

## 1. **Perceptions of Influence**

### **a/ Issue Statement:**

Democratic representation is a key tenet of government in Canada. In Calgary, this means our mayor and aldermen should represent the interests and beliefs of their constituents, even when this may be contrary to their own personal opinions. Unfortunately, other influences, such as professional lobbying, can overwhelm this representation.

Currently, donations to municipal election campaigns are only partially regulated and there are no limits placed on total expenditures. This increases the perception that elections can be bought and those candidates who spend the most are perceived in turn more likely to be influenced by those who help finance those campaigns.

*We believe that civic election campaign total expenditures should be limited to reduce the potential for abuse.*

### **b/ Background:**

The perception that the will of constituents or communities is not always represented by elected representatives is intensified by unbridled financial support by certain industries and lobbyists.

While community volunteers represent their issues with very limited financial resources, there are individuals and organizations that have the resources to make sure council members understand their point of view. Average citizens and community volunteers, unlike industry professionals, experience greater difficulty in getting their message, issues, and concerns across to elected officials, due to the need to take time off work, the impact on personal costs, and the lack of technical or professional credentials.

### **c/ Questions for the Candidate:**

Do you support limiting the total civic election expenditures by individual candidates? If so, what limits would you suggest?

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

Do you believe there should be new rules in regard to people and organizations lobbying Council members?