

Bob Kwapis

Councillor Candidate in Newmarket (acclaimed), Ward 5
York Region

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: In Newmarket, a few years ago, we took an innovative approach in collaboration with developers, to try something new that addresses this issue. By working together, we were able to build a first purpose-built building in York Region, in over 25 years. These innovative approaches, working together with the builders, is the key in addressing the affordability crisis we are currently facing.

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: I believe that the industry is becoming aware of the carbon footprint and making adjustments accordingly. Many clients are now demanding greener housing therefore many builders are readjusting due to these market pressures. As an example, in Newmarket, a new planned development will now be pre-wired for solar roofs, AV chargers, some will have geothermal heat exchangers, and the whole area will have Low Impact Drainage (LID) system that captures storm water and naturally filters the water into the water table instead of running it directly into our lakes. Instead of a storm pond, an underground holding tank will capture the overflow. The space on top of the tank can now be easily utilized as green space or even a playground. The buildings are now focused on LEED certifications and even implement green roofs. I think that we are certainly moving in the right direction.

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: Newmarket has a very small footprint therefore we started planning many years ago. We implemented a secondary plan on our main corridors that include green, urban spaces and make it easy for developers to understand the expected framework. We treasure our interconnected trail systems and continue to expand on it. We promote active transportation and outdoor activities. We are also heavily invested into park spaces, such as the future Mulock Park that is planned to open in 2023. Parks and public places are key component to future generations.