

Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Municipal Election 2017 Candidate Survey

Survey was sent to 74 mayoral and council candidates, between July and October. Candidates were asked to rank their view on each issue with 1 meaning Strongly Agree and 5 meaning Strongly Disagree.

For more information on housing issues please visit www.ecohh.ca.

Candidate & Ward	1. The City of Edmonton should make more municipal land available for affordable housing for low-income Edmontonians.	2. There is not enough subsidized housing in some neighbourhoods, and the City must ensure a better distribution in all neighbourhoods throughout Edmonton.	3. The City should seek to make zoning more flexible to support the development of more affordable housing initiatives.	4. The City should fund programs to increase the supply of affordable housing.	5. The City should create a comprehensive plan to address the need for thousands of units of affordable housing that includes attention to schools, public transportation, and community services.	6. The City is doing a good job to end homelessness.	7. The City must be more active in advocating with the provincial and federal governments for more funding and better policies on affordable housing.	8. The City must develop better ways to gather views of residents about housing issues and not depend so significantly on special interests.	Comments
Taz Bouchier, Mayor	2	2	2	2	1	5	1	1	
Carla Frost, Mayor	5	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	See below
Bev Esslinger, Ward 2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	See below
Shelley Tupper, Ward 2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	See below
Jon Dziadyk, Ward 3	2	2	1	2	2	4	3	1	See below
John Oplanich, Ward 3	1	3	2	2	2	3	1	2	See below
Justin Draper, Ward 4	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	See below
Sam Hashem, Ward 4	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below
Martin Narsing, Ward 4	4	4	3	3	4	2	5	5	See below
Aaron Paquette, Ward 4	1	1	1	1	1	4-5	1-2	1-2	See below
Miranda Jimmy, Ward	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	See below

5									
Dawn Newton, Ward 5	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	See below
James Prentice, Ward 5	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below
Scott McKeen, Ward 6	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below
Tish Prouse, Ward 6	5	1	2	1	1	5	4	2	See below
Kris Andreychuk, Ward 7	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	See below
Liz John-West, Ward 7	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	
Matthew Kleywegt, Ward 7	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below
Kirsten Goa, Ward 8	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	See below
James Kosowan, Ward 8	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	See below
Tim Cartmell, Ward 9	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	See below
Mark Hope, Ward 9	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	See below
Samantha Hees, Ward 10	1-2	1	1	1-2	1-2	3	1	1	See below
Michael Walters, Ward 10	1	1-2	1-2	2-3	1	2	1-2	1	See below
Brandy Burdeniuk, Ward 11	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below

Troy Pavlek, Ward 11	1-2	1	1	1	1	2-3	1	2-3	See below
Keren Tang, Ward 11	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	See below
Nigel Logan, Ward 12	1	1	1	2	1	4	1	1	See below
Mike Russnak, Ward 12	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	See below
Walter Youb, Ward 12	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	See below

Carla Frost, Mayor: Define homelessness and I suggest we put the responsibility on the landowners and properties owners.

Bev Esslinger, Ward 2: Affordable housing is a need throughout the city of Edmonton for many of our fellow Edmontonians. As a city we need to continue to work with all orders of government to help address this need. I believe affordable housing should be throughout the city. I think we have done some good work in the city to address homelessness but we have more to do. It will take everyone working together to end homelessness and providing affordable supportive housing is essential. I am committed to working to end homelessness, advocate to other orders of government and work with community partners on this important issue.

Shelley Tupper, Ward 2:

Question One

I would support a review taking place of municipally held land to determine its suitability for affordable housing for low-income Edmontonians. For example access to public transit, proximity of schools, libraries, health centres, parks, sports fields, day cares and senior centres. From suitable land parcels I would support consulting with the existing community to determine what would become an asset to the community.

Question Two

There may not be enough subsidized housing in some neighbourhoods as people in need of such housing would generally want to live in a community that has access to public transit, proximity of schools, libraries, health centres, parks, sport fields, day cares and senior centres. All neighbourhoods throughout Edmonton would not meet all of these criteria.

Question Three

I would support seeking to make zoning more flexible ; to encourage the development of more affordable housing initiatives, however consulting with the existing community would need to be included.

Question Four

I would support funding programs to increase the supply of affordable housing provided the funds were leveraged by provincial and federal funding.

Question Five

I would agree to the comprehensive plan however it should also contain a component such as the HOME Program for educating and assisting low income families to achieve the capability of buying and sustaining their own home.

Question Six

The October 2016 Homeless count was of 1,752 people that represented a 43% decrease from 2008, however 70 % are chronically homeless. I agree with Mayor Iveson a more aggressive and focused service delivery model is required to care for people with complex health factors.

Question Seven

Mayor Iveson has reported as Chair of Canada's Big Cities the Mayors Group pushed for more funding for affordable housing from federal and provincial taxes so more of these funds would come back to help us build.

Question Eight

Giving the residents of a community a meaningful role in planning their community will result in good development for the city.

Please visit my website at shelleytupper.ca

Jon Dziadyk, Ward 3: Engagement of the private sector can also help and I would encourage this as a Councillor.

John Oplanich, Ward 3: Mobile app surveys on any City issues. Responses happen in hours. You can gather 100,000 responses via cell phone surveys. Why spend millions on studies.

Justin Draper, Ward 4: Reducing poverty and working towards ending homelessness is one of the major focuses in my platform, and will be a priority for me when elected. My platform includes several key goals and targets to reduce homelessness in Edmonton.

First, I am advocating for a three part poverty reduction strategy, that includes prevention, adequate services and housing first. 1) Prevention - Being able to provide the supports to help someone before they become homeless. If we can have preventative services to help someone who may be at risk of becoming homeless, we can make sure they have the supports they need early on. Additionally, supports such as mental health resources or addiction counselling are valuable to all people, not just those who are at risk of becoming homeless, so ensuring these resources are available and accessible will have lasting benefits across the community. I am committed to working with marginalized and at risk groups to ensure they have access to poverty prevention resources. 2) Adequate Services - Helping people who are already homeless. I am committed to working with Edmonton emergency services, poverty and homelessness reduction groups and all levels of government to help connect people who are currently homeless with the services they need to succeed. I understand that every person is different, and requires different support and resources, and I am committed to individualized resources in the Edmonton area. 3) Housing First - Accessible, inclusive affordable housing. I support a housing first approach that ensures that putting a roof over the head of someone who is without a home is the first priority. To ensure this is possible, I am supporting a city wide target of 5-10% affordable housing in every community. Someone living in poverty should have the services they need close to home, and these services should not all be restricted to a few designated areas in the city. I support a balanced approach to citywide poverty reduction, ensuring that resources are available no matter where in the city you may live, and that no one area is drastically different in its poverty or homelessness reduction responsibility than the rest of the city.

Secondly, I will make poverty reduction a priority when designing new communities, and developing existing communities. I will fight to expand the city's existing Transit-Oriented-Development strategy and fight to develop our transit system as a low cost, environmentally friendly option for getting around our city. I will work with all levels of government to ensure that services such as schools and medical services are accessible and available to people in the community who are living in poverty.

Sam Hachem, Ward 4: Housing will continue to be an issue until it is dealt with.

Martin Narsing, Ward 4: Homelessness and affordable housing are two distinct initiatives. We must distribute these initiatives throughout regions of Edmonton rather than to focus it on one particular region or central area in our City.

Aaron Paquette, Ward 4: Poverty isn't exclusive to the downtown core. It is present across our city and in the Northeast. We need to ensure that affordable housing is the responsibility of our entire city not just certain regions. As the Northeast grows, we need to make sure that the city invests in more affordable housing units in our communities. I will also work with city council and community partners to address homelessness in the river valley.

Miranda Jimmy, Ward 5: <http://mirandajimmy.com/housing-options-for-everyone/>

Dawn Newton: Ward 5: We need good information and reliable data to inform how we move forward on our housing policies. I believe our government needs to create a sense of place for all Edmontonians, and access to affordable housing is a critical element.

James Prentice, Ward 5:

Although City Council over recent terms with the help of and in response to organizations like those within the ECOHH has made great strides in the right direction, I believe the City can and should do more to address homelessness and housing insecurity. We have a moral imperative to ensure people are not living and dying on the streets - which should be all the motivation we need. However, if we commit ourselves to addressing the issue properly, it also makes the most sense economically and socially in the long term in relation to both direct and indirect costs to the community.

Scott McKeen, Ward 6: Fighting for permanent supportive housing for Edmonton's most vulnerable -- suffering mental illness, generational trauma, chronic (self medication) addiction -- is my highest priority. That housing must be distributed around the city. Permanent supportive housing is like a nursing home. It is a solution, not a problem. Ambrose Place in McCauley is the model, with its indigenous spiritual and medicinal programming, as well as its harm-reduction work with alcohol. To my mind, we need at least six more of these for the most ill folks on the streets. And we should replicate the harm reduction model and use legal, prescribed opioids for I.V. drug users, so they need not commit crime to find the money for drugs, nor purchase off gangsters. We could properly and compassionately house these very ill people, drastically reduce crime and save the public purse tens of millions of dollars each year. But it will take a coordinated effort and it will take civic, provincial and federal leaders willing to finally face the truth: We've abandoned people like stray animals to the streets for far too long. It costs individual lives, hurts neighbourhoods, hampers small business and taxes police, paramedics and hospitals. Our past response of shelters, outreach counselling and soup kitchens is dated technology. Time to change. The City has not ignored the issue, though. Over the last 7-8 years, under the guidance of Homeward Trust, housed thousands of people have been housed under its Housing First policies. But there's so much more to do to end poverty, eliminate racism and bring social justice, compassion and greater human connection to our city and its neighbourhoods.

Tish Prouse, Ward 6: This is a very important topic for me, and I have a very detailed section on my website outlining my views, plans, solutions, and approach to these issues.

Kris Andreychuk, Ward 7: I've been working on social issues in this part of the City for more than a decade and I know what needs to be done. We need a city-wide social housing policy that is effective and fair. We can't keep being bystanders to critical council decisions. We need to act.

Matthew Kleywegt, Ward 7: As a member of the Board at Boyle St Community Services I am keenly interested in addressing the issue of homelessness. While the city has made gains on this issue we have a long way to go. My understanding is that we currently have about 5,000 families on the waiting list for subsidised housing and about 2,000 chronically homeless people in need of permanent supported housing. Addressing this will not be easy, but it is far from impossible.

Kirsten Goa, Ward 8: Safe, stable housing is a fundamental human need. We can't adequately address work, education, income and social cohesion without housing. When I'm out in the community, most people are supportive of increased access to affordable housing and supported living arrangements in order to address homelessness and precarious housing. There is a broad understanding that our communities are more sustainable and resilient when we take care of each other and when we include the full diversity of our City.

There is a significant need in Edmonton for more diverse market housing as well as more affordable housing, subsidies and permanent supportive housing. Our inclusionary zoning practices are not currently addressing the need for non-market housing across the city. We need to build this housing as a part of larger multi-family development, especially in the context of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) given that it is now a focus for the City. Too often we are seeing developers make modest payments to the City (relative to their profit) and forgo the investment in actual housing. The City can use these funds to build or purchase units, but it is not a robust system and doesn't seem to be translating into the housing we need. If we bring together the diverse interests involved in meaningful conversation, I think we could come up with better solutions.

We also need to be building more diverse options so that larger families can be better accommodated and smaller families, couples and singles can also access housing. The imbalances, in what is available and who can qualify (due to limited resources, rather than need), create division in the community. For a generation, we have ignored this fundamental issue, increasing stigma and costs related to the justice system and our health system. This has started to change under the current Council and with both the federal government and provincial government starting to invest again in housing, we have an opportunity to address this need through cross-jurisdictional collaboration and to take more comprehensive action. This is urgent given the gaps that already exist and the increasing social, economic and environmental pressures we are facing as a society.

One of my areas of interest is around how we design buildings and neighbourhoods and the impact this has on our mental and physical health and social cohesion. As we make essential investments in housing we need to also insist that it is integrated effectively into our communities, that design for connection is taken into account and that we invest in energy efficiency and sustainable building practices in order to bring down long term costs and prepare for 2050. A major barrier to inclusionary zoning is a result of design practices (often driven by cost) that exacerbates social stratification. We must do this better and we can.

I was community co-chair of the City of Edmonton's Council Initiative on Public Engagement for the last two years and a member of the Community Leadership working group. One of our key questions is how to, not only reach more diverse populations, but also how to support and enhance the existing capacity in often overlooked communities to engage more fully in decision making. Bringing diverse groups together in meaningful conversation can often mitigate polarized positions and create better solutions. This work has resulted in a new policy and framework and is slowly being built out across the organization. It is still in early stages but the potential is there for much deeper conversations across more diverse perspectives. There is no question the City needs to more effectively engage citizens who don't own property, who are in precarious housing, or who are homeless, and do so on an equal footing as those who own their homes. Currently, it is quite unbalanced and leads to decisions that don't take the lived experience and expertise of many community members into account. Fundamentally, the most creative and robust solutions are rooted in our communities.

James Kosowan, Ward 8: Wonderful opportunities exist to make our neighbourhoods more diverse and affordable. The City must be more proactive in helping to realize greater affordability in our neighbourhoods and not allow market forces to be the only arbiter in determining housing options in our city.

Tim Cartmell, Ward 9: Housing is an incredibly important issue impacting municipal leadership and I struggle to answer some of these questions without being able to ask clarifying questions or elaborating about why I answer a certain way. I recently met with a former Director of Homeward Trust and know that there is still much I need to become familiar with. I've provided some detail on each question below but would welcome a further discussion about this as it is a complex challenge.

1. I'm not clear on whether making "more land available" means units, buildings, entire complexes, surplus school sites, etc. I'm in favour of affordable and supportive housing. I am not as supportive of entire buildings or complexes to serve affordable and / or supportive housing. I have a concern with "ghettoizing" these facilities and therefore the citizens they serve. I am also concerned with facilities that have certain eligibility requirements that result in families being expelled just when they get on their feet. Surplus school sites is a complex issue that requires more of a conversation as I am not in favour of "one size fits all" solutions. I prefer a model where the money follows the people in need, not the facility, property or operator providing the service.

2. Homelessness affects us all. Homeless persons may gravitate to more central neighbourhoods due to the location of services they need, but the root causes of homelessness are present across the city. Ultimately addressing these causes before a person is without a home should be our goal.

3. Zoning is a complex equation. We must consider transport networks, proximity of bus routes and commercial developments which equate to amenities and services. Zoning has wider implications than just a single affordable housing property and must be looked at case by case.

4. I do believe the City should lead the discussion on more resources to be dedicated to homelessness. It is the city and their partners that must react to address homelessness when and where it occurs. I do believe, however, in a model where funding follows those in need, instead of being attached to a facility or property.

5. There is no question that we need a comprehensive plan that speaks to setting up vulnerable persons for success. Not just identifying available property, but identifying locations that will address health care accessibility, opportunity for education, community supports, the ability to join a community and remain there particularly when children are involved.

6. I believe the city is doing what they can with their partners, within the confines of the resources they have, to provide support and programs to those who are impacted by homelessness. I believe that, collectively, there is more to be done, and that more resources overall must be provided to help end homelessness. The City needs to continue to pursue expanded programs, with its funding and delivery partners, to achieve better results and lower homeless populations. This is more than a resource issue, however. An examination of the various root causes of homelessness must be considered as more resources are dedicated. We should also consider a best practices review, that considers results of various programs and approaches nationally and internationally, so as to inform us on just how well Edmonton is doing, what others are doing and what opportunity is there for us to do better? .

7. At this time, I don't have enough information about what is happening at the funding and programming level to have an informed position.

8. I believe that the city needs to improve its consultative processes across the board, not just with homelessness, but with all its initiatives. Governing has become a more interactive process, that requires an ongoing feedback loop between Councillor and constituent, Councillor and other levels of government, and Councillor and representatives of different subsets of our communities.

Mark Hope, Ward 9: The current City Council has been able to reduce the degree of Homelessness by an impressive amount, so I think they deserve credit for that, but there is still a lot of work to be done. Unfortunately, the funding that used to be there from Provincial and Federal Governments, have really dried up, leaving it much more difficult to meet our goals.

Beyond that, one thing I would like to see more put into is Mental Health, which affects so many lives and causes symptoms such as homelessness.

I really believe in representing the views of the constituents, and being their voice in the decision making process. I would love to hear what your thoughts are, and how best to tackle these issues. Please contact me via e-mail at hopeforabetteredmonton@gmail.com

Hopeforabetteredmonton.com

Samantha Hees, Ward 10: the City of Edmonton needs to stake a stronger approach to lobbying the federal and provincial governments for money to help with subsidized housing and lower income tax breaks.

Michael Walters, Ward 10: I have been pleased to lead our City Council initiative on Affordable Housing and promote innovative public engagement pilot projects aimed at creating more space for affordable housing in South Edmonton neighbourhoods. It is important that we have a comprehensive strategy that achieves permanent supportive housing in all areas of the city to help house those who are chronically homeless in Edmonton and that provides opportunities for mixed market affordable and attainable housing in each area of Edmonton to help provide better housing and more affordability for the nearly 25,000 households that pay more than 50% of their income on rent. It is important for the city and the many housing providers to approach both the federal and provincial governments with one voice and a clear understanding of the needs and a clear understanding of our local solutions. I am committed to continuing to be a part of leading this work.

Brandy Burdeniuk, Ward 11:

Thank you for all your hard work with ECOHH! As a past volunteer at the Old Sthraithcona Youth Society I hope to bring my experience to the role and make homelessness a priority. I have also worked in construction for over a decade and as Councillor of Ward 11 I hope to look at how best to cut red tape to ensure affordable housing does not lose money or momentum waiting for permitting. I know the realities of building these projects, and timing is everything. I hope I can count on your support. Thank you for your survey.

Troy Pavlek, Ward 11: The success or failure of affordable housing initiatives lies in integration. We shouldn't "ghettoize" a development by making it for a single purpose or a single demographic. A unit in every building is far, far more effective than a single building with 100 units - even if that single building might be cheaper at the start to build. Affordable housing needs to be integrated with full-market housing. We know that separating affordable housing into entirely-affordable developments is not nearly as effective at actually lifting residents out of poverty.

Keren Tang, Ward 11: Housing is a multi-jurisdictional issue where higher strategic planning is happening at the provincial and federal level. While municipalities are responsible for determining where to place affordable and supportive housing units, the City of Edmonton must plan more broadly for the future. The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness and the Affordable Housing Strategy are comprehensive and offer a good starting point for this strategic planning. Land is limited and we must do more with what we have.

Affordable housing is simply low-income or subsidized, which would greatly benefit low-income families, particularly single mothers, who are some of the poorest of the poor. However, to end homelessness, we need not only subsidized housing, but also wrap-around services to address mental health and addiction issues that often contribute to homelessness. Existing permanent supportive housing programs, such as Ambrose Place, are great examples for where we could start. I support the shift from "inner city wellness" to "urban wellness" and a more even distribution of services and affordable housing across the city. Issues of housing and homelessness are city-wide, including the Mill Creek and Mill Woods neighbourhoods of Ward 11.

To ensure affordable housing is not undermined by NIMBYism and misinformation, City administration needs to take a collaborative approach in working with communities and use a variety of engagement strategies (e.g., outreach at community events instead of only open houses). This will open up the conversation beyond specific stakeholders who may be the loudest voices, but not representative of the rest of the community.

Nigel Logan, Ward 12: Just a note on question #4 - my view is that while City should fund programs for additional units, I would prefer to see this funding come from the provincial and federal governments, and partner organizations like Habitat for Humanity.

Mike Rusnak, Ward 12: My family has been fortunate enough to provide ongoing financial support to homeless via Hope Mission, Salvation Army, Mustard Seed and the Food Bank. My heart is there and I appreciate all the support these agencies provide. The City needs fresh ideas and I believe we can do better when it comes to working with residents on the planning and development side.

Walter Youb, Ward 12: I believe the city has responsibility to address this issue. The most efficient way to do this is to create a plan for the city how we would like it to look. Once this plan is in place we need to push back on developers and have them include affordable housing options and community services in these new neighbourhoods.