

# Mario Russo

Regional Councillor Candidate in the Town of Caledon, Wards 4, 5, 6  
Peel 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:** Appropriate intensification that reduces urban sprawl and revitalizes underutilized lands in our urban nodes. With emphasis on mixed use developments that encompasses much needed commercial/retail/office opportunities combined with entry level housing options and senior friendly developments with appropriate recreation and amenities nearby creating a complete community.

**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:** As mentioned above, appropriate intensification is necessary and will reduce our carbon footprint. However, to make it work we need a connected community including active transportation connectivity combined with public transit and ultimately higher order transit as numbers reach justification. This further includes expands on my reference to a "complete community" that provides live/work options and health care and recreation facilities etc. all within walking distance.

**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:** These shared public spaces are essential. So again, accessibility and getting in and out of these locations are essential. Thus, the right choice in terms of geographic location, connectivity options and amenities serving the area all must be considered. But ultimately, we need to make these locations desirable with lighting, safety and building design being top priorities. Further, accessibility considerations (physical needs, and appropriate to all genders, and stages of one's life) should be implemented and aspects of design that integrate community needs and cultural and ethnic differences. These are just a few points to be considered.