

JD Meaney

Regional Councillor Candidate in the City of Oakville
Halton 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: It does not make sense that housing is a quota set by the provincial government. In Ward 1, there is a bad example of high-end rental units approximately \$5000 a month per unit. The number of units meets the quota, but the building is half empty. I think it's time we look at cutting red tape in order to meet proper housing affordability. I'm in favour low-medium density development in Ward 1, high density should be rezoned to another area.

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: If we really want to cut down on carbon emissions, then we need to first look at congestion. A top priority for me would be introducing smart-traffic sensors, cutting down idle times drivers spend at the light. Most emissions are caused in high-density areas while idling. I consider this to be a top contributor to pollution along with some housing materials.

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: I think we need to look at best practices from a range of markets. For example, the YMCA is a leader at community recreational centres. Oakville did not want the YMCA to build a \$61 million dollar facility in Ward 7 because Oakville wanted to have their name on the building. I think it is important that if we can turn to industry experts and look at other municipalities with best practices, we can adopt the same for Ward 1.