

# Adam Smith

Councillor Candidate in Toronto, Ward 19  
City of Toronto

*The following answers were provided by the candidate in response to [a letter sent by the Toronto Society of Architects on September 20, 2022](#) outlining three questions related to issues of the built environment. Answers have been copied and pasted into this page for clarity and ease of access, but all answers are verbatim and no changes or edits have been made.*

**Q1: Housing is a fundamental human right, and yet an increasing number of residents across the Greater Toronto Area are struggling to pay rent or find an affordable place to live. What policies and actions do you believe need to be implemented to address this crisis?**

**A:** We need our rent controls back. Issues with housing affordability began with Harris removing rent controls, especially vacancy decontrol, and only worsened under Ford, who removed even more rent controls. The other main issue is the commodification of housing and the rise of financialized landlords, we must rein them in, or better yet, expropriate buildings (as Berliners voted to do) to ensure housing is public and remains affordable. Lastly, all new multi-unit housing builds for the foreseeable future should be affordable and public, and primarily funded by senior levels of government that spent the last 30 years cutting funding for affordable housing.

**Q2: The design, construction and operation of our built environment accounts for nearly 40% of energy related carbon emissions, contributing to the ongoing climate crisis affecting us today. What do you believe needs to be prioritised to reduce carbon emissions within the built environment?**

**A:** The city is doing great work retrofitting older city-owned buildings and making all new city-owned buildings net-zero, but it's still optional for private buildings. Such improvements should be mandatory, and ALL new builds should meet the highest environmental standards and be as close to net-zero as possible.

**Q3: In towns and cities, so much of life happens in the shared public spaces—in our parks, libraries and streets. How can we ensure these civic spaces achieve design excellence in their initial conception and construction, and that they are properly maintained so they may continue to serve future generations?**

**A:** The first half of this equation is meaningful and robust public consultation. We must engage the public in creating public spaces. The other half, maintaining these spaces, needs to be covered by the city. It's all well and good the city is offering grants and other handouts to community groups to do things like maintain ravines, but it can't be left to the public, who have enough on their plate, to maintain public spaces.