

Injection sites by Jan. 1: Campbell

'I am not going to hesitate while people are dying,' candidate vows

By **FRANCES BULA**

Larry Campbell wants a safe-injection site for drug addicts in place by Jan. 1 if he is elected mayor Nov. 16.

Realistically, there are zoning issues, staffing issues, a police plan and negotiations with other agencies, but he will not wait around for the perfect system while people die.

"Another two people died on Friday night because we don't have a safe-injection site," said Campbell. "I am not going to hesitate while people are dying. It's not going to be a year or two down the road."

The new mayor will take office Dec. 2 and if it's him, Campbell wants to open the first safe injection site within 30 days.

Campbell outlined his plan for safe injection sites the day after announcing that he would, if elected mayor, immediately implement a harm-reduction drug strategy to deal with the city's hard drug problem.

"Here's my plan," Campbell said Monday.

"I'll meet with the (police) chief [Jamie Graham] and say I want a police plan. I want you to get together with the health board and figure out how to have a safe-injection site and still have law enforcement."

Campbell said that German safe-injection sites impose a bubble zone around their safe-injection sites where all dealing is absolutely prohibited, and that's something local police might want to look at.

Second, he said, "I want to sit down with the people on the prevention end. We should have a concerted plan to get into the schools with medical-health people giving information."

He said he's not so concerned about meeting with people on the treatment "pillar" of the plan, since he knows that the health authority is already working on a comprehensive plan.

Campbell did not seem to be aware that police are also working on their own strategy for policing that will mesh with the health authority.