

Zeeshan Hamid

Mayoral Candidate in the Town of Milton
Halton 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: At the municipal level, there are measures we can take to encourage purpose-built rentals. In addition, municipalities need to move away from exclusionary zoning. We have the power to require a certain percentage of units to be truly affordable in each development.

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 Ontario Building Code is very basic and can be improved. However, municipalities do not have a lot of authority to tweak it themselves. That said, municipalities can (and some do) incentivize sustainable constructions.

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: I (successfully) pushed for an infrastructure maintenance fund in Milton and successfully fought three attempts to cut it. The purpose of the reserve / fund is to put money aside each year for keeping these assets in the state of good repair. Moreover, this also allows us to enhance all libraries, parks and other shared spaces as technology, demand or requirements evolve over time.