

Grading summary: Mike Nickel

Edmonton's mayoral race is highly contested with two prominent politicians with long track records running for office. Despite multiple attempts and deadline extensions offered to candidate Mike Nickel, his campaign did not respond.

For the 6 questions AUPE will be relying on a combination of Nickel's policies on his website, public positions, and his past political track record to provide a guide to grading his commitments in these areas. A notable standout is that Mike Nickel sought (and lost) the UCP nomination to run on the UCP platform in 2019 in Edmonton-South. References to the UCP platform that Nickel supported are included below.

Q1: Will you oppose privatization of municipal services and infrastructure, including Public-Private Partnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

Nickel's website: Nickel is proposing an "Independent Project Management Office" for infrastructure, a separate corporation to handle work already done by the city. The oversight will be removed from council and instead be through a Board of Directors. There is no mention in Nickel's lengthy vision for this corporation that it would rule out P3 projects.

UCP platform: Nickel supported the UCP platform which calls for more P3s in Alberta, private health care and social services delivery and more. F

Context from AUPE COPA:

Q2: 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?

Nickel's website: Contains no commitment to improving wages, hours, or job security of City of Edmonton staff.

UCP platform:: Nickel supported a platform that resulted in reductions in overtime and holiday pay for front line workers, as well as changes making it harder for workers to unionize. F

Q3: 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?

Nickel's website: Contains no commitment to protect pensions or defend the right to strike.

UCP Platform: Nickel supported a platform that promotes the use of scab-labour in essential services strikes. F

Q4: 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?

Nickel's website: Nickel's message online is consistent that public spending should be curbed, while also cutting taxes – despite a rising Consumer Price Index.

UCP Platform: Like Nickel, the UCP platform he supported promised to reduce taxes on the premise it would create jobs and not lead to problems for front line staff. F

Q5: 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?

Nickel’s website is silent on addressing COVID-19.

AUPE COPA Context: Mike Nickel voted against reintroducing even a mask mandate within the city of Edmonton, has rejected the idea of any vaccine mandate for staff, and has not proposed any measures to help the city deal with the fourth wave. Nickel claimed that the city’s mask mandate would “drive business right out of the city”, yet municipalities around Edmonton and eventually the province quickly introduced mandates of their own. F

Q6: Do you support measures to reduce municipal reliance on services fees and fares, such as eliminating transit fares?

Nickel’s website does talk about some fees like parking at city parks, but is silent on reducing transit fares. D