

**Gary Klassen responses**  
**Candidate for Mayor of Lethbridge**

Privatization, including P3s: AUPE members know very well that privatization regularly fails to find “efficiencies” and any cost savings are often off the backs of workers who become de unionized, with lower pay and benefits. They also work on the front lines of service delivery and see the problems caused by high-turnover low wage private providers, and the bureaucratic burden caused by having to deal with a third party instead of an in-house provider.

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? Municipalities as employers: As our economies recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, good jobs are an important factor. Public sector workers spend in their communities, and many households impacted by private sector recessions have been able to keep the bills paid thanks to a stable public sector job.

I personally would like to keep all the city employees working, all we need to do is do things as efficiently as possible

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?

I totally support living wages and full-time hours. I think that employees should earn what they get paid,

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? Funding: For decades the trend on public services has been cut and defunding, with fees downloaded onto workers, and the tax burden shifted away from the wealthy and corporations to the working class. At the same time, workers in the public sector know that tax freezes and cuts mean cuts to services and jobs. Any promise political candidates make can only be realized through proper revenues.

I think that if both management and employees work together and nobody gets greedy negotiations will work, solutions rather than striking

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? Thank you for participating in this survey from AUPE’s Committee On Political Action. The Committee is asking for all surveys to be completed by Thursday, September 30. Please send your responses or any questions of your own to AUPE via email at [t.zimmerman@aupe.org](mailto:t.zimmerman@aupe.org) The committee intends to publish the responses (or lack thereof) during the week of October

Like I said before if we work smarter, better and more efficiently we will be able to make ends meet, and not have to do any tax increases

4. COVID-19 Safety: With the negligent provincial response to the now three preventable waves of COVID-19, municipalities have been put in an awkward position of needing to take measures

to protect their citizens throughout the pandemic. Many are introducing measures of their own, but not all have.

These times are tough we all have to buckle down and be safe, if that means wearing masks in public places then we should do just that, staying clean and safe is the only way to go. Vaccines should not be mandatory but remember the polio vaccine we all took it and it worked, (no more polio)

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?

Like I said before wearing masks in public places seems to have been working, as for vaccine passports it is forcing people to do things that they do not believe in, vaccine mandates are again forcing people to make a choice

Affordability: With workers squeezed by increasing costs, municipal fees add to the burden. Service fees are a form of a flat tax that requires the same payment from a CEO as a low-income worker. Transit affordability is an important piece of working-class equity. Fees add an extra burden for many people who can not afford the costs of private transportation in the first place. The reduced emissions on increasing transit ridership can also be a part of how cities take positive action on climate change.

I feel that if the transit rates were reduced to affordable rates then more people would consider using transit, low-income workers will be able to afford transit, as well this will have more and more people using transit

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

Again reducing transit to where it is more affordable will be better than eliminating transit fares completely