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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).

First of all, there appears to be a root issue with our school reserve lands. I have met people in Ward 2 who were led to believe that a school would be forthcoming in their neighbourhood. Years later, and with young children on hand, they later learn there will not be a school -- and the land is being declared as "surplus." I have concerns about that as a root issue, i.e., who is looking at the "big picture," and knitting together where and when schools are (or will be) required, how does that balance with reinvestment in our mature neighbourhoods, what are the effects of our aging demographic on city planning, and where is the plan to ensure that the city, developers, the school board, and provincial funding, are all pulling in the same direction? Subsequent to that, is the next question ... what is the best purpose for "surplus school land"? If not for public schools, or a park, or community recreation area, then how can it best-serve the interests of the public? I would suggest that projects such as affordable housing developments may be appropriate. However, in fairness, I would suggest that any such developments should be limited to the building envelope and parking area (only) in order to retain the originally intended parkland for the community.

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

I do not support "Nimby-ism." Our Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures that every citizen has the right to move and take up residence in any province. It does not say, "except in certain neighbourhoods." While I do not have the current statistics on the distribution of subsidized housing across certain neighbourhoods in Edmonton, we all need to remember that this is not just about "us." That said, meaningful community engagement is a must. Honest dialogue, compassion, tolerance, and engagement can go a long way.

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.

I have to pass on this one; I have not yet studied the zoning restrictions that may be impacting the development of more affordable housing initiatives.

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

I of course support continued funding to address our need for affordable housing, with provisos. (1) To quote the City of Edmonton's own report on Cornerstones, "Housing needs not met through market forces are constitutionally a provincial government responsibility requiring extensive financial and service support. Municipalities continue to lack predictable, dedicated, long-term funding from other orders of government." Our civic funding must be met with continued political will by other levels of

government. (2) The Edmonton Journal reported concerns by the Auditor General about the Alberta Government's \$1.1 billion investment (in what I understand to be in combination with \$1.1 billion from municipalities, non-profit groups and the private sector) in order to fund 11,000 units. That is \$100,000 per unit (or, if I am reading it right - \$200,000 per unit). My contacts in construction/engineering tell me that \$60,000 per door, in an apartment development, is more typical. I have to wonder if we are exercising proper oversight, or achieving good value for the spending of precious public dollars, and what might need to change in that regard. (3) Rather than building new developments, could we consider a requirement (or incentive) for any new multi-family residential developments to include a portion of affordable/subsidized housing? (4) The City of Edmonton, nor any level of government, cannot be expected to solve the present reality that too many people cannot afford to pay rent or own a home, even while working full-time. This speaks to broader and deeper societal issues (e.g., appropriate wages). At some point, the private sector needs to ensure adequate wages, and wage increases which recognize the true cost-of-living. Public money cannot be expected to fill the income gap being experienced by a rapidly increasing segment of our society.

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 think I independently touched on a very similar thought in my answer to your Question 1. The Edmonton Area Community Plan on Housing and Supports: 2011-2015 is moving in the right direction. I look forward to seeing the implementation plan, and measurements for success.

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 walk by, and through, homelessness every day. I say "good morning," or "hello," as opposed to turning a blind eye. In 2008, our homeless count was approximately 3,100 people (Edmonton Social Planning Council). Two years later (2010), our homeless count was 2,421 people (Edmonton Area Community Plan). Two years later (2012), our homeless count was 2,147 people (Edmonton Homeless Commission). We are moving in the right direction. We also established a 10-year plan to eliminate homelessness in 2009, by 2019, which means we have six years left to achieve that goal. And, this will remain a moving target as immigration continues and people's circumstances change. Edmonton cannot afford to become the "homeless destination of Canada." Other cities, other levels of government, and our private sector, all need to be responsible for doing their fair share.

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.

No answer.

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.

Again, the Edmonton Area Community Plan on Housing and Supports: 2011-2015 appears to be moving in that direction. Open dialogue with affected or interested neighbourhood residents is a must.

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

Thank you for your diligence and hard work to address the issues of affordable housing. It is a real and pressing need for many.