

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 current market is unrealistically favouring property investors and landlords, to the point where they basically have their pick of whatever tenant or buyer is willing to pay the most. In a balanced market, tenants and buyers should be able to afford housing, and the landlord's selection process should be based more on the quality of the tenant than the top price they can afford. Tenants and investors deserve a return on their risk, but there must still be balance. This is accomplished by securing land in each municipality that is close to amenities and services, and build large, efficient housing units to ease the demand on the rental market. Responsible development must also happen, building new homes for those who choose to buy, with incentives to encourage developers and buyers to build green.

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 prioritized to reduce carbon emissions within the built environment?

While there are many provincial and federal programs providing rebates for homeowners to renovate "green," there are few incentives at the municipal level to encourage this. I would work with staff to seek funding opportunities for green/energy efficient building, and create new funding opportunities where others don't exist. It is fair that developers make a profit, but we must require a higher standard of environmental protection and efficiency when building. As we begin to use new and innovative green technologies, the cost of such will decline. The buyer shouldn't be the only one to bear the burden of the cost of building green - the municipalities and developers need to play a part.

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?

Communication - residents need proper open and transparent communication about proposed projects, and they need to have their voices heard before projects move forward. While costly at times, subject matter experts and consultants need to be engaged to more accurately report the short term, medium term, and long term costs and benefits of each project. For example - a donated park is wonderful, but if the long term maintenance costs are far greater than it would have been to build a more efficient park, then we need to reconsider. We need growth and development, but it needs to stop coming at all costs. It's time to become more efficient, and to truly engage the public in decision making.

