

*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?*

Toronto is a successful city that is still experiencing growth. Constraints in housing supply are a reality in successful cities around the world, and it's something we need to remember - we won't be able to build our way out of a situation, and no government can solve the problems posed by growth that outpaces resources - whether those are housing or natural resources.

That being said, Toronto has many policies in place that constrain innovation and the increase of density. There are many expert planners, architects, developers and urban thinkers who have ideas on how to improve Toronto's political and bureaucratic environment so as to encourage more and better housing. I favour a government that works collaboratively with those experts to remove barriers to housing. I think we can take a much more radical approach to our zoning, and simply eliminate all but the most essential rules. For instance, we could completely eliminate restrictions on number of people per unit (ie, legalize multi-tenant housing). We could eliminate the Committee of Adjustment, because if we have a rule where exemptions are allowed after lengthy bureaucratic processes like committee hearings we should get rid of that rule altogether, since it only benefits those with the time and wealth to navigate those processes, and it doesn't genuinely improve quality of life in the city. I also favour a change to our property tax situation so that we are taxed on paved land value or something approximating that, which would automatically favour high density housing over low density housing. I say paved land value so that we don't tax people's green spaces, which are assets to the city, but we do tax them per square foot of paved over, built on land. Tax policy changes would need to be designed and implemented with the help of all those with expertise in the area. Please read my platform statement on housing here: <https://sarahclimenhaga.substack.com/p/if-you-build-it-they-can-come>

*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?*

I believe we are overcomplicating our approach to the life support systems that comprise our environment. Rather than focussing on carbon, we should be focussing on elements of our environment that are tangible, visible and meaningful to every resident. Every city policy and action should be about maximizing natural spaces and processes and discouraging actions that harm our air, water, land, and wildlife. I would like to expand our network of green spaces in Toronto, and deal with all our waste - consumer and industrial waste, food waste, and sewage (please see my vision statement about sewage in Toronto: <https://sarahclimenhaga.substack.com/p/legalize-sht>) - within Toronto and in ways that focus on prevention and healthy end results. I also believe in pricing energy in a way that pays for local small-scale generation of energy and conservation, so that Toronto does not need to rely on energy from elsewhere. Finally, I believe we can take many actions to mitigate weather that would

save us money in the long run, actions such as increasing wetland and flood friendly landscaping, increasing tree, shrub and other plant cover that cools and regulate microclimates, and doing away with pavement that creates heat islands.

*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?*

We need to engage local communities and turn much of our public space design and maintenance over to the communities they serve. We can increase our public spaces in this city and maximize opportunities to create it everywhere so that we have a diversity of options for our residents. We can take a “performance based” approach to design rather than a command and control one, to reduce the layers of bureaucracy, delay and micromanagement that compromise design excellence. And we can realize our public streets are incredibly underused public space resources. By transforming our attitude from one that considers streets primarily as corridors for high speed cars to one that considers them primarily as places for connection between residents, employment, art and business, with some ability for all people to travel through safely and affordably, we will create amazing public realms in every block in this city.

*4. Toronto’s modern architectural heritage is at risk, with both the redevelopment of Ontario Place and the potential demolition of the Ontario Science Centre jeopardizing some of the most important architectural landmarks in the country. Other modern buildings, including city-owned properties, have been left to decay with inadequate maintenance. What measures will you take as Mayor to protect, preserve and revitalize our city’s 20th century built legacy?*

I am interested in hearing from Toronto’s architectural community what a mayor can do to address this situation. Perhaps we should declare places of interest as public parks or museums, so that they are not touchable by developers. In the case of Ontario Place and the Ontario Science Centre, the mayor can speak up and mobilize residents on behalf of preservation, can lead council to refuse permits or permission for demolition or conversion that jeopardizes landmarks and public space, and more importantly the mayor can be proactive and work with the architectural community and local neighbourhoods to identify other places we may be taking for granted. Keeping an open dialogue with senior levels of government will be crucial in matters where their legislative ability supersedes our own.