OCCA Communities Association (OCCA)

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2026 BC provincial election: Candidates' Responses to Community Priorities

This document presents candidates' responses to three community priorities identified through OCCA's Community Priorities Survey: Multicultural Inclusion & Belonging; Youth, Families & Seniors; and Civic Participation & Representation.

Responses are listed in the order they were received. "No response received by the publication deadline" indicates that a candidate's response had not been received when this document was finalized.

OCCA Communities Association is a non-partisan registered charity and does not endorse any candidates. This document is provided for community information only.

Photo source: Central Okanagan Candidates - BC Election 2026

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Gavin Dew

Party: BC Conservative

Riding: Kelowna-Mission

Question 1: Multicultural Inclusion, Economic Participation & Belonging

Racism and discrimination have no place in British Columbia. Everyone deserves safety, respect and equal opportunity.

My family is half Chinese, and I value opportunities for my children to celebrate their heritage and experience other cultural traditions. Having attended many OCCA events and spoken with Job Connect for Future (JCF) participants, I've seen how OCCA brings communities together.

Newcomers start businesses at high rates, creating jobs and strengthening our economy. Provincially, I support faster recognition of international credentials while maintaining professional standards, stronger connections between job training and employers, and fewer barriers to starting and growing a business.

JCF helps newcomers build networks and enter the workforce, but these efforts must be matched by a stronger economy. We need to attract investment, support small businesses and create good jobs so people from every background can build a future here.

Question 2: Youth, Families & Seniors

Affordable childcare helps parents participate in the workforce. Families should be able to access essential services based on their needs, not their connections or ability to navigate complicated systems. I support expanding $10-a-day and other affordable childcare, prioritizing families facing the greatest barriers and respecting parental choice.

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We need strong schools, opportunities for young people to find their first jobs, and better health care, including more capacity at Kelowna General Hospital. Seniors deserve better home-care options, more long-term-care beds and protection from rising costs, including reversing changes to provincial property-tax deferral.

Services must also be available in ways that are linguistically and culturally accessible. Trusted community partners like OCCA can help government connect people with services and community programs, particularly newcomers and seniors who may face additional barriers.

Our goal should be opportunity for every community and every generation, throughout British Columbia.

Question 3: Civic Participation & Representation

Elected representatives must listen to everyone, whether they voted for them or not, and make themselves proactively available to every community. That means showing up throughout the year, not just during elections. I've attended many OCCA events and value its role as a platform connecting multicultural communities across the Okanagan.

I would continue meeting directly with grassroots organizations, seeking their input early when provincial decisions affect them, and explaining how that input shaped decisions. Plain-language communications and appropriate language access can help newcomers and others participate in public consultations.

OCCA's nonpartisan voter education work matters. Helping people understand our institutions and exercise their right to vote strengthens our democracy.

Community nonprofits need dependable partnerships with government. I support fair and transparent funding processes, less administrative red tape and accountability for results, so organizations can focus on serving people.

Engagement should be ongoing, respectful and genuinely two-way.

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Abraham Nordine

Party: OneBC

Riding: Kelowna-Mission

I support some of your agenda and oppose others.

For example, your signature line says preferred pronouns (she / her / hers). I think saying these things are nonsense and confusing to children that are exposed to it.

Also, you sign off with the usual "traditional, ancestral and **unceded**"…. I strongly oppose this and so should you based on your organizations agenda. Again for example, you want to welcome immigrants to Canada and our local community. Yet you declare these lands are effectively stolen. By what right do we have to invite and accept new people to this beautiful country if the land we live on is stolen. Shouldn't that matter be settled first and then whomever owns the land gets to decide? I oppose any level of government using this land acknowledgement.

My in-laws are first generation immigrants and speak English as a second language. I understand the complexity of feeling welcome and integrating into society. Local non-profit cultural societies provide a great deal of help in this regard. Also our community college providing course options for newcomers and language courses is vital. The more we can support out college the more it trickles down into these vastly different cultures to integrate. However, our k-12 system is not equipped or funded to be a stopgap for all peoples and all languages to assimilate. The funding is impossible. So it's about partnerships with groups and non-profits and post-secondary schools.

I oppose racisms. I believe every person is inherently valuable because we are made in the image of God.

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I oppose the promotion of 2SLGBTQIA+ ideology. I believe what a person does in the bedroom need not require a parade and stickers all over businesses. And most certainly it should not be promoted in the school classroom.

I believe voices can be heard in many ways… however, voting is for citizens only. Nonetheless, inform your local MLA of issues on an ongoing basis. They are there to assist. I would always been willing to hear your concerns.

I believe we must manage the rate of immigration so as not to strip our publicly funded institutions like health-care. We are not in a position to financially support anyone and everyone. That is not racist, it is a fact of our fiscal situation. I do like 'sponsorship' whereby a Canadian can guarantee an immigrant financially for a period of time while they get setup. Keep in mind Kelowna has one of the highest unemployment ratios in all of Canada. We must be honest in these types of conversations.

I endorse more aggressively considering foreign credentials. And when they are approved, a more rapid immigration process.

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Carter Mochinski

Party: BC Green

Riding: Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream

These questions are incredibly important to the BC Greens and me. We appreciate the scope of these questions and that you are taking the time to read my answers. We need a government that works for all British Columbians, and we are committed to that.

1. Multicultural Inclusion, Economic Participation & Belonging

We are focused on creating a BC that works for and with everyone. We know that the systems that operate our province are entrenched in systemic racism. That is why we have committed to the following policy approaches.

-Continue to support the First Nations Health Authority's work to address systemic racism and

improve Indigenous life expectancy.

-Transform the policing and justice systems to prioritize accountability, equity and community

safety. These changes will focus on addressing systemic racism and gender-based violence,

enhancing transparency, and ensuring fair treatment for all citizens, with particular attention to

Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, and marginalized groups.

-Enhance and standardize education and training for justice system actors on topics such as

cultural safety, anti-racism, mental health awareness, and de-escalation. This will involve

ensuring that all learning is distinctions-based, evidence-based, and trauma-informed.

2. Youth, Families & Seniors

We believe that the Government is responsible for ensuring that the experience for children in

the education system, no matter who they are or where they are in the province, is an equitable

one. The same goes for healthcare, employment opportunities, seniors services, etc. We

commit to the following policies to address some of these problems; there are more, but these

highlight some specific steps we want to take.

-Examine and address disparities and any inequitable impacts of mental health legislation on

people based on identity, including but not limited to Indigenous People, Black and racialized

communities, people with disabilities, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

-Provide adequate and equitable funding for Indigenous-led Complex Care Housing, designed

and determined by Indigenous communities. This will include trauma-informed housing

allocations and supported Rent Supplements set aside for Indigenous Peoples and

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administered in line with guidance from Indigenous organizations and communities, surrounded

by supportive services.

3. Civic Participation & Representation

We have always been and will continue to support the idea of citizens' assemblies in the legislature. These are special assemblies where diverse groups of everyday people are selected to advise the government on public opinions and beliefs on a specific issue. We would ensure more of those happen and that all groups have the opportunity to have their voices heard.

I definitely speak for all my fellow BC Green candidates when I say, if elected, one of our most important priorities is representing the constituents we were elected by. No matter where they are on the political spectrum, no matter what colour their skin is, no matter their age, everyone deserves fair, equitable government representation and for that representation to hear them and their concerns

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Kristina Loewen

Party: BC Conservative

Riding: Kelowna Centre

Response received after the 12:00 p.m. deadline on October 19, 2026.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on these important community priorities. I appreciate the work OCCA does to bring people together, encourage civic participation, and ensure more voices are heard.

1. Multicultural Inclusion, Economic Participation & Belonging

I believe everyone deserves the opportunity to build a good life here in British Columbia, regardless of where they come from. Racism and discrimination have no place in our communities.

We need to remove unnecessary barriers that prevent skilled newcomers from contributing to our economy. That means faster recognition of foreign credentials, reducing red tape for small businesses, and creating more opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship.

I've heard firsthand about the challenges people face navigating government systems. Whether it's finding employment, accessing healthcare, or starting a business, government should be helping people succeed, not standing in their way.

Kelowna is stronger because of the different cultures, experiences, and perspectives that make up our community. I will continue supporting opportunities that bring people together and ensure everyone has a fair chance to participate, contribute, and feel they belong.

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2. Youth, Families & Seniors

As a mother of four, and through my work advocating for families and seniors, I know how difficult it can be when essential services aren't there when you need them.

I've advocated for patients struggling to access healthcare, seniors facing unacceptable long-term care options, and families navigating gaps in support services.

We need more doctors and frontline healthcare workers, better access to childcare, stronger support for children with autism and disabilities, and education and training opportunities that prepare young people for good-paying jobs.

I'm also committed to protecting seniors on fixed incomes, including reversing changes to the property tax deferment program that make it harder for them to remain in their homes.

Services must be accessible and responsive to people's needs, including language, financial, and cultural barriers.

Compassion isn't just something we talk about. It needs to show up in the decisions we make and the people we help.

3. Civic Participation & Representation

One of the most important parts of representing Kelowna Centre has been listening to people who feel their concerns aren't being heard.

I've hosted community town halls, met with families, healthcare workers, seniors, and local organizations, and brought their concerns directly to government. Some of the most important advocacy I've done began with one person reaching out and sharing their story.

I believe meaningful representation means making government accessible, listening beyond election season, and ensuring people know their voices matter.

That includes working closely with multicultural and grassroots organizations, supporting accessible and multilingual civic education, and involving young people and newcomers in community conversations.

Nonprofits are often the first place people turn for help. They deserve genuine

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partnerships, less administrative burden, and more predictable support.

My commitment is simple: listen, show up, and make sure people aren't forgotten.

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Saoirse MacKinnon

Party: BC Green

Riding: Kelowna-Mission

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1. Multicultural Inclusion, Economic Participation & Belonging

I would continue with the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, and subsequent evaluation and revision as results from that become available. I appreciate and acknowledge my white privilege, but as a transgender woman, I am no stranger to discrimination and marginalization. Hate has no place in our province, and I intend to make it a better place for us all to live.

I would support services targeted at newcomer integration, and push for the revision of foreign credential recognition at both provincial and federal levels. By recognizing the credentials that newcomers have, it allows them to have better employment opportunities, and in turn, provides BC with more professionals.

2. Youth, Families & Seniors

We need to increase support for youth, families, and seniors to ensure that everyone can have a fulfilling life (throughout their entire lives). People face disadvantages in our community for many different reasons (language, race, cultural background, etc.), and I intend to work towards a more equitable province for everyone, stressing equity over equality.

3. Civic Participation & Representation

A key component of the job of an MLA is to hear what their constituents have to say, and represent them properly in our provincial government, This is something that many MLAs seem to have forgotten, but I promise to follow through on if I am elected.

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Loyal Wooldridge

Party: BC NDP
Riding: Kelowna Centre

Response received after the 12:00 p.m. deadline on October 19, 2026.

1. Multicultural Inclusion, Economic Participation & Belonging

I've lived in the Okanagan my whole life as an entrepreneur and local leader and my record shows I'm a champion of diversity as it drives shared prosperity. To combat hate, I stand behind fully implementing BC's Anti-Racism Legislation and strengthening community anti-hate safety grants. Economically, we are breaking down barriers through the International Credentials Recognition Act, removing redundant "Canadian work experience" requirements so internationally trained professionals can work in healthcare, engineering, and education immediately. In the Central Okanagan, I've remained connected to agencies supporting new residents to expand newcomer entrepreneurship accelerators, language-accessible small business supports, and targeted career mentorship. I advocate tirelessly to ensure people of all cultural backgrounds are welcomed, valued, and empowered to thrive across our valley.

2. Youth, Families & Seniors

I believe strong communities are built across generations. To support working families, childcare spaces along with school food programs improve quality of life and have a direct economic impact so both parents can work. For our youth, I support continued provincial funding for local hubs like Foundry Kelowna to provide stigma-free mental health, primary care, and on demand addictions support. For seniors, we are expanding home health support, community-based care, and public long-term care facilities so our aging family members age with dignity near loved ones. Having worked

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closely with the regional housing provider community, I will know there are still systemic barriers that need to be removed through multilingual healthcare navigators, affordable transit, and accessible recreation programs that keep every generation connected.

3. Civic Participation & Representation

Effective democracy requires decision makers to meet community members where they are. I've done this for 8 years in local governance. I connect regularly with young people, newcomers, and multicultural channels. There is more work to do with proactive recruitment to ensure provincial boards, commissions, and advisory bodies genuinely reflect our diverse population. My approach is an open door, an accessible constituency practice where racialized, immigrant, and youth voices are actively heard, respected, and embedded in every provincial policy decision.

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Bill Desrosiers

Party: OneBC

Riding: Kelowna Centre

No response received by the publication deadline

Miriam Rycroft

Party: BC NDP

Riding: Kelowna-Mission

No response received by the publication deadline

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Pavneet Singh

Party: BC Conservative

Riding: Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream

No response received by the publication deadline



Binny Boparai

Party: BC NDP

Riding: Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream

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Alexandra Wright

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Riding: Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream

No response received by the publication deadline



Macklin McCall

Party: BC Conservative

Riding: West Kelowna-Peachland

No response received by the publication deadline

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George Morgan

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No response received by the publication deadline



Adam Frank

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Riding: West Kelowna-Peachland

No response received by the publication deadline

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