

Tara Veer – Housing

1. What role should the City have in ensuring there is adequate affordable housing for all citizens?
2. What would you do to address discrimination against housing developments for vulnerable populations that have met the zoning requirements?
3. What is your position on the use of emergency shelters in our community?
4. The current 5-year plan to end homelessness is due to be reviewed and revised in 2018. What role should the municipal council take in the next iteration of this plan?

I have been and will continue to be an advocate for the integrated housing and supports initiative the City is working on in partnership with the Provincial Government and in consultation with community agencies. Our community is at a watershed moment with respect to our existing affordable housing shortage and emerging risks to current affordable housing stock. Follow through on this project by the next Council will be essential to address our current affordable housing shortage and to prevent future losses of affordable housing stock inventory, in addition to planning for future inventory and asset management.

As Chair of both Council and the Municipal Planning Commission, it is necessary for the Mayor to ensure the respective decision-making authority grounds zoning decisions and interpretations in planning rationale.

Red Deer is in strong need of shelter capacity, for both daytime and overnight shelter provision. In theme six of my 2017 platform, I identify “Advocate for Our Community Needs” as a priority for the next Council and include modernized shelter capacity as a specific advocacy matter. Our community objective ultimately needs to be to ensure that people are not entrenched in shelter but moved into appropriate affordable housing, however there will be an ongoing need to ensure that we have safe and sufficient shelter available for those who need it when they need it.

The plan to end homelessness will need to be renewed in 2018, and the role of the City will depend on the recommendations of the integrated housing initiative as referenced above. Currently City Council has a role in ratifying the funding allocations recommended by the Community Housing Advisory Board, but this may be a role that is transitioned to the community over time. If the latter occurs, there would need to be a strong phasing/implementation plan to ensure community capacity before a transition fully takes place. Also, currently shelter is not identified as a part of the continuum in the plan to end homelessness, and the next iteration will likely need to recognize that while “shelter” is obviously not “housing”, it is an important part of our community response for the safety of the vulnerable in emergency circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I invite you to view my leadership record, community service, and 2017 platform at www.veerforreddeer.ca.