

May 28, 2010

Dear Victoria Residents,

It is with trepidation and appreciation that I am writing this letter today to inform you that I have tendered my resignation from Victoria City Council effective September 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.

I have been privileged to be your City Councillor since 2005, championing issues related to health, sustainability, food security and community engagement. As a registered nurse and mother I have been committed to improving the health of our community, for ourselves but also for our children and grandchildren. An opportunity to continue this work has presented itself in the form of a scholarship to do my Masters Degree in Sustainable Health Systems in the European Union. The challenging part of this exciting opportunity is that the program requires a two year commitment that starts in early September 2010 and thereby requires an early end to my term.

This decision has been a difficult one to make, but as I consider my future both professionally and personally, as well as my long term contributions to this community I believe this to be the right decision. The Erasmus Mundus Scholarship that I have been awarded is fully funded through the European Commission and will see our family spending time at Universities in Spain, Hungary, Italy and Lithuania. This program is also unique from any I have been able to uncover here in Canada with the specific study areas that I have been looking for.

As I write this letter I am feeling so thankful for the opportunity I have had to be on council, and am distressed by the prospect of stepping away from the role in a few short months. I am grateful for all that I have learned during my time here, and also for what I have been able to contribute in my two terms of office. Some of the things that I am most proud of include the creation of our Department of Sustainability, a renewed municipal focus on public engagement, a governance review that has changed how City Hall does business, a council commitment to health promotion through housing and harm reduction and a greater understanding of what it means to be a family friendly, food secure community. I have been honoured to be at the council table representing you, and have worked to give voice to those in our society that historically have been underrepresented such as youth, families, seniors and those living in poverty.

As I look to the future for Victoria, I am comforted by the fact that as a team, I believe council is moving forward with a real sense of civic responsibility and a balanced approach to finding lasting solutions to some of the challenges our city faces. I would like to say heart-felt thanks to all the City staff, from our top Directors, to our front line, who work tirelessly for the community; to my council members from whom I have learned so much and have truly enjoyed getting to know; and to the Mayor whose commitment to this community is steadfast and whose leadership is commendable.

But more than anything I want to thank the community members who entrusted me with this role. I thank you for the chance to have been a part of this city in such a vital way and for the privilege of representing you on Victoria City Council.

Sincerely,

Sonya Chandler

Victoria City Councillor