

Bruce Buruma responses

Candidate for Red Deer City Council

- Privatization, including P3s
 - Having experience with privatization of services and P3 partnerships as a Senior Administrator with Red Deer Public Schools, I know and agree that the benefits and efficiencies are hard to find and have not achieved the service levels expected. I would stand by that position if elected to City Council
- Municipalities as Employers
 - Local governments have a responsibility to offer fair and competitive wages and benefits that attract and retain quality employees. Also important are mutually trusting, caring, fair and respectful relationships between employee groups and the employer. That includes honouring their choice to bargain collectively. Those values are driven by City Council and expected of administration.
 - I am a member of the Alberta Teachers Retirement Fund and was opposed to the government's move to have teacher (and other) pensions moved to AIMCo. Thankfully that direction has changed. Too often the public fails to realize that it is our money that funds pensions, and that we make financial plans based on that trust. I respect the collective bargaining process and the right to strike.
- Funding
 - I'm at the table making recommendations and implementing budget decisions as a Senior Administrator at Red Deer Public Schools which has a budget of \$125 million, 1,200+ staff and serving 11,000 students and their families. That experience matters, particularly when there has not been a per pupil funding increase from the province in over 8 years. We have achieved challenging budgets through transparency and engagement that garner understanding and support--process matters. It's easy for candidates to make bold promises, but tough to keep them when they realize how revenues and expenses really work. These challenges will become more significant as other levels of government place greater responsibilities on already stretched local governments. Council, when setting the budget framework needs to be open to both sides of the equation- revenues and expenses.
- COVID 19
 - COVID 19 is a crisis and we need to respond based on science, public health and community wellness. I support mask mandates and vaccination passports as an effective way to limit and reduce the spread. For those not following the measures, there are implications and they must face the implications of their choices.
- Affordability
 - Municipalities face 'affordability' challenges themselves. City Council must respect taxpayers and steward the resources to best serve our community. I also believe an equity lens is important in making those decisions particularly for

vulnerable populations facing economic security issues. There should be means for individuals to access reduced or free services like transit, recreation and cultural opportunities.