



**Manitoba Home
Builders' Association**

2018 Winnipeg Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Sherri Rollins:

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?

We need to make sure that when impact fees are established or increased, they take into account not just the immediate circumstances of new construction costs, but the ongoing impacts of new construction on city services. Many of the same factors that cause residential construction costs to rise also impact the costs of municipal infrastructure renewal costs, and these are out of the control of both private contractors and the city. As a consequence, this means that the city needs more resources to support existing infrastructure priorities, in addition to all the new service costs that come from new development. The taxpayers of Winnipeg will have to pay for municipal services, sewer and water maintenance, and road renewal around new developments for generations to come. It is important that the city has the resources it needs to pay for these services in established communities, just as it will need to for newer communities in the future. To meet important objectives that encourage investments and innovation, I have campaigned for:

1. An Economic Development Office to shine a light on policy that works
2. A Capital City Partnership Model
 - Support for a provincial panel to strike a new deal
 - Diversifying revenue streams and tax system that rewards growth
3. Instilling a culture within the city civil service that is focused on helping, not just abiding

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?

As our city grows, we need to make sure that we are not simply relying on outward growth because it is easier to do. Instead, we need to support growing 'up' and infill development, which minimizes the additional stresses on municipal services and infrastructure that outward growth does. At the same time, several high profile issues with City consultation calls into question the integrity of the Winnipeg's practices with respect to development. This has been echoed at the doorstep across the ward of Fort Rouge East Fort Garry with residents expressing real concerns with openness and fairness in consultations and the city's ability to balance public and private interests. Residents feel disconnected to any strategy and have raised concern during this election and at other times on the impact of the built forms and character of neighbourhoods being affected.

I support infill housing development where it makes sense and when it can be done in a way that respects the integrity of existing communities. Across Fort Rouge – East Fort Garry the community feels they are not being meaningfully engaged or consulted and that people are being asked to "rubber-stamp" decisions already made with respect to infill housing development. Worse, people are literally needing to move in the cases that infill development beside them has gone terribly wrong. This type of scenario creates a chill effect on reasonable growth and needed change in neighbourhoods and negative concomitant sentiment with respect to development generally.

One way to increase certainty in the process is to ensure that meaningful community engagement is part of the process from the beginning and that equitable neighborhood development is being discussed. People feel left out of the complexity. I believe we can create a system where much needed infill is created in a way that doesn't cause friction in our established communities. Where projects are not met with opposition mid-way through the project's lifecycle. This may mean some changes to planning and approval and a more understandable and relatable policy and proposed revisions, including existing bylaws and zoning an summary of considerations related to existing policies and regulations on residential intensification within areas in Winnipeg.

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 agree that timing is an important factor for major development projects and that there needs to be a consistent and predictable process in place for permitting and approvals. I am open exploring ways that we can make the process more efficient for builders, land developers but also to help with important centres and corridors and special districts in Winnipeg. It makes sense to streamline, and have all required information and documentation is provided properly, there are no unnecessary delays in approval. At the same time, the city cannot walk back from its

obligations to public health and safety, the environment, and public consultation, simply in the name of fast-tracking development. Again, to meet important objectives that encourage investments and innovation, I have campaigned for:

1. An Economic Development Office to shine a light on policy that works
2. A Capital City Partnership Model
3. Instilling a culture within the city civil service that is focused on helping, not just abiding

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?

Our Winnipeg, continues to move across three phases of review with robust community consultation and engagement. This is encouraging. There are strong city leaders guiding this process. Our Winnipeg can be a useful tool for decision makers when assessing the merits of individual projects and whether they reflect our broader vision as a city into the future. I think it's important to view Our Winnipeg as a roadmap for responsible and sustainable residential housing development in the city into the future.

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

Unit 1 – 1420 Clarence Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 1T6

Telephone (204) 925-2560
E-Mail: info@homebuilders.mb.ca
Website: <http://www.homebuilders.mb.ca>



Canadian
Home Builders'
Association