

Boris Godzinevski

Candidate for Mayor of the Town of Georgina
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: Real estate development is not just about the cost of housing and the demand for it. It is just as much about location, surrounding infrastructure, amenities, transport/accessibility, crime and businesses/services. With concentrated development and in the time manner it is done with permits and licensing housing costs will typically remain high if not continue climbing. Again there are so many areas to cover but one somewhat immediate action that can be taken is vacant housing taxation which is a complicated issue in itself. At the end of the day houses now on average take longer to build and land costs are higher while being bought up by corporations in large quantities. In a free market the most logistical way housing prices can come down is with mass development outstripping demand and in areas without much supporting infrastructure. If there is more of a European approach and at least public transit is greatly improved there would not be the commuter issue and maybe that is the magic bullet that would directly result in more affordable housing, but then you are talking about provincial or federal mandates that would take years to come to fruition. At the municipal level you can essentially work with building developments to make the process go faster, reach out to public transport companies and cautiously support some type of initiative to lower empty housing that sits as long-term investment hold. Ultimately you want communities to be highly desirable places to live so we don't even have to look at vacant real estate holdings.

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 easy answer is having older buildings updated and newer ones made more energy efficient. This is as much a lifestyle issue as energy consumption however. Though I remain a realist when it comes to emissions by developed nations and especially Canada with under forty million compare to larger nations. It is not that we do nothing but putting pressure on citizens here when it becomes somewhat if a self defeating initiative needs to be acknowledged. In the meantime we do what we can with energy efficient appliances, heating and spacing.

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: Maintaining public amenities, especially for families (children and adolescence) is about the materials used. You have to go with a fine balance so you do not have issues such as scorching hot surfaces in the summer. I believe there continues to be too much emphasis on cost or personal relationships when it comes to contracts at the municipal level, simply put the process needs to be focused on long-term viability and use. From a practical stand-point you also need to maximize space as one major issue is when a large surface area has noticeable decline, such as improper tennis or basketball surfacing. And multi-purpose use, again an example being where basketball nets are installed on a measured tennis court so there can be multiple uses. But it's all a case by case basis and sometimes there needs to be additional outreach to find an optimal design with a balanced but not overtly frugal budget.