

Tom Vegh

Regional Councillor Candidate in the Town of Newmarket
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: Housing affordability is one of the most important issues that government faces. Any solution necessitates government and the private sector working together to provide direct rent subsidies to tenants and deferred development charges for purpose-built rentals.

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: Carbon emissions within the built environment can be reduced through design that relies more on solar energy, reducing or eliminating the need for fossil fuels. In the construction, using materials that do not involve high energy levels in the extraction of raw materials, production or transportation. Best practices on the built environment operation by ensuring regular building maintenance and retrofitting insulation in roofs and walls to improve performance.

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: In designing civic spaces in Newmarket, we achieve design excellence by engaging residents in the planning through Public Information Centres (PIC). We have just finalized the master plan of the iconic, 12-acre Mullock Estate Park that involved three years of public consultation. With regard to ensuring civic spaces are properly maintained, too often governments build community amenities with the best intentions, but neglect to factor into the budget adequate operational/maintenance funding and eventual replacement costs. In Newmarket, we have created restricted reserves attached to each community amenity so that future generations are not left with unmanageable repair/ replacement costs.