



VOTERS - Get to know your Fort Rouge - East Fort Garry Candidates

With seven candidates running in our ward, we recognize the importance of helping local voters get to know as much as possible about each person. We have posed six questions to each candidate and their answers appear below in reverse alphabetical order of candidate's last name.

Harry Wolbert



harrywolbertforcitycouncil.blogspot.com

Did not respond to our request

Michael Thompson



www.VoteMichaelThompson.ca

- 1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?**

The city has an important role to play in helping to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing. I would also highlight the need to create affordable yet accessible housing for people with disabilities. If elected I would work toward obtaining funding for Coop housing tax incentives and grants. I would change bylaws regarding zoning issues for individual lots for side by side homes rather than individual units which cost more and take up more space. I would increase the number of units within a complex to provide low income housing and offer incentives to do so. Overall I would work with community groups and other levels of government to meet today's housing needs and anticipated future needs. It starts with acknowledging that there is a problem and by recognizing what's working in the community and what's not working. This applies to all the questions in this survey.

- 2. People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?**

I would work with community groups within each individual area to form advisory committees to open discussion around specific active transport issues such as sidewalks, bike paths, and transit. I would work with these committees to audit and prioritize the issues in order to establish a plan. In some cases these groups exist already such as in the Corydon community in regards to sidewalks. I would take lessons learned from active groups and provide more assistance where needed. I have already outlined my changes for Handi-Transit on my election website www.VoteMichaelThompson.ca, please see for more details. I would approach other areas in the same way.

- 3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Municipal Budget, the mayor, the former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?**

I believe that communities such as West Broadway and Main Community have been at the heart of this issue for years and I respect the progress that your organization has made in this area. I am not a subject expert in this area but I am big believer in learning from and collaborating with those who are. I would lobby the provincial government to provide funding and we need to look at things like safe consumption sites and rehab centres like the Bruce Oake one. Providing funding to create more groups such as the Bear Clan Patrol in different parts of the ward. I am here to listen, work with the community and help mobilize city resources for the plan we develop together.

- 4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?**

My background was in computer operations within the lottery industry for over 25 years. Every year was about improving processes, quality, efficiency, audits and the integrity of the computer system as well as the supporting systems, data and reports administrative management and staff. My corporate work experience sets me apart from the other candidates and it is one of the many reasons that I am running for City Councillor. If elected, I would review the current work processes, data structure and communication plans to help make motions, and to create committees that run more effectively and efficiently in order to improve the city processes to benefit both the business community and residential community. This is important to me because loss of time impacts everyone and prevents us from growing as a city, not to mention wasting citizens' money and time.

- 5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?**

I strongly support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides. I support following best practices of care in order to maintain the health of our elm trees and I would defer to experts in this area. Continue to manage and maintain on our surroundings over mosquitoes. I support reducing our dependency on chemicals because of the long term negative impact chemicals have on our environment.

- 6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?**

The city bylaws group is a solid group that is working that is working to keep our communities healthy by enforcing that buildings are maintained. If elected, I would make a motion that technology be improved to help report by law issues that would include the option of having photos uploaded by concerned citizens as part of the reporting process. Community members are great as the eyes and ears of our

community. Let's give them access to today's technology to make a better difference for tomorrow. I would take this to the next level and work with the community and city bylaws group to address buildings that are hurting the community. Other cities have the same issues; we can adopt their best practices. I care about all of these issues that you have listed in the survey. I hope, with the support of the community, that I will be elected to provide leadership and integrity in all of these areas.

Bryanna Spina



www.bryannaspina.vote

- 1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?**

I would like to explore prospective options in collaboration with the Province of Manitoba (anticipating the release of the MB. Poverty Reduction Strategy)

- 2. People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?**

I have issued a press release advocating a 25 cent roll back on the current bus fare to encourage affordability and ridership. I will continue to prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg.

- 3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Municipal Budget, the mayor, the former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?**

I would like to see funds be allocated to neighbourhood safety initiatives, ambassador and community foot patrols and Community Readiness Programs that can engage community members of all ages.

- 4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?**

Provide a public service campaign to direct applicants to the abundant information on the City of Winnipeg web site (Permits Department). Alert the public to informative resources (ie: Youtube videos-residential permits) and encourage continued collaborative dialogue.

- 5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?**

I do support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control so long as we can implement safe and effective alternatives.

6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?

Review the Vacant and Derelict Buildings Strategy and enforce accountability.

Sherri Rollins



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1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?

The city should be an advocate for adequate, suitable, and affordable housing on behalf of city residents who need it. We need elected officials that will fight for better housing, as we work to address structural and social needs in our community. When the city invests in or supports capital investments, these projects should reflect established local planning goals around affordable housing. Councillors should support the plans like the West Broadway Community Housing Plan, facilitated by the West Broadway Community Organization, so that local communities are engaged in decisions about housing in their neighbourhood.

The city can educate the public on the complexity surrounding affordable housing in terms of relative affordability so that there is a better understanding of the problem we are trying to solve. There is a wide difference between the type and quality of housing that the average family can afford, compared to the average rent low income individuals and families can afford. Making informed, meaningful decisions about housing supply requires city council and the public to better understanding these underlying issues. Ultimately, we need leaders at the city who will advocate for real progress on affordable housing. I believe the city should have the courage to use its powers to incentivize and require the development of affordable housing in the city. This is why I called for council to delay the vote on True North until after the election if it wasn't going to demand affordable housing as part of the deal. Our city needs new housing of all types and we cannot simply rely on private suburban development to meet our affordable housing needs.

2. People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?

Our city needs to make public and active transportation a priority so that everyone in our community has a safe way to get to work, school, or the store. Every year, pedestrians and cyclists are injured on Winnipeg roads, while there is increasing worry about safety for riders and drivers on public transit. I want the city to adopt a 'Vision Zero' model for road safety and renewal that views every injury and fatality as a preventable tragedy rather than an accident.

Vision Zero is a long-term, evidence-based strategy that targets how infrastructure is built and traffic signs are used, including road redesign, traffic calming, lower speed limits, extended cross-walk times, pedestrian-driven signaling, targeted traffic law enforcements, and increased public awareness campaigns. By promoting intentional design for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit, we can make our roads safer for everyone.

I have long been an advocate and ally for a barrier-free and accessible province and city. We need to make sure our roadways, sidewalks, and public transit are built for everyone, not just cars. We also need to make that snow clearing and removal is better managed with a bigger budget. Too often people are stuck in their homes or can't navigate major roadways because sidewalk clearance is so poor. Finally, we need to make sure that Handi-transit services are accessible and reliable, and that Winnipeg Transit has the funding it needs to provide routes that serve more people, more often.

3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Municipal Budget, the mayor, the former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?

I share the CCPA's concern about the manner in which policing is funding in our city, and the impact that has on other city priorities. I am concerned with the lack of Indigenous representation and community oversight of our policing, particularly in light of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, and my work at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I think we need to focus more on prevention and ensuring people in crisis or with addictions have access to meaningful supports, rather than a reactive policing model.

We need to make sure more money is spent on community social and economic development like education, housing, health, and not just policing. We should open 24-hour safe spaces for Indigenous Women, Girls, and Trans-identified youth to provide better options for those vulnerable people who are more likely to be victims of crime. And we should work with community organizations and non-profits who are working at the front lines of public safety. There is more to public safety than just policing and we need to make sure the city's budgeting process does not simply place all its resources into the police budget without also looking to address the structural social issues and vulnerabilities in our society.

4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?

I know that planning and permitting 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. The city should play a role in being fearlessly optimistic in terms of innovation and development, and I am open to exploring ways that we can make the process more efficient. I think we should have a process that is focused on helping, not just compliance, and think it makes sense to have a system where if all the required information and documentation is provided properly, there are no unnecessary delays in approval. That said, 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.

Making sure this process works better would be a key priority for the Economic Development Office that I would advocate for. This office would be focused on creating processes at city hall that help responsible, sustainable development occur, and support that works for our community and builders. By having a dedicated office, there would be a clear place to go to when facing issues around permitting or fees, and the ability to identify and address structural concerns more quickly.

5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?

I believe that all our families, children, and pets should be able to enjoy being outside and in green space without the risks associated with pesticides. We need to reduce the risk to human health that has been identified by the Canadian Cancer Society. We also need to address the public health impacts of communicable diseases transmitted by mosquitos, and ensure that our trees are kept healthy and free from disease.

6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?

Our city needs to do a better job at addressing vacant buildings so that they are safely maintained and restored for productive use. Another role of the Economic Development Office would be to help make sure that city policies and practices around vacant and derelict buildings are providing a better path to redevelopment and renewal. In cases where there is clear, long-term noncompliance, the city should be willing to step in and force real improvements to be done or impose real consequences. In other situations, and the city should move to help these property owners throughout a redevelopment process. The city should also consider “pink zoning” some corridors where buildings are vacant so that innovative and progressive solutions aren’t frustrated by difficult processes meant for new construction.

Jeff Palmer



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1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?

Every level of government has a responsibility to ensure an appropriate supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing. Governments can be most successful when all levels work together, as they did with the single window housing office (Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative) in the past. Although the City is challenged in terms of resources, the City could for example provide land for new developments and eliminate permit fees or development charges in order to make new housing more affordable.

- 2. People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?**

Throughout the campaign I have made walking, cycling and public transit a priority. As our infrastructure is renewed we must ensure that active transportation modes are identified as a priority and incorporated into all plans for renewal.

- 3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Municipal Budget, the mayor, the former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?**

I believe fundamentally that prevention is less expensive than enforcement. I support the City of Winnipeg's establishment of a task force to identify prevention and treatment strategies. I support maintaining the police budget and existing levels and directing future investments towards prevention, treatment, and community-based safety initiatives.

- 4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?**

Small business is the backbone of our local business community. The City must recognize that it has a tremendous impact on the success of our local businesses through its regulatory processes. The City has a responsibility to carefully consider the needs of the business community to ensure that development is in the public interest. But this consideration must take into account that time is of the essence, and that unreasonable or unnecessary delays impact our business community and discourage investment and business development.

- 5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?**

I support phasing out or maintaining existing bans on cosmetic pesticides and other chemical treatments unless there is a public health issue. I believe we need to take action to protect our urban tree canopy and would support the use of products that protect trees without harming the public.

- 6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?**

Buildings become vacant for many reasons. In Fort Rouge - East Fort Garry, where the real estate market is generally healthy, no building should become vacant if properly maintained by the owner. Vacant buildings are a safety hazard and hold back the economic development of our community. Currently, the City limits its role to making sure that vacant buildings are secure. Securing the building will not however cause it to be renovated or redeveloped. The City must use every tool at its disposal to ensure that buildings are renovated in a timely manner. With community input and participation, vacant buildings can once again become productive and offer much needed housing and commercial space for our communities.

Stephanie Meilleur



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- 1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?**

We have more than a handful of dialect buildings that go unused, are magnets for negative behavior and activities. We need to amend current by-laws to allow the City to re-possess the buildings to create adequate and affordable housing.

- 2. People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?**

We need to create a Fixed Income bus pass for those who are on fixed, and low incomes.

- 3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the CCPA alternative budget, the mayor, the former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?**

Using grass root efforts of social media and traditional Neighborhood Watch Groups that could work directly with the West District CSU unit can re-create safety within community.

- 4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?**

The Permitting process needs a COMPLETE OVERHAUL! I am adamant about this. Having worked for the Osborne Village BIZ for seven years I have advocated for small business by attending hearings, speaking at Council meetings and promoting the amendment of processes. The current timelines surrounding Occupancy permits, zoning, expansions, hearings and approval of construction permits is insulting. We need to put small business first!

- 5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?**

Any chemical that is effecting our environment in a negative way needs to be addressed and substantially weighed out with the pros and cons of each.

- 6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?**

Please see my answer in question 1.

Peter Koroma



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- 1. Housing is a foundation of healthy communities. Limited affordable housing options create barriers for low-income households in Manitoba leading to visible homelessness, hidden homelessness, and core housing need. What role do you think the city should play to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing?**

The first thing the city of Winnipeg must do is to produce a strategic plan to house all our homeless citizens within five years. The Mayor can achieve this goal by collaborating with the Federal and Provincial governments on the housing file. Not fighting over funding, but asking all levels of government to work together to finally solve this problem.

The city should create partnerships with the charitable social agencies in Winnipeg that are ready and willing to help end homelessness. The city should work with landlords and developers to increase the stock of affordable housing units in Winnipeg. The homeless population should be given housing first, and addicts should be given more rehab options including a safe injection site to get them off the streets. Any future residential developments should have a designated percentage of affordable housing units, which should be announced in a transparent way to avoid any issues or miscommunication. Lastly, the city should encourage some Legions and work with them to convert their properties into social housing with priority given to retired citizens from our Armed Forces.

- 2. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg? People on low incomes and those with mobility issues have fewer transportation options. A healthy transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling and public transit. If elected, how will you prioritize sustainable and healthy modes of travel in Winnipeg?**

First, I would like to see the city provide a long-term final city-wide Bus Rapid Transit Plan that each subsequent Council will continue to implement. Any new buses should be powered by electricity, with the goal of modernizing the entire fleet. If we want to reduce our carbon footprint in Winnipeg, we must find a way to drive less cars as our population continues to grow. I was invited to Art City on Broadway a few weeks ago and one of the children asked us candidates this question: "Why don't we build a city where we only have buses to avoid emissions?" There is hope.

I would like the city to continue to increase bike paths, especially in scenic areas along the river banks and through parks, but also strategically placed along streets. I would love to see our riverbank paths improved with better lighting and some strategic barriers to improve security and beautify the paths.

- 3. Given that the continued growth of the Winnipeg Police Budget has been called unsustainable (by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Alternative Municipal Budget, the mayor, the**

former police chief), where would money be better spent to improve safety for all community members?

The most effective way to spend our safety dollars is to get addicts off the streets of Winnipeg. Most seniors I met at the doors do not feel safe when approached by an addict or a homeless person. However, I do think we can spend some money to provide modern technology for our Police officers to increase their effectiveness.

We should upgrade our infrastructure and city services to improve accessibility, especially for our seniors and people with disabilities. Street lighting in Winnipeg needs to be improved especially in high-crime areas of the city.

4. How would you propose that City Council work with the business community to ensure the City permitting process and related fees as well as the bureaucratic structure relating to timeliness of those permits do not hinder or discourage business development?

The first suggestion I would make is to do an internal audit of the processes at the Zoning & Permits office. Complaints about red tape at this office have been around for years. Some of the by-laws that were passed when creating this office may not be relevant today. This may be a case of unintended policy outcomes that have now become a culture and require leadership at City Hall to modernize and streamline.

The Mayor should appoint an auditor to look into this problem, including interviewing businesses for their input, and come up with recommendations to remove these barriers. We cannot afford business as usual, and I will advocate for necessary changes as City Councillor.

5. Do you support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides, elm tree spraying and mosquito control? Why or why not?

I do support the phasing out of cosmetic pesticides for the safety of our children and grandchildren who innocently play on our lawns and parks. If their value is only cosmetic, why risk the health of our children? Elm tree spraying to control the elm bark beetles and reduce the spread of Dutch elm disease is a necessary tool, but I am open to other options.

Spraying for mosquito control: Coming from West Africa where our mosquitoes carry malaria virus, I support the strategic and controlled spraying of mosquitoes to control these pesky and potentially harmful insects. With West Nile virus and other possible concerns, this is a health issue.

6. Vacant buildings are present in many parts of the ward, what role should the City play in ensuring such structures are renovated or secured?

The city of Winnipeg does have a bylaw No.79/2010 meant to regulate the condition of vacant buildings and to discourage boarding them up. However, the bylaw allows owners to renew their boarding permits for a fee for up to five years.

I've heard from many voters who feel that the city is more interested in making money from charging boarding fees than removing the blighted look of so many boarded houses or businesses in the city. The city needs to tighten the regulations for boarded and/or vacant buildings, because the alternative is a city that looks to be struggling and we don't want that to be our reputation. As City Councillor, I would work with Mayor and council to revise the bylaws around vacant buildings and do what we can to make sure they are used instead of ignored.

I believe there is also an opportunity to look at using some vacant properties downtown as public housing options to house the homeless. This will require collaboration with other levels of government.