

Cody Bondarchuk responses
Candidate for Edmonton City Council Ward tastawiyiniwak

1. Will you oppose privatization of municipal services and infrastructure, including Public-Private-Partnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

Yes and yes – those interested in expanding P3 funding for projects often only use cost as an argument, but not only is there limited evidence that P3 projects end up costing less, but there are serious concerns with pay inequity for workers on these projects and the lack of accountability on private entities if the project does not deliver or if issues arise after completion. In almost every case, infrastructure and community projects should be funded by the city and built by union workers.

2. Will you support your employees and your community by ensuring the municipality employs staff with living wages, full-time hours where desired, job security, and collective bargaining rights?

Absolutely, it is necessary for the city to keep staffing levels where they are as a minimum. The city is a significant job creator in Edmonton and public sector jobs are some of the more stable types of employment. To ensure wages are increased and competitive with the private sector, I've proposed a significant reduction to consultant costs from the city's budget. If there are consultants who the city administration continuously goes to for work on projects, those job positions should be brought in-house and hired by the city for better stability and predictability for the budget.

3. Will you oppose attempts from the provincial government to legislate against municipal staff including cuts to the Local Authorities Pension Plan, or restrictions on their right to strike?

Yes – while the city is essentially formed out of provincial legislation, large cities like Edmonton have demonstrated their autonomy and ability to function well without the paternalistic oversight of the provincial government. If legislation were to be introduced by the provincial government that had serious impacts on city operations or structure, I would support Edmonton doing everything within its power to reassert its independence.

4. How do you propose your municipality deal with funding shortfalls, cuts, and downloading of responsibilities from federal and provincial governments? Do you favour spending cuts over tax increases?

I do not believe austerity builds success; community and well-funded services do. It is true that municipalities have limited avenues to generate revenue, but I have proposed in my platform changes that can be made to revenue policy to ensure stability and fairness in the city budget, including a property tax modifier applied to the highest-valued homes in Edmonton that would generate an additional \$15 million per year without raising taxes on the working class. Long term, we must advocate for guaranteed funding from the provincial government that is in line with other jurisdictions – in Ontario, almost 20 percent of the average municipality's budget is funded through grants from the province and country, and in Alberta it is only 5 percent.

5. Do you support measures such as mask mandates, vaccine “passports”, and vaccine mandates for staff to limit and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your municipality?

Protective public health measures including mask requirements, proof of vaccination for public spaces, and vaccination requirements for employment are the only way we will get out of the pandemic, and I support these measures knowing they are not permanent and are used to keep others safe.

6. Do you support measures to reduce municipal reliance on services fees and fares, such as eliminating transit fares?

Yes, and my platform includes a commitment to fully subsidized, fare-free transit in Edmonton. Workers and families have been slowly sinking further into debt as the cost of everything keeps rising but their wages/salaries aren't, and it is the government's responsibility to provide access to well-funded services like transit to ease the burden.