

John Santoro

Regional Councillor Candidate in the City of Vaughan
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: I believe that the Municipal Government should work with the Province to enact legislation that controls condo fees and holds the board of directors and property management companies more to account. With the growing number of condominium units being built this is an issue that should be addressed before it gets out of hand. The higher the condo fees, the more a landlord has to charge to carry the property.

All Municipal governments should allow for secondary units in houses. Increasing the amount of product on the market could see rents decrease.

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 the way we Zone and build high rise buildings needs to change to create "Work/Live" spaces. A percentage of every high rise building being proposed for permit should be required to allocate 25% of the building's total area to employment zoning. Although this is a long term, partial solution, people would be able to ride the elevator to work instead of driving or taking public transit.

Buildings with full glass curtain walls should be required to use solar panels for the areas that are not meant to be windows.

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: A study should be done prior to the design and construction of such spaces to determine what residents of an area would consider to be useful and beneficial to them. The designs should also incorporate materials that are durable and require little maintenance. The "life cycle" of the materials should be examined to ensure longevity.