

Sept 27

FOR: CHIMA

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Candidate Name:	<u>JAMES KOHUT</u>
Ward:	<u>6</u>
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Contact name/number:	<u>286-7669</u>

1. What are the top three issues facing your Ward?

Traffic
 Lack of real democracy (representation)
 Urban sprawl / environment / population

2. What are the top three issues facing the city as a whole, if different from above?

Lack of real democracy (representation)
 Traffic
 Urban sprawl / environment / population

3. Urban Sprawl and Housing

- a. Do you support the concept of extending Transit-Oriented Development throughout the city, including in established neighbourhoods generally and in your ward? What is your stance on the proposed development at Dalhousie Station (in Varsity)?

Yes. My stance on Dalhousie is somewhat positive. I would have liked to see taller buildings to house more people while increasing green spaces to 60% of the project. It meets city standards which is a good start. More input by residence on design is always a good idea.

- b. Are we facing a housing crisis in Calgary? If so, what should be done about it? If you are an incumbent, what have you specifically done about this? Yes.

- Use City lands for low income housing on a larger scale.
- Change building codes to allow lower cost more fire resistant enviro friendly materials such as compressed straw bales, rammed earth etc.
- Expand mobile home parks - quick cheap housing
- Push builders to build smaller housing units and more dense (nonmarket)
- Push more basement suites (with neighbor/community approval)
- Push changes to zoning laws to allow higher densities and increase supply of land.

- c. Do you support legalization of secondary suites in all existing neighbourhoods, subject only to reasonable safety concerns? Why or why not? Subject to a process of

participatory democracy where people directly affected decide.

- d. Do you believe that urban sprawl is a problem for the city? If you believe it is a problem, what will you do to address it? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see it as a problem, please explain why. Yes.

- Ban further land annexations
- Increase development densities greater than 7 people/acre
- Increase housing by or above business developments (live at work)
- Do not allow developers to externalize costs onto government/people so developments are not subsidized.
- Halt promoting the city and cap Calgary's population like other responsible jurisdictions are doing. Show leadership by example.

4. Transportation

- a. Has the City been doing a good job of addressing transportation needs? What, if anything, would you do differently? *No.*

City has not invested enough in public transportation. Need more east west service so more people can get transportation into industrial areas. Halt urban sprawl to decrease need for roads. Too much North, South transportation servicing more suburbs → should build more east (high density). Increase bike routes and car pooling lanes (for buses too). Need to build developments to reduce need for all transportation and associated costs (economic & environmental).

- b. How often do you use public transit? Bus, C-train, or both?

Varies greatly. 10% to 30% of my travel. Prefer a bike when the doctor says it is ok to ride one.

- c. Does our current transit system meet the needs of the city? If not, how specifically would you improve it? *No.*

The transit system does not allow all residents to participate in economic activities within the city. Numerous poor people are unable to take transit to areas where job opportunities exist within a reasonable time period. Expansion of east-west service into industrial areas is required to allow for better economic opportunities not just for people, but business too. The city will benefit (along with other government levels) through increased tax revenues.

- d. Are you in favour of the current strategic plan for transit? Why or why not? If not, what changes would you make? *No.*

The long term plan for LRT is designed to expand urban sprawl beyond proposed ring roads. More East West services are required to reduce North South expansion of the city. The transit plan should also identify ways to reduce fuel costs such as increasing the vertical integration of the transit business, in other

→ increasing the vertical integration of the City⁵ of Calgary (corporation) — to benefit the transit unit. Running buses on lower cost alternative fuels such as biodiesel or natural gas and owning those sources (like Medicine Hat City) will reduce operating costs which can be re-invested in more transit routes. Furthermore, this will reduce the harmful emissions coming out of the old buses. The LRT is an example of what vertical integration can do. Enmax invests in wind turbine farms that provides electricity to the LRT system. Profits from Enmax are then returned to the city. A form of beneficial socialism that economically works well.

- e. The City's current plan does not envision direct C-Train service to either the airport or Mount Royal College. Would you favour amending the plan to reach these two destinations (both within close distance of planned lines)? Why or why not?

I would have to see an economic study to decide whether this is feasible or not. Providing LRT service to the College would greatly benefit some students and likely increase the utility of the school.

- f. Are there other areas of the city that are underserved by transit?

How would you address this? Most of the city in general.

We need more funding from other government levels so some heavy lobbying is required. Shifting^{some} funds from road expansion and expanding non tax and non user fee revenues will, in part, address some funding issues.

Informing the public about the benefits of more transit is required so they can better understand the problem and funding requirements.

5. Vibrant and sustainable communities

a. What will you do to address homelessness and urban poverty in the city? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

- Lobby other government levels to obtain funds to help City with issue.
- Push to supply more ^{CITY} land to build low cost housing.
- Push to expand low cost mobile home parks
- Push City to use under utilized City buildings to create homeless shelters. Example: Bears paw is in part used to park trucks indoors. The vehicles could be parked outdoors and the facility could be converted to a shelter. Bus route #1 could be extended to provide transportation.
- Expand basement suites, through a process of participatory democracy, have neighbors/communities decide on the issue.
- Push to change building codes to incorporate lower cost building materials, such as straw bales, rammed earth etc, to build lower cost homes.
- Push developers to produce low cost non market housing particularly for singles who can be housed in smaller units.

b. What is your stance on arts funding? Do you support the recent recommendations of the Calgary Arts Development Authority?

I have not seen any recommendations by the Calgary Arts Development Authority but I have seen recommendations by Calgary Arts Development that I do support. The city has tremendous land assets that it can use to benefit the plan. Co-operative funding from various departments can be utilized to expand art spaces and opportunities along with meeting low cost housing needs. A new Calgary "Renaissance" that benefits the lives of poorer people along with the wealthy is a win win situation for humanity. (NOTE: EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IN ARTS RETURNS MUCH MORE ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY)

c. What is your stance on the city's curbside recycling plan? Would you extend the plan to include recycling of organics and plastics?

Why or why not? I would like to see a plan

that does not cost residences so much. Every dollar is important to poor people to feed themselves or their children. As an environmentalist who has recycled organics for over 20 years, I find it economically unwise to recycle organics when a home owner should be doing it. If on the other hand the city ~~is~~ can benefit from organic recycling (in an economic way) by creating a marketable product then I am for it. Education here will help reduce costs. Recycling plastics is a must.

→ Determining feasibility of establishing wind turbine farms to produce electricity → Spy Hill Dump looks good potentially, others.

d. What other environmental initiatives, if any, would you favour?

- Increase fines for polluters
- Expanding Urban farming (largest growing global farming sector) to reduce transportation pollution, reduce poverty, increase jobs
- Ban cosmetic use of pesticides
- Push to better protect waterways and reservoir by using filtering and or settling systems to reduce street water run off contamination
- Push to get rid of the toxic brown cloud that often hangs over Calgary → to help reduce cancer, respiratory problems, hospital wait times
- Make City fleet more fuel efficient and shift to alternative fuels
- Push to ban land annexations and Urban sprawl - increase densities
- Push to expand public transportation

e. What will you do to address crime and safety issues in Calgary? (If you are an Incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

- Push to increase cameras on streets in the City core
- Push federal government to legalize or decriminalize drugs to eliminate associated crimes (as is in other countries) and support more education to prevent use. Police efforts can then be shifted to other crime prevention that is more important. The 40 year plus war on drugs can only be won by crushing the market that most politicians are currently supporting.

6. Taxes and Revenues

a. Does the current system of funding municipal government largely through property taxes work well? If not, what changes would you recommend? No, Circumventing the market value assessment system.

Grandfathering tax rates with adjustments for inflation or some extraordinary problem adjustment. Allow poor to defer taxes and pay when they can afford it or when estate is sold.

b. Is there enough money in the system currently to fund your priorities? If not, how will you fund them?

Yes. It will take some shifts in funding to do what is needed. Extra revenues will be generated through non tax and non user fee sources. (Expanding City Corporate services like wind power). Assuming other government levels do not cut back revenues for City. Need to push federal government to use Bank of Canada to provide near zero interest rate loans to Cities to fund infrastructure as was done until 1974 (see www.CanadianActionParty.ca)

7. Political reform.

a. Does the current system of campaign financing work well? If not, what changes would you favour? No,

- Ban Alderman and Mayor from collecting as much money as they like in donations from a single individual. This leads to a 2-tiered election system where 1 rich person can "out donate" many average people
- Ban Corporate and union donations
- Ban Alderman and Mayor from keeping election donations - leads to huge bribes.

- Ban Alderman and Mayor from spending as much money as they like in an election. This does not create a level playing field. The rich win, Democracy does not.
- Ban Alderman and Mayor from shifting election donations from one election to another
- Ban all donations over \$100
- Who ever ~~donates~~ donates any money must be put on the public record not just people who donate \$101 or more.
- I favor having the City mailing out 1 flyer for all candidates 1 time in 1 mailing. Makes for real informative democracy.
- b. In the absence of rules around disbursement of campaign surpluses, what will you do with any leftover funds?

I will plan carefully so I do not have a surplus.
Any surplus funds should go to the food bank or homeless shelter.

c. Are there any other structural reforms you would favour?

Introducing Participatory Democracy where people make more decisions and politicians make fewer (or no) decisions. Participatory Democracy is a growing global movement. In some jurisdictions the people are actually making up the budget for the government over a year long process. It is people deciding on whether they need new roads, facilities, etc. not corrupt politicians.

8. **FOR INCUMBENTS ONLY:** What are your three major accomplishments this term? Of what are you most proud?

Thank you for filling out this survey. Please send your results before 6 PM on Thursday, September 27 email (preferred) to info@bettercalgary.ca. If you would prefer to fax your responses, or if you have other questions, please contact Chlma Nkemdirim on 390-9994 and he will be pleased to help you.