

**Candidate Name: Don Iveson**  
Mayoral Candidate

**QUESTION 1: The City of Edmonton should take more action to make municipal land available for low-income affordable housing development (eg. surplus school land).**

I think this idea has merit, but for mixed market and non-market housing, at least to begin with. A community coming to grips with not getting a school, or losing perceived park is very difficult, and the city handled the first large batch of surplus school sites very poorly in back 2006, which has highly polarized the whole idea of using surplus school sites for any kind of housing. Witness the pushback we saw trying to approve seniors housing on 8 of the sites declared surplus in 2009, in spite of the added public consultation.

**QUESTION 2: There is not enough subsidized housing in some neighbourhoods, and the City must ensure a better distribution in all neighbourhoods throughout Edmonton.**

Subsidized housing works better when it's integrated in a neighbourhood as it helps people become a part of the community. Many people share neighbourhoods with Housing First clients without ever knowing it. I believe Edmonton is an inclusive and welcoming place and the success of the Housing First program is an excellent proof point for that. Integration of subsidized housing in many neighbourhoods adds to the strength of this place. We need to guard against over-concentration, and we need to put it in neighbourhoods where there is complete community (transit, grocery, etc) for it to be successful for the clients.

**QUESTION 3: The City should seek to use zoning flexibility (on issues such as required parking spaces) to support the development of more affordable housing initiatives.**

We've recently made changes to the zoning bylaw under the 'community supportive living' provisions to relax parking requirements to improve affordability of construction for new housing that meets the criteria. Going much further requires customizing the zoning through direct-control.

**QUESTION 4: The City should commit funding to extend the Cornerstones Affordable Housing program.**

Yes, however, with limits as this is still primarily the jurisdiction of senior orders of government.

**QUESTION 5: The City should create a comprehensive plan to address the need for thousands of units of affordable housing in a comprehensive and coordinated way that includes attention to schools, public transportation, and community services.**

I would need to understand the context of this question more before committing to doing this as it sounds like there may be some redundancy: our municipal development plan and other planning documents already address this on some level. That said, there is no doubt rental rates can make housing difficult for people from all walks of life, from people working to support their families to seniors on pensions. And I agree, accessibility of transportation, employment, education, and recreation are a key for strong, mixed-income communities. I do support working quickly with our post-secondary institutions to build student housing, which in turn would free up some supply in the affordable end of the rental market.

**QUESTION 6: The City is doing a good job to end chronic homelessness through the current 10 Year Plan and the work of the Edmonton Homeless Commission.**

I believe our 10 year plan has done a fairly good job so far on its goals, reducing Edmonton's homeless population by an estimated 30% so far. I believe Homeward Trust does a great job as funding agent and service provider, however I am not as convinced of the ongoing need for a Homeless Commission in addition to the Trust. When we consider that there are resource scarcities, perhaps those resources supporting the Homeless Commission could be better used by Homeward Trust to build units.

**QUESTION 7: The City must be more active in advocating with the provincial and federal governments for more funding and better policies on affordable housing.**

Yes, I believe this is not something the city can take on itself. Many people struggling with housing come from other communities. The City's affordable housing need is not just Edmonton's, it is northern Alberta's and northern Canada's need. We need extraordinary resources to deal with that. I will lead sustained advocacy efforts to get more of an investment in housing from other orders of government. The reduced burden on our health care, justice, and social services systems is well worth that effort, and provides a return on investment for them.

**QUESTION 8: The City must develop better ways to gather views of all residents about housing issues and not depend so significantly on input from community leagues and developers.**

There must be avenues for residents to provide substantive input for these residences to be properly integrated into the community. Proper consultation and information sharing will allow the project to work not only for affordable housing units but for existing community members as well. Communities need to be involve in conversations about these kind of decisions prior to irrevocable decision making occurring, which creates lasting hostility as we saw with the 2006 surplus school sites.

**QUESTION 9: Finally, you may provide any additional comments about any other aspects of housing and homelessness.**

I believe that an important component to ending homelessness in Edmonton will be to work to eliminate poverty within a generation. If elected mayor, I will elevate council's current poverty reduction strategy to a mayor's task force, focusing first on the reduction of childhood poverty. I believe that with a concerted effort with all orders of government, this goal can be accomplished in a City and Province as prosperous as our own.