



**Manitoba Home
Builders' Association**

2018 Winnipeg Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Robb Massey:

As a candidate in this year's municipal election, your opinion and position on issues important to our sector is highly valued. The MHBA asks that you please answer this brief questionnaire on the following four important topics:

1) Increasing Costs and Fees

According to Statistics Canada, residential construction costs in Winnipeg have risen over 14 per cent, more than double the national average, since the beginning of 2017. Between January 1st and March 31st, 2018, the cost of building or renovating a home in Winnipeg has shot up 7.3 per cent. To put that in comparison, the city with the next highest increase in construction costs during that time was Vancouver at 2.2 per cent.

During this same time, builders in Winnipeg saw increases on numerous permits and fees issued by the City of Winnipeg, including a 5% increase to the City's Impact Fee. These fee increases, while generating increased revenue for the City, are compounding other increasing construction costs and have negatively impacted the affordability of all housing – not just new homes - across Winnipeg.

What is your plan to stem increasing fees being charged to new and existing home owners in Winnipeg?

I would look at the fees being charged to determine whether the amounts are justified. I support reasonable fees that support the cost (to the city) for new home approvals and for renovations.

2) Infill Strategy

The City of Winnipeg's implementation action plan for the Residential Infill Strategy has been developed and is currently being presented for public feedback. The MHBA supports an active and thriving infill housing market. More and more, the City of Winnipeg will rely on infill housing to sustain its long-term population growth.

What is your plan to help promote infill housing development and to create more certainty around investing in infill housing?

Infill housing is an important strategy for the growth of Elmwood-EK. The priority for residents is that any infill housing improves the street and the neighbourhood. I would encourage residents and builders to work together to this end so that infill homes are welcome new neighbours.

3) Development Approvals

Timing is a critically important component in securing private investment for major development projects that help provide Winnipeg with a consistent and reliable supply of housing. Winnipeg's development approval process can be an onerous one and added delays can potentially put investment at risk. Streamlining this process, which involves multiple City departments, would significantly help both Winnipeg's builders and land developers.

How would you support improving the development approval process?

I am in favour of streamlining processes, but the priority remains safety first and growth of healthy, complete neighbourhoods second.

4) Our Winnipeg Review – Plan for Growth

Our Winnipeg is the City's road map and vision for future growth, planning and development for the next 25 years. It sets out the goals, policies and guidelines intended to direct all physical, social, environmental, and economic development in Winnipeg, now and into the future. A stable and predictable residential housing supply is critical to ensure that Winnipeg is able to grow in a sustainable way.

What are your thoughts on how Our Winnipeg can be a tool for residential growth?

As I compared Winnipeg's plan for growth and other cities, I was concerned to see that there has been very little of Our Winnipeg applied to Elmwood-EK. I believe that what is needed is a focus on using professional planners to help us a city achieve measurable results in the growth of Winnipeg using Our Winnipeg.

I believe that Our Winnipeg is an excellent tool that has only been used selectively. I would push for measurable outcomes that can be monitored and reported. A proper system would begin to give us comparable results in 3 years but would begin to be valuable in 7-10 years.

Please provide your response to our questions via email to lmcinnes@homebuilders.mb.ca by **4:30 pm, October 12, 2018.**

Your responses will be shared with MHBA members through our e-newsletter on October 16, 2018 and will also be posted on the MHBA website.

Building Excellence since 1937

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