



Cities for Everyone supports more affordable housing and transportation, in order to provide security, mobility and opportunity for people with all incomes and abilities

www.citiesforeveryone.org

Municipal Candidates Affordability Survey

Please fill out this survey and return to info@citiesforeveryone.org by 24 September 2018.

Candidate Name Lisa Helps Date Sept 24 2018

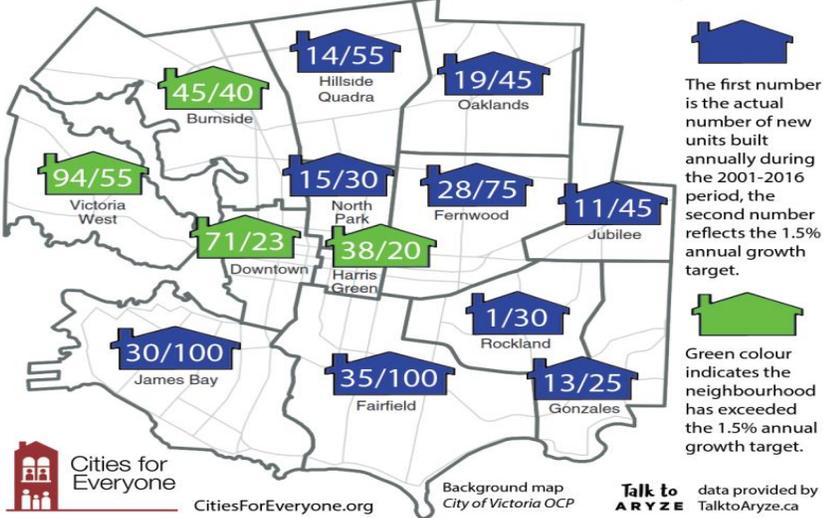
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For more information see the [Victoria Affordability Backgrounder](#) and other documents at www.citiesforeveryone.org.

Context	Questions	Comments
Our region is considered unaffordable, based on income-to-cost ratios (households spending no more than 45% of income on housing and transport), and low rental vacancy rates.	1. What priority do you give to local efforts to increase affordability? Low __ Medium __ High X	Affordability (including housing, transportation, childcare, food and taxes) is the number one element of my platform. Tinkering will not work. Bold, thoughtful comprehensive action is required. Please head here for more: https://lisahelpsvictoria.ca/affordability/
Many middle-income households (\$40-80k per year) spend more on housing and transport than is affordable, and so want more middle-priced (\$1,200-2,500 per month) housing in walkable urban neighbourhoods.	2. Do you support efforts to increase middle- as well as lower-income affordability? Yes X No __ Maybe __	Absolutely yes. A community is like an ecosystem all elements need to be strong and nurtured in order for the whole to be strong.
Our urban population grows approximately 1.5% annually. Although housing supply currently grows at about that rate, most new units are downtown or at the urban fringe. The <i>1.5% Neighbourhood Affordability Solution</i> (see below) sets neighbourhood infill targets.	3. Do you support the <i>1.5% Solution</i> neighbourhood housing growth targets? Yes X No __ Maybe __	Yes, I think it is a brilliant, balanced and equitable solution that I will work hard to implement.

Neighbourhoods' actual annual housing growth rate versus their 1.5% annual growth targets



Cities for Everyone's [1.5% Neighbourhood Affordability Solution](#) sets targets to increase neighbourhoods' housing supply by approximately 1.5% annually, to match the City's population growth rate.

Most of this housing should be middle-priced (\$1,200-2,500 per month), so it is initially affordable to middle-income households, and becomes affordable to lower-income households as it depreciates in the future.

This ensures that more lower- and middle-income households can afford suitable housing in walkable urban neighbourhoods.

Most residential neighbourhoods only allow two stories and limit densities, which excludes most *missing middle* housing (see below). Affordable housing requires upzoning.

4. Do you support upzoning:

- Neighbourhood-wide**
- For all corner and larger lots**
- Only on a case-by-case basis**

I support neighbourhood wide upzoning as proposed by the Fairfield Gentle Density group. This forms part of my platform. The upzoning will need to be done through detailed consultation with neighbourhoods, we will need to ensure the look and feel of neighbourhoods don't change drastically and we will need to ensure that affordability is built into the new zoning.



The "missing middle" includes moderate density housing types such as multiplexes, townhomes and low-rise apartments. These are generally the least costly houses to develop.

Many jurisdictions have *inclusionary* mandates which require that a portion (typically 5-15%) of new units be priced below market rates. However, if this requirement is excessive it can reduce the number of new units built.

5. Do you support mandates:

- For all new housing**
- For higher-priced housing**
- Only on a case-by-case basis**
- Under no circumstances**

I made a motion which was supported by Council when this topic came to our Council table. The direction to staff is to create an inclusionary housing policy that will generate the *greatest number of affordable units* overall. This means that it needs to be a balanced policy that does

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		not reduce the number of new units built overall.
Urban parking typically costs \$10-60k per space, and an increasing portion of households are car-free. For affordability and fairness sake many experts recommend reducing parking requirements so occupants are not forced to pay for costly spaces they do not need.	6. Do you support reduced parking requirements for infill developments even if some neighbours object? Yes <u>X</u> No ___ Maybe ___	I feel very strongly about this. The City recently adopted a new Schedule C Parking Bylaw. It reduced the number of off-street parking requirements but I don't think it goes far enough. We must continue to build a city for people. It is ironic that our bylaws mandate housing for cars (eg a certain number of parking spots per new building) but they don't mandate housing for people (eg there are many people homeless in our region.) My vision is that in the next 20 years the City's streets are lined with car sharing vehicles and the need for single occupancy vehicle ownership is greatly reduced.
Infill development often requires variances to allow taller buildings, higher densities and fewer parking spaces than codes require. Neighbors often oppose these variances.	7. Would you approve variances needed for medium-priced infill? Generally approve <u>X</u> Generally reject ___ Approve if _____	I will generally look to approve these kinds of variances if the built form blends into the look and feel of the existing
Victoria's <i>Official Community Plan</i> generally allows up to two stories in <i>traditional residential</i> neighbourhoods, three stories on <i>collector streets</i> , four stories in <i>urban villages</i> , and six stories on <i>major arterials</i> , but some residents consider these too tall and dense.	8. If a proposed development meets OCP guidelines and includes moderate-priced units (less than \$600k), but is opposed by some neighbors, would you: Reject it _____ Approve it _____ Approve if it is a balanced approach that seeks to meet the needs of existing neighbourhood residents and new neighbourhood residents.	We are legally required to keep an open mind on all development applications so I can't say in theory what I would support or not. What I can say is in this past term I have worked very hard to balance the needs of the present with the needs of the future.
9. What other municipal affordability strategies do you support?		
As noted above, we need to take a comprehensive approach to affordability - it is more than just the cost of housing. Please refer to my entire platform section on Affordability to see the bold, creative approaches that I propose we take: https://lisahelpsvictoria.ca/affordability/		
10. Please let us know if you have other thoughts concerning our community's affordability problems and solutions? Thanks for the opportunity to reflect on these important topics and for your thoughtful questions.		