

Shaker Jamal Answers for TSA Questions

- 1. 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?**

The City's Housing Now initiative, the plan to develop city-owned land into affordable housing, has a target of 30% affordable units and no commitments to rent control. Affordable is defined as 30% of CMHC's average market rent (which works out to \$1,666 for 2-bedroom apartments as of Oct. 2021 — and is even higher today). We need more ambitious targets and a more realistic understanding of affordability. I will work ensure city-owned land developments must include at least 50% of units that are affordable and rent controlled.

I want to build the missing middle It's no secret that Toronto needs more variety in housing options, including low-and mid-rise developments, especially throughout the yellow belt. We increasingly have a city living in extremes — just 30-storey towers or single family detached homes — that makes it challenging to build diverse, connected communities. That's why I will revise zoning policies in the yellow belt to expand opportunities for missing middle housing forms that contribute to our vibrant neighbourhoods, ranging from duplexes to low-rise walk-up apartments.

I want to support growth with infrastructure. As your councillor, I will work to bring much needed density to Davenport. When I speak with long-time residents about new developments, they welcome new neighbours but are worried about the pressure on infrastructure and amenities. I get it — the city has not invested in the transit, utilities, community centres and greenspaces our growing neighbourhoods need. That's why I will advocate for the creation of a Chief Development Officer, a person who will transform and mobilize the City's existing resources to stimulate rapid, thoughtful development.

- 2. 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?**

Since I moved to Toronto, I've become a cycle commuter. Cycling makes our city healthier, greener and less congested. Here in Davenport, our community is full of bike commuters, advocates and bike-friendly businesses. Yet, like much of Toronto, our cycling infrastructure is lacking.

That's why I will:

1. Create safer routes. Every arterial road should be safe for cyclists or have a parallel route nearby. I plan to advocate to increase our dedicated bike lanes by 100 km to ensure that cyclists can safely navigate our city.

2. Improve bike parking. A key part of the ride is how safe your bike is when you get to your destination. Our parking infrastructure is sorely lacking for bikes. By focusing on major routes such as Bloor, Dufferin, and Dundas West, I will push for the installation of more frequent, secure bike parking solutions that are practical and enhance our street life.

3. Expand our cycling network. Accessing green spaces is one of the best parts of cycling in our city. I plan to expand access from the Bloor line, by connecting Runnymede West station to existing bike lanes around Six Points in Etobicoke, connecting riders to numerous parks, businesses, and homes along the way. I also plan to connect the northern ends of the Metrolinx Greenway and the hydro corridor Greenline (Caledonia Park Rd. between Dupont and Davenport) to the southern end of the Kay Gardiner Beltline Trail and future Caledonia LRT and GO station, to improve commuter access to our fast-growing communities.

3. 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?

Whether running along the Railpath, picnicking in Dufferin Grove Park, shooting hoops in EarlsCourt, or simply going for a walk down Bloor West, Davenport's outdoor areas are the best part of enjoying life in Toronto. During the pandemic, they became a lifeline for many of us. As a cooped-up Torontonians, parent, and dog owner, my family and I cherish these public spaces, and deeply appreciate the amazing leadership from dedicated groups of local residents, businesses, artists and activists. We need to ensure that City Hall plays its part in funding and maintaining our public parks.

Unfortunately, much of Ward 9 is designated as areas in need of parkland, and almost all the ward is projected to see a decrease in parkland supply between 2016–2033. Therefore, my goals are to:

1. Enhance the West Toronto Railpath. The Railpath is one of Davenport's most used and beloved outdoor recreational areas. However, we can make it better and safer for everyone in our community. I will advocate to have dedicated cyclist and non-cyclist lanes installed throughout the Rail Path, similar to those on the Waterfront. I will also work with our Parks and Recreation department to have the path widened where possible. And, finally, I will formalize the makeshift dog park to create a dedicated, safer space for everyone in our community, including our furry friends.
2. Develop more multi-use trails In Davenport, there are several opportunities to develop multi-use trails like the Railpath adjacent to rail and hydro infrastructure. As Councillor I will push to have those opportunities studied and developed by the city.

3. Build trust in how we socialize in parks. For many, our green public spaces are the only outdoor spaces available — to socialize with friends, to unwind after work and to have informal gatherings that help us feel connected to one another. The punitive way that our City treats responsible adults points to a lack of trust between City Hall and the citizens of our ward. I will advocate for Toronto parks to have dedicated areas where alcohol consumption is liberalized.
4. Create “complete streets” The City of Toronto has an existing plan to create complete streets in other wards of Toronto, including dedicated lanes for more modes of transportation, more green spaces, and more pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. I want to see the complete streets plan extended to Davenport, so that we can create streets that are safe, beautiful and accommodate a variety of ways of getting around that is inviting for people of all ages and abilities.
5. Ensure access to public washrooms and water fountains It is unfathomable that in a city as rich as Toronto we cannot provide people with access to public washrooms and water fountains. That’s why I will push the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department to open all shuttered public washrooms and fix all water fountains. So, that folks can go about this great city and not have to worry about the basics!