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City of Toronto

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: The housing crisis is severe. Skyrocketing rents are driving working class families, low-income communities, seniors, and students out of the GTA, into debt, into unsafe or deplorable living situations, into the shelter system or onto the streets. Those who can't pay inflated rents are exploited. The housing market is dominated by real estate and development speculators. The establishment is completely unwilling to fight for the solutions we need. It's time to build rent-geared-to-income, publicly-owned and cooperatively-run accessible housing. In the meantime, expropriate vacant units in large multi-unit buildings and assign them to people in dire need of housing. Landlord licensing is needed so that landlords who fail to keep units in good repair and meet basic standards would have their rental properties turned into cooperatives. Orders and judgments against landlords must be enforced.

1. Repeal Code 608 (the no camping bylaw).
2. Eliminate blind bidding on property sales.
3. Introduce real rent control/freeze.
4. Vacancy tax to kick in after 3 months, at 30% of property value annually, with expropriation after two years of vacancy. Primary residences excluded.
5. Freeze on property tax for personal property.
6. 30% tax annually on investment properties. This does not include individuals renting out portions of their primary/personal residence.
7. Aggressive inclusionary zoning — 50% of newly-constructed condo units to be rented at median-market rent.
8. Public registry of property ownership, which includes the designation of primary/personal residence and secondary/investment properties. Individuals would be limited to two primary/personal residences. (*address loopholes in future)

9. Colour-coded rating system for apartments.
10. Hire more housing inspectors — empowered to speak with tenants and inspect units. Create a public and accessible system for reporting landlord abuses. Build on the 311 system.
11. Introduce mechanisms to transfer property from landlord to city. a.) city has right of first refusal if landlord sells property b.) city takes over for bad landlords (i.e. code red).
12. All housing units expropriated by the city will be rented to tenants as non-profit housing. Rent would cover only utilities and maintenance.
13. Index the shelter allowance to median-market rent.

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: Public transit is an essential service for many residents and front-line workers. Toronto should deploy more buses to allow for physical distancing and use back-door boarding to protect transit operators, and abolish fare enforcement. Resume building of the LRT in Peel.

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 municipal Green New Deal, based on a rapid transition to sustainable energy systems, is urgently needed. Regulations should require new construction projects to incorporate some type of life sustaining green roof. We must consult communities and severely restrict any environmental damage before the development begins. Parts of the GTA are fortunate to have beautiful parks and green spaces that are home to many animals and plants. Increase city services including garbage collection and snow removal. Empowered, democratically elected community boards should review proposed developments. Cancel Highway 413, stop urban sprawl, and build high-density housing. Our notion of a Municipal Green New Deal puts the interests of the working class first. Enact public control over resources, fully respecting Indigenous peoples. Before Reconciliation there must be Restitution, in harmony with nature.