

NICK HALFYARD

WARD 12

1. We believe that the city must increase its options for solutions to the housing squeeze? yes

- What policy changes or practical action such as leveraging existing funding can you initiate for Council to address this issue in the long term and the short term?

A: This is a critical issue that faces the city which at the same time is controversial with its solutions. With that said I don't claim, nor have I ever claimed to have any answers to these unfortunate problems; one side will suggest rent controls, and another will condemn that very option. What my pledge has always been is to listen to all sides about all solutions and create a dialogue with the public and all levels of government, because this problem is simply too big and far too complicated for the City of Calgary to solve on its own. As a city and as a council we need to be open minded to all ideas that are presented before us and work together with the community to create the best viable options for everyone involved. The worst thing that we can do is not have a dialogue and not listen to all possible solutions to this crisis. I don't think that at this point any idea is not worth hearing, some are too extreme, some not extreme enough, I believe with consulting with the public we can find some middle ground, by combining many great aspects of several different ideas and come up with the best possible solution that faces our city.

2. We believe that the city must balance its plan for growth in all quadrants of the city. Additional employment centres and localised community services will help mobility systems become more efficient and effective. Yes.

- Are you willing to take a leadership role and implement the Calgary Transportation Plan and its principles of balance growth strategy?

A: I would take a leadership role on this issue. As someone who takes transit everyday, it is a nightmare during the peak periods, and driving at anytime on the major roads is a nightmare, the peak periods only adds to that problem. My leadership role would include actively expanding capacity for transit first of all. Perhaps for the short term expanding the lines of the LRT is not the way to go, but rather focus on increasing passenger capacity to ensure that more people can use the system and ultimately more comfortably at that. Again my focus would be on what is best for my ward and what is best for the city, and this means engaging in a dialogue with all those that are involved. This means actually listening to what people and the experts have to say, and not believing that I as an Alderman have all the solutions, because I don't. What I have is the ability to take a strong leadership role on this issue by listening to others and coming up with the best practical solution.

3. We believe the current system is unfair to a wide range of Calgarians and has negative planning implications for the city as a whole. Yes

- What policy initiatives would you implement to mitigate the imbalances of the market value assessment and ensure taxation fairness?

A: I would work with the province in a non adversarial way in order to create fairness to the taxation system. I would also stand firm with the province that a change to the current system needs to happen and happen fast. The system I have in mind is nearly the opposite, in which the tax system and property assessment rewards renovation, maintenance but not the deterioration of a property. Secondly the system would be based not on area, but by almost an individual basis for the land and house. In such a new system, seniors, low income, and fixed income families need not worry, however like so many other issues, this one as well has no quick solution, or quick fix, and must be handled with care and insight. Only by creating a strong dialogue and weighing a variety of options and working together with the province can a solution be obtained that will be in the best interests of all Calgarians. I will say however that I have made a solemn pledge never to vote to increase taxes, create any new taxes, or raise current taxes without the expressive consent of my Ward (12), through a referendum.

4. We believe that better planning tools such as land use and building regulations, and new engineering standards are required for an ecologically sustainable future.

Yes.

-As a municipal leader what types of policy have you or would you initiate to reduce our environmental impact and maintain our quality of life?

A: I would initiate a recycling plan, free of course, at no charge to the citizens of Calgary, directly or indirectly. With this free service the impact will already be noticeable to the quality of life. Then of course we can look into tax incentives for people to make their homes more environmentally friendly for using less energy and reducing waste, of course the city needs to be the leader on this one. I would make it so that everything vehicle that the city comes to produce or buy would be environmentally friendly, as would the buildings the city operates. We need to look into some sort of incentives, tax or otherwise for car pools as well. Also by creating a better transit system that operates more efficiently, we can cut down on the use of cars as more people can use the transit to get to work. None of these proposed solutions are easy, and require strong leadership from someone that is not afraid to stand up and say it like it is, or back down in the face of big business. The people must always come first.

5. We believe that the financing of election campaigns at the municipal level should be subject to the same financial scrutiny of federal and provincial elections. Yes

- What election financing policies would you champion to provide limits, checks, and balances against actual or perceived preferential treatment?

A: I would initiate a law that election spending for all Alderman can only be two thousand five hundred dollars, and ten thousand for the Mayor. All donations, no matter the amount must be documented and submitted, and the max individual donation can not exceed one thousand dollars, also I would make it so that you would have to be at least 18 in order to donate any amount of money, and all corporate donations would be banned. This way the people know where the money is coming from, and then of course there are limits on how much one can spend, which creates fairness for all.