

Leslyn Joseph responses
Candidate for Calgary City Council Ward 10

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?

Privatization has long been a lazy "solution" to budget issues and to avoid responsibility for services delivered and for those hard-working individuals who deliver them. Municipal services can be conducted to a high standard and in a cost-effective manner as a public service. I support the public sector and would encourage continuing public sector work and avoiding any future privatization. As current privatized service contracts wrap-up, I believe it prudent to review these contracts and municipal public sector capacity to see where we can return to in-house services from the public sector and streamline our delivery on these services to Calgarians.

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 believe that all should have a living wage and free and fair access to union rights. I believe in leading by example and as a municipal government we must ensure that city staff are paid a living wage and a schedule that accommodates their financial and home-life needs. Job security is highly beneficial to a secure and stable economy and all city staff should have this. I am a proponent of unions and one's right to collectively bargain.

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?

Those who have come before us have fought too hard for the labour rights we have today for me to allow other jurisdictions to infringe on those rights. Municipal staff have a right to strike and have worked hard to fund their pension plan, I will most certainly oppose any attempts to restrict those rights and earned benefits.

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?

The largest line item on the Calgary City Budget is police. I believe that there are significant cuts and streamlining that can be performed on this line item alone which will free up a great deal of income to fund other city services and programs to make Calgary a safe and thriving city. Elsewhere in the budget, I would like to work with service providers to find measures by which we can work smarter to provide high quality services without risking jobs or short changing Calgarians. There is no simple answer to these matters and I believe that working in concert with those providing services and experts will allow us to find the best way to proceed forward together.

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?

Yes, I do support such measures. Medical experts have made it abundantly clear that a layered approach is necessary in combating this pandemic. If the province will not, we as a city will lead by example and implement the necessary measures to keep us and the public at large safe and make meaningful progress in ending this pandemic.

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

Creating a more accessible, affordable and environmentally-friendly city is so important to me. Making transit more financially accessible will aid in discouraging driving for some and will provide a lifeline to low-income Calgarians. We need to reassess the manner in which we attribute fees for municipal services and where those fees do and do not make sense. Drastically reducing or foregoing all fees entirely has the potential to aid many low-income Calgarians and provide additional incentives to choose transit over driving.