

Lori Masse responses

Candidate for Calgary City Council Ward 9

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?

While I understand the need to find efficiencies & cost savings in any organization, I don't always believe in the privatization of services. I have been told that often when looking at the privatization of services some people win and some people lose and the winners often are not the workers of these companies but the people who negotiate those deals.

At this point, I would support reviewing processes and procedures in the delivery of services, but work to ensure that we are supporting the City of Calgary employees who are a part of AUPE**

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.

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? **100%. I firmly believe in protecting and supporting staff. Happy staff, happy workers, better services for the health of our city.**
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.**

Funding:

For decades the trend on public services has been cuts 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.

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 believe that we need to work with the provincial & federal governments to ensure that the City of Calgary is paying and receiving its fair share. I think that we need to start looking at taxing from a 'resilience lens'. Calgary has proven over time that we have an economy that can go up & down. When we are in an upswing, I believe in collecting and saving so that when a downturn is experienced the burden of revenue isn't downloaded by way of tax increases.**

COVID-19 Safety:

With the negligent provincial response to 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.

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. As many Albertans feel neglected by our provinces COVID response. They have failed the entire province by their lack of clear directives.**

Affordability:

With workers squeezed by increasing costs, municipal fees add to the burden. Service fees are a form of flat tax that require 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.

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

I fully encourage, incentivize, and support all City of Calgary employees who choose to use green transportation. This could mean reduced transit passes, benefits that would supplement costs for bikes, scooters, or other forms of green transportation.

*****AUPE Note: AUPE does not represent City of Calgary Employees.***