



Municipal Election 2021

Dear Candidate

Greater Edmonton Alliance is an alliance of faith, labour, health education and community organizations dedicated to building a base of everyday civic leaders to effectively stand for change they want to see in their communities.

GEA is a multi-issue organization.

The issues we work on change from year to year, arising directly from the concerns of the thousands of people in our member organizations through shared stories.

We cross economic, faith, and neighbourhood lines to find common ground and act on our values.

As you are a candidate running for the councillor position in your ward, the members of GEA have some questions to ask you that are of importance to our members in their communities.

Value 1: Workplace Mental Health

We value a city that supports mental health and well being. Over the last 2 years we have approached the city to adopt the Canadian National Standard for the Psychological Safety in the Workplace as official policy. The present city council has only agreed to use it as a benchmark. Psychological health problems cost the Canadian economy \$51 billion per year - \$20 billions of which results from work-related causes.

Under the standard there is a rigorous monitoring, measurement and internal auditing process that would need to be adhered to and this is the piece that we feel is most needed as official policy.

The present City Council has stated there will be a report presented to council concerning Workplace Mental Health in approximately 1 year (May 2022).

- *As a candidate, what is your opinion concerning psychological safety in the workplace?*
Psychological safety is as critical as physical safety and needs to be treated with the same level of focus as physical safety.

When elected, would you commit to meeting and working with The Greater Edmonton Alliance to discuss Workplace Mental Health before the City Administration Report is presented and reviewed? Yes.

- *Would you support the City of Edmonton adopting the Canadian National Standard for Psychological Safety in the Workplace as official policy? State reason for your answer.*
Most likely. I supported the use of it as a benchmark to start and want to see the next report in 2022 to help inform whether we should then be adopting it as official policy.



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Value 2: The Path to Shared Prosperity

We value creating an equitable city that allows equal participation for people facing challenges of poverty and disability. When one of us struggles it has a negative effect for the whole community. Poverty is a condition of a person who is deprived of the resources, means, choices and power to have a basic level of living standards and non-living wages disproportionately impacts women, immigrants, indigenous people and people with disabilities in our communities. This is why GEA has identified Living Wages as a solution to this issue and has developed an educational course to be presented to the people and businesses of our communities. Work should lift people out of poverty and give families the ability to have a decent standard of life.

- *When elected, will you commit to meeting and working with GEA's Living Wage/Quality Jobs Research/Action team as we reach out to our communities with our educational program? Yes.*
- *What actions would you take to increase equity in our community and participation of the business community to make Edmonton a truly living wage city? While I am happy that the City of Edmonton requires a living wage, we still have work to do in order to lift people out of poverty. To do that, we need to implement actions as identified by End Poverty Edmonton and we need to expand access to programs and services such as the Ride Transit and Leisure Access Programs.*

Value 3: Truth and Reconciliation:

We value building and healing our relationships with Indigenous peoples by fully implementing

the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). GEA is reaching out to Local Indigenous Leaders in our communities to lead our organization to a better understanding of the “truth” of colonization, residential schools and their ongoing aftermath.

- *Once GEA has completed our internal reflections on Truth and Reconciliation and are working with our Local Indigenous Leadership, when elected, will you commit to meeting with our Truth and Reconciliation Research/Action team to discuss the calls to action and how we may partner to bring these actions to our communities?* Yes. I’m not sure of how we would specifically partner on this yet but I believe that would be best determined once we meet.



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Values 4: A Just Transition for Workers

We value a healthy environment that can sustain us into the future but with Climate Change and the Transition to Green Energy or a Greener Future, workers always seem to be forgotten in this process. As the economy changes workers need to be re-trained, this seems to fall on the shoulders of the worker and the family most times.

- *As a candidate, what role do you see the City of Edmonton taking to lessen the impact of this transition period for workers and their families?* For any City workers that would be impacted by properly addressing climate change, we should begin the process as early as possible so that we aren't left scrambling to train people as the economy changes. That means even if we don't have a specific timeline for job impacts in certain roles, if we are confident there will be impacts, we should work with our union partners now on a transition plan.
- *Once elected will you commit to meeting and working with the Greater Edmonton Alliance to explore the possibilities to keep quality jobs in the hands of Edmonton workers.* Yes.

Value 5: Community Mental Health

We value healthy communities within our city and this is why GEA has identified Community Mental Health initiatives as a solution to the increasing mental health concerns particularly due to the effects of the pandemic. By creating community mental health resources to build

resiliency, by fostering peer support networks, an under-utilized resource, whole communities can improve the mental health of those in need. We know these networks can reduce the stigmatization about mental health, improve crisis response, and support early intervention.

- *As a candidate, what role do you see the City of Edmonton taking to support building community mental health initiatives?* I believe that much of the work that was started under the Urban Isolation and Mental Health council initiative should continue.
- *When elected, would you commit to meeting with GEA's Mental Health Research/Action team and support the ongoing efforts of GEA to partner with certain departments within the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Public Libraries to create community mental health initiatives?* Yes.



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We would like to thank you for taking the time to respond to GEA's survey questions and to inform you that GEA will have your responses posted on our website. Our affiliate organizations have also agreed to post on their social media accounts and websites for their memberships.

If you have any questions please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely

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