

# Civic Election 2021: FAST & FAIR

*This October, Calgarians will be making important choices about how we will address the climate crisis and build a resilient community that can emerge from the pandemic and the collapse of fossil fuels.*

**FAST:** We need stronger and faster action to achieve our climate goals. Calgary is not on track with its commitments, and we missed our target for 2020. We need to move further faster and set interim targets if we want to do our part in keeping global temperature rise to under 1.5 degrees.

**FAIR:** We need a Just Recovery to ensure no one is left behind. Our decisions regarding the pandemic recovery and the local economic crisis must be fair, empower the most vulnerable, and contribute to a resilient and diverse economy that is less dependent on a high-carbon industry.

## What to Ask Your Candidates: A Policy Conversation Resource

*The key question is “What is your climate plan?” If you want to delve deeper, this document offers a resource for discussing specific actions based on The City’s Climate Resilience Strategy.*

*To order a lawn sign, visit [www.calgaryclimatehub.ca/election\\_2021](http://www.calgaryclimatehub.ca/election_2021).*



## FAST: Action to meet our CLIMATE goals

What is your plan to make sure Calgary gets back on track with our emission targets? [The Climate Resilience Strategy](#) aimed to cut GHG emissions to 20 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050. Instead, [our emissions went up](#). We need to tackle our biggest sources of emissions, and we need to do it quickly.

### BUILDINGS & ENERGY

Buildings account for 65 per cent of Calgary's GHG emissions, with non-residential buildings at 39 per cent and residential buildings at 26 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

- ❑ **Will you support ENMAX going to net-zero?** Electricity generation accounts for 42 per cent of GHG emissions in Calgary.<sup>2</sup> We can have a significant impact by asking our City-owned utility to get to net-zero emissions by 2050, with interim targets of 50 per cent by 2030 and 90 per cent by 2040.
- ❑ **Will you revise the Sustainable Building Policy to require all new publicly-owned buildings to be net-zero?** The current [policy](#) allows standards to be set on a project-by-project basis. Building structures that will need to be retrofitted soon after completion is not only more expensive in the long run, but also highly inefficient due to greater energy loss. Calgary ranks fifth in large cities for sustainable buildings with 1.5/100k residents, far behind Vancouver's 8.6/100k residents.<sup>3</sup>
- ❑ **Will you implement innovative financing mechanisms to allow businesses and homeowners to retrofit existing buildings more easily?** The Clean Energy Improvement Program ([CEIP](#)) is Alberta's approach to Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) a program to fund retrofits, with costs recouped through property taxes. The Province has approved it, but Calgary needs to pass a bylaw for people to use it.

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<sup>1</sup> Climate Resilience Strategy, Figure 1 – Calgary Community-Wide GHG Emissions by Sector (2017), p. 25

<sup>2</sup> Climate Resilience Strategy, Figure 2 – Calgary Community-Wide GHG Emissions by Energy Type (2017), p.25

<sup>3</sup>LEED Platinum, Passive House, Living Buildings/100k residents. The Climate Reality Project Canada, Community Climate Hub. *2020 National Climate League Standings* (<https://www.climatereality.ca/ncl>) p. 14

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation accounts for 34 per cent of Calgary's emissions.<sup>4</sup> The way we plan our city has a significant impact on emissions and the wellbeing of our residents.

- ❑ **Will you support the completion of the Green Line?** The Green Line ties together CLIMATE and COMMUNITY. It will reduce GHG emissions by 30,000 tonnes, create 20,000 jobs (12,000 direct and 8,000 indirect jobs), and connect 2,300 existing affordable housing units. Crossing the river will help connect communities to the north who have been waiting for years.
- ❑ **Will you increase access to active, low-carbon transportation by investing in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in under-served neighbourhoods?** Calgary ranked last among large cities in the National Climate League for our low walkability score of 39, compared to Vancouver's score of 80. Walkability has been linked to greater health.<sup>5</sup>
- ❑ **Will you work to make our streets safer for pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility challenges?** In 2019, Calgary had 58.7 cycling and pedestrian injuries and deaths per 100k compared to Edmonton's 42.3. Possible solutions include ensuring greater cycling route connectivity and eliminating the need for pedestrians to push buttons for a walk signal at intersections.
- ❑ **Will you say 'No' to new developments on the outskirts of Calgary?** Continuing to grow outwards increases costs for building roads and pipes, makes transit less efficient and accessible, and increases GHG emissions by putting more people in cars. The Municipal Development Plan calls for 50 per cent of development to be in established areas.
- ❑ **Will you develop a policy to manage the burden of EVs on the electricity grid at peak times?** In a recent poll, 70 per cent of Canadians said they would consider buying an EV for their next vehicle. This is a positive move, but we need to develop a plan now to avoid problems during peak demand.

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<sup>4</sup> Climate Resilience Strategy, Figure 1 – Calgary Community-Wide GHG Emissions by Sector (2017), p. 25

<sup>5</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2019009/article/00002-eng.htm>

## OTHER ACTIONS

- Will you support annual reporting to Calgarians on our climate plan progress?** Right now, it is difficult for ordinary citizens to assess how we are doing. We need a clear scorecard, updated annually.
- Will you require City purchasing to be net-zero by 2025?** The City has significant buying power and could influence producers through purchasing policies, particularly around food. It can also press for extended producer responsibility regulations to make producers responsible for waste.
- Will you start tracking scope 3 emissions to get a better picture of our GHG footprint?** Scope 3 emissions are consumption-based, such as emissions from the production of goods used in Calgary but manufactured elsewhere. They are not currently tracked.<sup>6</sup>
- Will you support nature-based solutions, including increasing the tree canopy coverage to 16 per cent?** As of 2019, Calgary has tree coverage of 8.3 per cent.<sup>7</sup> Trees help improve air quality, reduce heat islands, and capture carbon.

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<sup>6</sup> Climate Resilience Strategy, p. 47

<sup>7</sup> NCL 2020 Standings, p. 17

## **FAST: Action to meet our CLIMATE ADAPTATION goals**

**What is your plan for climate change adaptation?** We need to ensure we can better withstand the severe weather events and other effects of climate change. Flooding is the most obvious risk, but -- as we have seen with increased numbers of poor air quality days, snow events and the hailstorm in June, 2020 -- other climate-related events also have real social and economic impacts on the lives of Calgarians, particularly worsening the living conditions of vulnerable communities. In 2019, Calgary had the highest number of poor air quality days thanks to the effects of smoke from forest fires.<sup>8</sup>

- ❑ **Will you support nature-based solutions** to reducing heat islands, increasing habitat, and mitigating flooding? The Parks department needs reliable funding for biologists and other biological scientists.
- ❑ **Will you commit to ensuring all Calgarians have equal access to disaster funding?** Some residents in the northeast are still waiting for assistance to recover from the June 2020 hailstorm.

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<sup>8</sup> NCL 2020 Standings, p. 16

## **FAIR: Action to ensure a more resilient COMMUNITY**

**What is your plan for a Just Recovery?** Our decisions regarding the pandemic recovery and the local economic crisis must be fair, empower the most vulnerable, and contribute to a resilient and diverse economy that is less dependent on a high-carbon industry. We need to make sure no one is left behind.

- **Will you actively support green jobs?** Calgary has fallen behind Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal in the number of certified Benefit Corporations, which consider the effects of decisions on people, communities, and the environment.<sup>9</sup> As Calgary is one of Canada's primary industry and innovation hubs, we have the required skillset to be a leader in sustainable energy.
- **Will you commit to restoring transit service as soon as possible?** Transit must be safe, affordable, and convenient to ensure an equitable city. Calgary trails the pack when it comes to transit trips per capita.<sup>10</sup> We can do better.
- **Will you ensure that stimulus funding is used to help us transition to a low-carbon economy?** New projects must apply an 'inclusive climate lens' to determine if they will reduce or increase GHG emissions.
- **Will you support a re-examination of the municipal tax system?** We need to make sure that those who can afford it are paying their full share, that the tax system incentivizes low-carbon options, and that we have adequate funding to support climate programs and initiatives.

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<sup>9</sup> NCL Standings 2020, p. 25

<sup>10</sup> NCL Standings 2020, p.32