Island Region Food Charter has been written and supported by food security organizations across Vancouver Island (these are funded by *Island Health*). It sets out a vision for a health-oriented, local and equitable food system. If elected, would you support the adoption of this Food Charter for your jurisdiction?**
- 3. The development of progressive food security policy is important at all levels of government. If elected, would you support the development of a Municipal/Regional Food Policy Council? Would you advocate for local jurisdictions to work with other levels of government on food security issues? What food security issues do you see as being a priority for this region?**
- 4. In 2010, the region created a comprehensive [Sustainability Strategy](#). If elected, will you encourage the adoption of relevant 'food security actions' outlined in the strategy?**
- 5. Would you support using municipal/regional lands and infrastructure to develop local food systems (e.g. farmers' markets, community gardens, land leasing, etc). If yes, what would be your first priority?**

I did actively work for the creation of the Community Garden we have in the City of Courtenay. As I understand, the Farmers' Market already uses City Property for their markets. Volunteer groups such as Comox Rotary use public facilities to make soup for a school lunch program. The City should continue to support as many of these ventures which make a real difference to our citizens.

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## LUSH VALLEY

**6. What will you do to increase awareness of food insecurity and address related issues such as poverty and affordable housing?**

I will continue to work with our front line workers and agencies and am open to learning more to help our City and all our citizens become healthy contributing members. Back in late 2007, I chaired Courtenay's Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness which has made great gains on helping those most in need in our Valley. However, there is still much to do, including the formation of an Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team. Ten years have passed without action on this. If elected, I will encourage all Valley politicians to join me to finally implement an ACT Team to ease the burden on our front-line workers. Further, it is imperative that we create an ongoing dialogue between the DBIA and frontline workers. It is also important to develop a cohesive partnership between our new RCMP Superintendent and overextended frontline workers. I will also advocate for a homeless drop in Centre complete with laundry facilities and free coffee and tea. These initiatives can be accomplished without raising taxes one penny.

**7. Do you have any other comments related to food security you would like to share?**