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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: It is absolutely necessary that municipalities, upper tier regions, and the province, all collaborate on this urgent matter to find and implement solutions which will mitigate the current housing affordability crisis. The private sector must also be involved as governments, no matter the level, do not have any control of market values, neither their rise nor their fall. Policies and legislation must be formulated to enable the public and private sector to better manage public housing necessities. This must be a co-operative undertaking, with focuses both on the current situation as well into the future. There is no quick and easy fix here, it will require a concerted and diligent effort from many to ensure affordable housing is available to all.

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: Greater focus must be given to construct sustainable built assets. LEED compliant buildings should be the gold-standard for all construction, no matter the size. As well, as public officials, it behooves us all to ensure the switch to electric cars is seamless. To encourage green energy, it should be a legislative priority to have electric charging stations installed or roughed-in in all new multi-use construction projects. Urban communities must also be constructed within walking ability to public transit thereby appropriately decreasing our carbon footprint and output. Attention should also be given to the site's green footprint - landscaping and surface permeability. When new construction sites are mandated to incorporate specific green-related policies, I believe we will see greater common attention paid to our planet's dire climate needs.

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: Public spaces are critical to the well-being of communities large and small. Civic gathering squares, parks, open greenspaces and well-maintained public outdoor trails to encourage walk-ability and bike-ability, all contribute to the wellness of society, both to our physical and mental health and well-being. Libraries, outdoor skating and pool venues, amphitheatres, and public outdoor seating areas to enable people to relax and congregate outside are very important to the human psyche. Public art should be incorporated into outdoor designs as well, to showcase local artists' work and provide the human mind with cultural nourishment. Complete and integrated communities designed around the concept of public health and wellness will enable people to better inhabit our built urban spaces, living within communities which care about the well-being of residents while also continuing to provide for beneficial environmental stability.