

MAYORAL CANDIDATES DEBATE OUR DOWNTOWN: Q&A RESPONSES

1. **A spirit of creativity, cooperation, and collaboration between municipal and provincial governments is critical. How would you foster this environment? In particular, the need for municipal/provincial collaboration to:**
 - a. **Renew the Province’s Winnipeg Regeneration Strategy with a greater funding focus on downtown and the inner city**
 - b. **Broaden the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) into other areas of downtown to enable strategic public investments that in turn help stimulate private development**
 - c. **Create partnerships to prioritize heritage building preservation and conversion**

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, I will strive to foster a strong relationship with our provincial government. As a part of these efforts, it will be critical to lobby the provincial government on the importance of investing in our downtown. Winnipeg is both the population and economic heart of this province, with downtown Winnipeg, as its heart. We must continue our efforts to improve our downtown, with bi-level governmental support, if we want to continue to create and maintain the growth in the heart of our city. I’ve proposed a new structure for infrastructure renewal (The BuildWINNIPEG Partnership) that will facilitate greater collaboration with the provincial government on transportation infrastructure matters. This new, more collaborative, approach to working with the provincial government will also impact the important efforts to make our downtown an even better place to live, work and play. b) We are currently developing a new TIF strategy that will aid in the development of our downtown. I look forward to making a future policy announcement that will provide details of this strategy. I am a firm believer that the use of TIFs is an excellent policy tool that can be used to assist in the building of a vibrant downtown community. c) One of our city’s greatest assets is our heritage building stock. We need to ensure that these buildings are not destroyed and we will encourage owners, to redevelop them. Our Exchange District is a wonderful treasure trove that showcases our city’s rich heritage. The Exchange District should be a national tourist destination and we need to strive to make it one of the crown jewel of the prairies.

DAVID SANDERS: As Mayor, I will invite the Premier and the Minister responsible for relations with the City of Winnipeg to re-establish the former regular meetings between an Urban Affairs Committee of Cabinet and the new Executive Policy Committee, to encourage frequent and



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frank communication and collaboration between the Provincial Cabinet and City Council on issues of common concern, including such matters as the development of new urban regeneration strategies, creative TIF and other public investment techniques, and innovative partnerships for heritage building preservation and conversion. When I served as Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs, my staff and I supported such a municipal/provincial diplomatic process, which was highly successful in dealing with the full range of intergovernmental relations, from immediate crises to annual budgeting, to legislative changes, to major program development and review. I would also seek to participate in regular tri-level diplomatic relationships with the Government of Canada as well as the Province and City, to enable the same kind of cooperation and collaboration by all the elected representatives of the citizens of Winnipeg. I know this is possible, because I have already helped make it happen before.

GORD STEEVES: Each level of government needs to recognize their responsibilities; the province has the domain over social services, the city over policing. The downtown must be safe to foster the type of growth we need.

HAZEM ASLAN: Cooperation, and collaboration between municipal and provincial government is critical and it will always be, however we have to do are best for the city, but I think to renew the province's Winnipeg Regeneration strategy with a greater funding focus on downtown and inner city is the best way, but I have to get in to see what's happening.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I am committed to making Winnipeg a City That Works, which includes partnering with the provincial and federal governments to get results. There are a lot of exciting things happening downtown. The MTS Centre and return of the Jets has brought new entertainment. New housing options and Waterfront Drive and surrounding developments are creating a strong momentum. Winnipeg is lucky to have beautiful heritage buildings throughout the historic Exchange District, and our brilliant arts community is a foundation of strength. Downtown needs to be a place where people live, work and play, and I will work with anyone willing to help advance that goal.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: The provincial and federal government would work closer with a mayor who is not bound by political affiliation. We need to build partnerships to help create a multi-faceted approach to building a prosperous, successful Winnipeg. It is important that we attract investors into Winnipeg, who are willing to help further develop our city. Furthermore, fostering an inviting business environment draw people to the area. My vision begins with the innercity, and involves working our way outwards. I believe we need to tear down the invisible walls from one community to another, creating communication channels which will promote harmony and balance within our city. We need to restructure downtown, to attract citizens into these viable areas. Our heritage buildings are a crucial component of Winnipeg culture, and we must preserve them, as this allows us to keep our collective heritage alive – strengthening our sense of connection and community.



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PAULA HAVIXBECK: a) The three elements of the Province’s Winnipeg Regeneration Strategy are: Aboriginal Capacity Building, Downtown Renewal, and Inner City Resiliency. As Mayor, I would establish this as an ongoing discussion item with measurable deliverables. b) Tax Increment Financing has been the catalyst for a number of new Downtown Buildings. TIF is a strong tool to encourage growth downtown, and I would establish an ongoing discussion with the Province and strongly advocate for increased TIF project funding. c) Having served as a member of the board of Heritage Winnipeg, I will have an announcement on this but will commit to continually working towards heritage building preservation and conversion, with a focus on eliminating derelict buildings as a result of neglect.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: Building partnerships is always about demonstrating to the other partner that there is a real benefit. When it comes to dealing with the province, it's about building a case and demonstrating how the two levels of government working together, coordinating, and partnering on investment can deliver better social, financial, and economic returns than the two governments working alone, or separately. There are a number of major reasons to focus on downtown improvement. People often talk about how the City should run like a business. What if we acted like entrepreneurs instead? What if we considered the City of Winnipeg as a product, and we were trying to enhance it with new features. What would we keep? What would we change? What makes us different? Great downtowns set cities apart. They impress visitors, and make citizens proud. What sets exceptional cities apart, socially and economically, are downtowns that work. We have elements of that right now, and we need to build on it. There have been major improvements and success stories downtown, with the Forks and the Exchange District being two examples, as well as increasing numbers of condos, and restaurants downtown. The heritage buildings and architecture of Winnipeg set it apart from other cities, and their preserved. One of the major drawbacks, in that picture people have in their minds of downtown Winnipeg is, as the Weakerthans put it, of “Buildings gone missing like teeth”. Developers have purchased buildings – including heritage buildings - and have razed them and use them as parking lots because it is a cheaper option than redevelopment. We already have a carrot for development: the City of Winnipeg has already set aside \$40 million in tax subsidies to encourage development. What’s required is a stick: As Mayor, I would introduce Land Value Taxation for downtown, and treat vacant lots as if there were four-story buildings on them. This measure would encourage owners to develop their lots, instead of squatting on them, and would also raise an estimated \$29-million in new revenue for the City. It’s important that we preserve the heritage character of buildings downtown, so they have some exemptions. There are also important financial reasons for the City of Winnipeg and the province to focus on downtown development. It is more efficient for the city to provide infrastructure and other services to a dense downtown population than one that is spread out in the suburbs.



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2. Developing Winnipeg horizontally (sprawl) leads to increased city operating expenses and less taxes generated per hectare, as compared to developing our city vertically (density). How would you reconcile this dilemma?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, it will be my mandate to encourage smart development, and to specifically encourage policies that increase densification. The first step is to focus on investing back into our downtown neighborhoods and previously established neighborhoods. We will be announcing policies and incentives that will generate a substantial amount of new downtown residential units. It is extremely important to me that as our city grows, that we provide our citizens with excellent residential opportunities downtown. We will ensure that newer communities that are being developed are designed in a manner that reflects more compact and complete communities. We will also set density targets for new suburban developments. We will actively seek to identify new infill opportunities for development and will prioritize this type of development.

DAVID SANDERS: I believe the Provincial Government, the City, and the neighbouring municipalities in our Capital Region, all need to collaborate in the management of land uses and development approvals so as to minimize the public costs of accommodating a publicly acceptable range of options for residential and commercial growth and rejuvenation. We are talking about being good neighbours, whether in our immediate neighbourhoods, our larger communities, or the whole Capital Region. Land use planning and development controls are intended to provide all citizens with a reasonable degree of certainty as to the future nature of their own environment, and to ensure that the very significant expenses of development and/or rehabilitation are shared fairly by all parties. This is not easy to do, but City Council is making such far-reaching decisions every month, often without any clear understanding of the long term financial implications. There have been some attempts to produce limited cost-benefit analyses to support decisions to allow further suburban expansion, but I believe we must insist on the preparation and publication of independent comprehensive cost-benefit analyses for public review, before allowing for further urban sprawl, within and beyond the City's boundaries. Such analyses need to consider alternatives for accommodating the residential and commercial development envisaged, to lay bare the real impact of allowing development on the periphery instead of encouraging redevelopment of areas already serviced with the full range of public investments – such as Downtown.

GORD STEEVES: A city requires all types of housing. The biggest challenge we have right now in our downtown is that people do not perceive it as safe. With a focus on safety for people in downtown, the development will follow and by definition it needs to be higher density.

HAZEM ASLAN: I support developing our city vertically (density) is the best way to do it, first it generate more revenue, second it saves city money, because the city don't have to build new



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roads, transportation everybody will be in cars not environmentally, pay for more service, cost of infrastructure. City has poor planning

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: A vibrant core area, including a mix of affordable housing, a thriving commercial sector, services people need and recreational opportunities are all crucial elements to our on-going downtown revitalization. Urban density begins with ensuring we have a strong, sustainable residential population. We need to ensure there are housing options for people of all income levels, especially young families. We need to ensure there are parks and greenspace where children can play and adults can relax and socialize. Some of this exists in Winnipeg but there needs to be more. I recognize that this type of development needs City Hall's support, but it also needs community support.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I believe that each citizen and family deserves a safe, fair neighbourhood to live in. We need to redevelop the core area of our city. The reason for the horizontal expansion of the city is mostly because people don't feel safe in various neighbourhoods of the city. In remedying this, we must make improvements of these areas a priority. It is paramount that we re-invest in these areas, as well as collaborate with other groups who could contribute to progress, and implement stronger enforcement of city bylaws (especially when it comes to derelict buildings.) This will also improve the aesthetic of the areas; not only will this maintain property value, but it will restore a sense of pride, and make people less apt to move elsewhere. There is only a certain amount of food-land available and we can't continuously convert this land into housing development projects. We need to work with different levels of government, when it comes to urban development and planning.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: A natural moratorium on further development exists because the city is out of developable land. This leads to all neighborhoods being positioned to develop upwards. Vertical density will create more pedestrian traffic on those streets, which will attract restaurants, retailers, and other businesses to those areas – Improving the quality of life for Winnipeggers.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: As I mentioned before, I would introduce a land value tax for the downtown area to encourage denser infill development in the core. I also pledged to work with the Provincial Government to create a "Winnipeg Regional Masterplan." We have people who live outside the city in bedroom communities, who have moved there partly for the lifestyle, partly for the low taxes, who commute into Winnipeg and can benefit from the City's infrastructure and services, but they aren't paying for them. The citizens of Winnipeg are. They need to pay their fair share of property taxes for the services they are enjoying. Given the challenges and costs of new infrastructure, it is long past due to come up with a plan, and there has been no planning at all. A Winnipeg Free Press writer once warned the bedroom communities around Winnipeg "Don't Kill the Moose." These communities all depend on Winnipeg. The other is to find ways of encouraging denser development through investments in transit.



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3. The public and our members identify accessibility and safety concerns with respect to the lack of renewal and repairs of our curbs and sidewalks and inadequate snow clearing. How will you address this?

BRIAN BOWMAN: We must identify the priority areas for new curb and sidewalk renewal and repair. We can do this partly through crowd sourcing, using new technology to help the public identify our priority areas and update our data in real time.

DAVID SANDERS: As Mayor I will invite the Access Advisory Committee to give immediate priority to a public review of the present state of downtown curbs and sidewalks, and the adequacy of present snowclearing practices in the downtown, from the perspective of our many citizens who find them unsafe now. I will ask the Committee to provide recommendations for providing sufficient funds in the City's new 2015 budgets to deal with the worst problems on a priority basis, and then continue to meet and maintain the high standards required for universal mobility throughout downtown, and indeed throughout the City.

GORD STEEVES: Greater focus on core services. A city cannot be all things to all people, we need to focus on core services above all. Infrastructure is THE core service.

HAZEM ASLAN: City failing to provide adequate customer service to its citizens. Is a huge problem in downtown we all have accessibility and safety concerns, snow clearing is very important during winter we need clear sidewalks if we like to see people in downtown last winter I seen many sidewalks were not cleared, I will assure Winnipeg's that we can repair curbs and sidewalks in downtown, it is very important.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I have made a commitment to fix Winnipeg's crumbling streets, sidewalks and back lanes. Any commitment to improving safety and the condition of our roads must include better snow removal than our city has seen in recent years. Our Winnipeg winters are tough enough without the added problems posed by icy, snow covered streets. Infrastructure is one of my top priorities, and I will work closely with city staff to make sure that our streets are safe and reliable, year-round. This is my number one priority.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I am going to take a common sense approach, with regards to snow removal tactics. My plan is to revision our approach and practice of conducting snow removal. Citizens will no longer see snowbanks (windrows), creating a safer Winnipeg during these difficult months. The snow will be taken off the sidewalks and boulevards. We will do the opposite of what the city is presently doing. Instead of pushing snow up on the boulevards, causing snowbanks and dangerous conditions (including ruts on the roads); I propose that we remove the snow directly of the streets, with a snowblower, into trailers and take it away. This will cause less damage to curbs, fire hydrants, planters and other items that are on our



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boulevards. Further, this will make the sidewalks accessible to individual with mobility issues, as well as seniors. Businesses will see benefit with the improved accessibility. The consequence of huge snowbanks, are many; it impedes visibility, as well as hazardous to small children.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: I have addressed infrastructure renewal in my announcement on Friday, September 5 where I discuss how the city can use the local improvement process combined with P3's.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: There are two issues here: one is snow clearing and one is street repair. The issue of snow clearing was a serious problem last winter in particular, which was truly exceptional in terms of cold and the height of snowbanks. But this is, after all, Winnipeg, and no one should be surprised that we need snow clearing. Yet all too often we hear the budget has been exhausted by mid-December. When it comes to clearing sidewalks, it is often particularly dangerous for seniors, and for parents with strollers streets uncleared sidewalks and snowbanks are a genuine safety hazard. For both snow clearing and emergency road maintenance, we need a "triage system" - to set out the order in which places will be cleared. We should also set out benchmarks in terms of time and quality: how quickly and how well it will be cleared. We should set realistic, but high expectations for performance and they should be clearly communicated to the public and to operators. We should also provide citizens with the opportunity to register hazardous or unsafe snowbanks so they can be dealt with quickly.



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4. How will you engage Winnipeg citizens to be part of downtown's renewal efforts?

BRIAN BOWMAN: I've proposed a new Office of Public Engagement to allow Winnipeg residents, including those living downtown, to have greater dialogue with our municipal government. Other ways that we will better engage Winnipeg's citizens, is encouraging another series of public consultation similar to the 'Speak Up Winnipeg' campaign. As Mayor, I will ensure that new developments in downtown will have open houses that will allow for residents of downtown and the city to come and view the progress that is being made downtown. As Mayor, I will also produce regular reports on the progress that is being made downtown and include future announcements in a format that is user friendly and engaging.

DAVID SANDERS: The calculus of democratic participation is based on a citizen's rational comparison of the cost and effort required to express an opinion, and the anticipated benefit for doing so. If a citizen finds it difficult to obtain reliable information, and previous experience has shown that the expression of that citizen's opinion will be ignored and make no difference, then a rational person finds a better use for his or her time and energy. That is why we have a low voter turn-out at municipal elections. That is why you will rarely find a citizen participating in City Council and Committee meetings, as I have been doing systematically during the last year and a half. As Mayor, I am committed to establishing a much more open government, with increased citizen access to relevant and reliable information on proposed decisions. Most importantly, I wish to encourage citizens to find it worthwhile to become engaged by demonstrating that their opinions are heard, and have an impact. We will start immediately with the accelerated 2015 budget approval process, which I want to allow for meaningful public review at the community level first, building on the budget consultation process which has already been underway since the spring. When people see that their opinions can have an impact, they will have reason to become engaged. I would add that in the case of our downtown, all Winnipeggers may have something to say.

GORD STEEVES: A safer downtown is the best way to ensure people see downtown as a viable entertainment or living option.

HAZEM ASLAN: Engaging with the Community. We must consult citizens to get involved, real change comes from engaging the people in decision making and policy development. Without engaging citizens we can't move forward.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Winnipeg is home to a diverse, talented community of people who work hard to make our city a better place to live, work and raise a family. Great things are already happening in Winnipeg because of the vision of our friends, family and neighbours, and that includes some great ideas for downtown renewal. I have a plan to open City Hall to make sure



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our citizens have a voice in important decisions. That starts with restoring public trust through my plan for a more accountable government and more professional, neutral administration. I have pledged to create a small business roundtable and Downtown BIZ will be invited to be part of the process. In addition, citizen input will be critical as we move forward with the OurWinnipeg Task Force, which I am proposing to ensure that decisions made by city council are guided by the city's most important planning document. I have also committed to establishing a youth council so the ideas of young people are reflected in city programs and policy. I pledge to ensure that the mayor and council make decisions in the interest.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I would focus on making downtown safer, this will attract business to the downtown area-- which, in turn, will attract people. I will create safe zones. My plans are also to change the policing system, adding more cadets, which will add more cadets into the downtown area.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Same as 3. above, in that the basic premise is to have neighborhood by neighborhood priorities established and build on the dialogue that began with Our Winnipeg and more recently, the budget consultations because both have proven to have engaged the most number of citizens.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: As Jane Jacobs said, the more eyes there are on the street, the safer it is. When something untoward happens downtown, the area is seen as dangerous. When the same thing happens in the suburbs, we tend not to feel the same way. There are a number of different ways to engage people to be part of downtown. One is to explain that there is real value - economic, social and financial - to having a downtown that works. Cities aren't usually judged by the selection in their strip malls or how sprawling their suburbs are. The cities we travel to, big or small that are remarkable have great downtowns. Cities where there is something new and remarkable in every storefront window, around every corner. Beautiful buildings, bright lights, and streets are busy and bustling with people. The fact that it's cold here part of the year shouldn't hold us back from celebrating the street. The other is myth busting about downtown. Downtown Winnipeg has two of the densest neighbourhoods in the city, and a large proportion of Winnipeggers work downtown. We need to deal with the realities of safety downtown, but we shouldn't be fear mongering about downtown either. The best way of convincing people is to show them: by having events that bring people together downtown. We see it happening at the Forks, but more of it could happen throughout the downtown.



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5. Will you play a leadership role in opening up Portage and Main to pedestrians?

BRIAN BOWMAN: I have publicly stated that it will be a goal of mine to reopen Portage and Main for pedestrians no later than 2019. I encourage everyone to review my policy announcement on this topic. This can be found on my website at: http://www.bowmanforwinnipeg.ca/bowman_stands_up_for_downtown_winnipeg. Our city's most iconic intersection has been devoid of pedestrian life for too long and it's time to bring the human element back into our downtown. Opening up Portage and Main to pedestrians will contribute immensely to our goals of creating a positive and vibrant downtown for all of our citizens.

DAVID SANDERS: No. I know that the original reason for separating pedestrian movement from vehicular traffic was to increase the capacity of the intersection to handle the growing volume of traffic. The alternatives would have involved major investments in expressways or downtown bypasses and the associated disruptions in downtown neighbourhoods. The last time the City considered reopening the intersection to pedestrian crossing at grade, the cost was estimated at \$10 million, and no study of the implications for traffic was carried out. The whole matter was quietly shipped off to CentreVenture. I believe the proposal is ill-advised, and certainly not a matter of high priority at this time.

GORD STEEVES: No.

HAZEM ASLAN: The intersection has been shut down to pedestrians since 1979, when four of the property owners at the corner inked deals with the city to close it when the underground concourse opened. Those agreements expire in 2019, it should be next election issue, but I feel as though this is a dangerous choice when this is an already super busy intersection with semi's and transit busses constantly going through as well as increasing the wait times during rush hour. Horrible plan to reopen. I like to see a round glass skywalk for tourist interaction with coffee shop. If we like to see more people downtown, we have to make parking cheaper, more entertainment weekly, safer street, and green space.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Absolutely. I think now is an appropriate time to have the conversation to open Portage and Main, especially given that there is a physical barrier between the SHED and the Exchange District. By opening up Portage and Main, there will be better connections between all of our beautiful urban neighbourhoods. I am open to a full and even partial opening of Portage and Main to pedestrians. This process should include public consultation. I also expressed interest in opening up Portage and Main during the 2010 mayoral campaign.



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MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I do not intend on opening Portage and Main. I believe it is a safety hazard, I think it will particularly be extremely dangerous for pedestrians in the winter months; it will hurt the existing businesses, located underneath the intersection. Why fix what's not broken? We have intersections, on either side, that are safe for pedestrians to access. One leads directly into the downtown area, the other into the exchange district.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Portage and Main can only be opened with a Mayor who is committed to negotiating with all of the partners. If the goal is to have more pedestrian visitors, a proper design that encourages pedestrians needs to exist.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: I am certainly willing to consider it. When it comes to downtowns, customer is another word for pedestrian, and the pedestrian is always right. It is important to note that the barriers were never erected for safety: they were erected to force people to businesses underground. They are, quite literally, barriers to trade. A basic tenet of good urban design, however, is that people should be able to see where they are going. With the underpass at Portage and Main, people can't do that. The major concern is the cost involved, which has been estimated at \$15-million. I also do not want taxpayers to be on the hook for paying a penalty for breaking the agreement early, so it would have to wait until 2019.



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6. Will you lead the development of rapid transit? If so, why and how?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, I have pledged to complete the proposed BRT routes by 2030. For too long we have lacked the leadership at City Hall that will champion this project. It is important that as our population continues to grow towards a million people, that we have the transit infrastructure in place that will allow us to be both a modern and functioning city. I encourage everyone to review my policy announcement which can be found on my website at http://www.bowmanforwinnipeg.ca/rapid_transit. One of the keys to completing the proposed BRT routes by 2030 will be through Transit Oriented Development or TOD. Using Cleveland and Portland as examples, these cities had similar projects and have seen significant success. This success has resulted in an increase in ridership and millions of dollars in new development for each city. Cleveland experienced an increase of 60 per cent in its ridership and Portland saw more than 2.8 billion dollars invested in new development. Completing BRT will also require the assistance of the provincial and federal government. I will champion both of these levels of government to support us by highlighting how the investments made in rapid transit pay for itself and how it is a key for the success and growth of this city and province. Bus Rapid Transit is essential to helping Winnipeg grow into a more compact, efficient, and modern city. It is one of the essential keys for continuing growth, attracting new industry to our city and growing our economy.

DAVID SANDERS: Yes, I will lead the immediate review of the present Southwest Transitway scheme, which is no longer referred to as “rapid.” I have severely criticized the \$1.1 billion “boondoggle” plan, which was blindly approved by a majority of the current City Council. I am in favour of public transit, I am in favour of rapid transit, and I am in favour of building the route from Downtown to the University of Manitoba first. But I can’t support the Parker Lands dogleg route, and I am most concerned about the refusal of the civic administration to release the mandatory cost-benefit analysis and value for money study to either the Council or the public, contrary to the law. I will not be stampeded into making another major blunder at City Hall, and I know there is absolutely no good reason for hurrying this huge commitment. I will see to it that the City adopts a publicly justifiable plan for proceeding with real rapid transit as and when it makes sense, financially, and in terms of the impact on land use. I would very much like that to be sooner rather than later. And I would want to consider how the rapid route could be made to reach the heart of downtown, as originally intended.

GORD STEEVES: We do not have the funding to make this a priority at present, we have other priorities that we are not living up to, that needs to be the focus.

HAZEM ASLAN: I am in favour of the plan providing it meets our needs as to origin and destination of route due to the substantial funding input from the other levels of government. However I will do more studies on phase two plane for time being, we have to do it right. We



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have to go with fourth option. The idea is called active transit signal priority (ATAP) we can implement this technology at 211 intersections for just \$8 million. I will make Winnipeg roads more efficient for traffic flow.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I am committed to completing Phase 2 of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor. It is the first step in implementing a comprehensive integrated master transportation plan that includes a modern transit system. If our city is going to grow and thrive, all transportation options need to be supported.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I am a firm believer in Rapid Transit. Although, I disagree with the current approach. We need to take RT into the future, for our next generation; I suggested light rail, or a monorail system, which will attract more people to use public transportation systems. The current project is heading in the wrong direction, there is not a long-term plan, nor vision, in place and I don't intend on wasting taxpayer money to complete this project a second (or third) time.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: How can we afford not to have rapid transit? The wear and tear on our roads would be significantly reduced if we could provide clean, reliable, efficient transit to all corners of our city and if we engage with the capital region partners.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: Rapid transit is essential to the future development of Winnipeg: it will spur better, denser development within city limits; do a better job of carry more people across the city, and make a Winnipeg of over 1-million people possible. I would not, however, proceed with the next leg of Bus Rapid Transit. It's been argued that LRT is too expensive and that BRT gives a better return on investment when it comes to development and improving property values. However, that is based on the premise that BRT costs as little as \$100,000 a mile. The BRT line between Jubilee and the University of Manitoba is seven kilometres long and will cost \$450-million - \$600-million (including improvements to the Pembina Jubilee underpass). That is a cost of \$64-million to \$85-million per kilometre. At the same time, Winnipeg is facing some very high-cost infrastructure projects to work around existing rail infrastructure. The Arlington Street Bridge must be replaced by 2020 for safety reasons, at a cost of \$75-million - to \$100-million, and the cost of a proposed underpass at Waverley and Taylor is unknown, but a similar underpass at Kenaston cost \$43-million in 2006. Add to that the inconvenience of rail traffic interruptions and the growing risk of shipping oil tankers through residential neighbourhoods and we have to ask a question: when does it make more sense, and cost less, to relocate rail traffic and rail yards instead of building around it? The cost of laying track in an undeveloped agricultural area outside of Winnipeg is about \$1.3-million to \$2-million. At the cost of an underpass, we could relocate 25 km of track. I have proposed a three-phase plan. Phase1 Cancel the next phase of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), estimated at \$600-million, and implement a lower cost Metro-Bus System that would provide better service across the city. The model would be Québec City, whose Metro-Bus plan in 1996 used existing infrastructure, and an analysis of transit use to expand bus service more where and when it is needed, and



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provide it more often - every 5-12 minutes. Phase 2: Provide \$1.5-million to complete a feasibility study on moving the CPR rail yards and other heavy rail traffic out of the city. The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg has already done preliminary work on this issue. The benefits of moving the yards and heavy rail traffic include: major savings on infrastructure spending because new or renewed underpasses and bridges around rail are no longer necessary; freeing up land for improvement at the heart of the city; sharply reduced risk of rail accidents near people, homes, and businesses. US Studies in five cities showed that cities AND railways were both more efficient after relocation, so there is a business incentive for railways as well. Phase 3: Develop a plan to use the existing, vacated rail network in the city as the basis of a Light Rail Transit network. There are many advantages of LRT as opposed to BRT. Winnipeg already has rail infrastructure that could be turned over for LRT, with Union station as its hub, and existing lines to or near Charleswood, St. Boniface, St. Vital, Transcona, St. Norbert and the airport. LRT tends to be more effective than BRT in fuelling development and raising property values in the vicinity, and it can also run on clean hydro-electricity. LRT also tends to have lower operating costs than BRT. As a first step, the rail line along Pembina could readily be converted to LRT with a station at St. Norbert, and stations to serve the U of M and the Stadium. Imagine walking with your kids, or your grandkids from Union Station, or your home in Riverview or Fort Rouge, and travelling by rail to St Norbert station to spend a Saturday morning at the Farmer's market. It's a city that we can imagine, and build, together.



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7. How will you champion better transit connectivity into the downtown and an integrated transit network that inspires further development (Transit Oriented Development, Downtown Circulator)?

BRIAN BOWMAN: One key will be pushing for the completion of our proposed BRT routes as I have announced. These new BRT routes will make downtown more accessible for public transportation commuters and for all of our citizens. As Mayor, I will focus on encouraging development along the designated routes. I will also be reviewing measures that will encourage surface lot development downtown.

DAVID SANDERS: I have always been a strong supporter of providing universal and affordable accessibility to the sites and services of the urban area, and therefore I believe that the public transit and Handi-transit system should be developed and improved as a high priority of the City. A long time ago I recommended the original Provincial transit cost sharing formula based on 50% of net costs, so as to provide an incentive for the City to expand and improve transit services. I usually don't use transit myself, mainly because of the unpredictability of my daily travels, but I recently did make a trip within downtown. I wanted to take the Downtown Spirit, but for some reason the bus just sailed by without stopping. Eventually I took a regular bus and paid \$2.10, because I didn't have a nickel on me. I do know what the fares are. In any case, this simple experience underlines for me the importance of ensuring that we make a special effort to ensure that travel to and within downtown is as quick and as reliable as possible. I would recommend that the Transit Department, the Downtown BIZ, and other interested parties conduct an evaluation of the Downtown transit system and recommend adjustments and improvements as appropriate, for public review and City approval.

GORD STEEVES: Transit ought to be concentrated downtown, anything, large or small that we can do to foster that idea is worthy.

HAZEM ASLAN: I will bring city officials and residents together to review the possible routes and develop recommended alternatives. A circulator extends a pedestrian's reach, making the whole of downtown accessible. As an example, pedestrians can ride to lunch and ride back to work over the lunch hour. Frequency is important in this regard. Circulators could pass by every 15 to 20 minutes. However it's difficult because the cost, but we must consult the whole city to come together for better transit service.

JUDY WASYLICIA-LEIS: There are many great things happening every day because of the vision and hard work of our friends and neighbours. We have succeeded in spite of City Hall, and now it is time to open City Hall and make sure that passionate Winnipeg residents have a voice in the decisions that affect them. This means listening to transit activists and progressive city planners when designing future transit networks.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I have a temporary solution, that will remedy the problem for now, until we can complete RT throughout Winnipeg. It's called Transit Priority Signal. This enables the selected busses passage through green lights, never stopping at a red light. We apply this system throughout all major intersections within the city, for 20 million dollars. This will enhance the speed of transit, and provide RT throughout the entire city.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Any improvements to transit would need to have discussions with users.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: As I mentioned, I would start with a Metro-Bus System based on the Québec City Model. Rather than spending money on concrete and transit ways, the Metro-Bus system uses existing infrastructure. It starts with an analysis of where and when transit riders use the service, then uses a mix of planning, (new routes and hours) design (diamond lanes) and technology (computer analysis and synchronized lights to move buses and traffic more quickly. Buses also arrived every 5-12 minutes. The result was a radically improved rider experience, where people could count on transit and would opt for the bus rather than a car. It was a success: Québec saw a 5% increase in ridership in the first year, and is the only transit system in Canada to steadily increase ridership since then. The long-term goal of creating an LRT network on existing lines would have Union Station as its hub: there are already existing lines to or near Charleswood, St. Boniface, St. Vital, Transcona, St. Norbert and the airport.



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8. How will you ensure that downtown is a place for people (pedestrian and active transportation) first and then cars?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, I will examine traffic calming designs to ensure pedestrian safety. Active Transit, in all its forms, is of great importance to me. I will make investments in active transportation infrastructure and will ensure downtown streets are multimodal for car, cyclist, and transit transportation. As Mayor, I will continue to champion innovative and alternative development ideas for our downtown. This may include examining diagonal parking, bump outs at intersections and placing moveable barriers to provide some protection to cyclists, as is being done in Ottawa. As Mayor, I want Winnipeg to be the paramount example of a city that fully embraces Active Transport.

DAVID SANDERS: I wish to ensure that Downtown is a place for people, that we be creative and imaginative in our streetscaping, places of shelter and refuge, our all-weather interconnections, and in safe design. However, I believe we should be concerned with the wellbeing of all people, including people in cars as well as people walking or cycling. I believe we should give high priority to implementing the long term pedestrian and cycling strategies which have recently been produced for the City, after substantial public consultation. In particular, we need to separate bus, cycling, and vehicular traffic as much as possible. We need a “Vision Zero,” to commit to preventing all deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

GORD STEEVES: We should ensure that entertainment uses like bars and patios are the focus. Easier entertainment uses to make downtown more fun, will assist.

HAZEM ASLAN: I want more urban parks and squares, we need more pedestrian zone like Albert Street during festival. Parks and public squares are vitally important for the mental health and well-being of a city. In summer we need to close a whole block for farmers market for two month, I will close portage and main two times in summer for block party.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I will ensure that we encourage development that ensures long-term, sustainable growth of urban neighbourhoods. This includes ensuring that active transportation is integrated in all planning and infrastructure renewal. I also think it is critical that we are open to innovative ideas from the community that promote getting people out of cars and into the streets. I also believe that mayor and council need to realize that some of the best ideas come from the people who already live, work and conduct business downtown. I will ensure my door will always be open to you and your ideas.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: We need to place a proper RT system, in order to attract more people to the downtown area. The only way to encourage people out of their cars, is to offer safe RT that also works.



PAULA HAVIXBECK: Downtown is a place for everyone. As Mayor, I believe we need to position the City of Winnipeg to be a champion, supporter and enabler of amazing ongoing initiatives working towards growing the Downtown community with housing, retail and amenities. I would ensure that all the elements to create a vibrant community are in place, to attract new businesses and new people to Winnipeg.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: In Winnipeg, people often choose cars over Transit because, right now, the convenience and freedom of being able to go whenever you want to often outweighs the difficulty and cost of parking. Simply put, to get people out of their cars, we need to make transit as convenient as driving - or even more convenient. The Metro-Bus system does this, in particular by having buses come by every 5-12 minutes. In a city with winters like Winnipeg, it doesn't make sense to have buses that only come every 30 or 45 minutes. Most commuters are riding one to a car. A full bus can take 60 cars off the road. It's also important for seniors in the city who can't drive or don't want to drive anymore. Reliable transit is a way of preserving mobility and independence. The other aspect of a walkable downtown is filling in surface parking lots with new buildings. Empty parking lots downtown give a sense of emptiness and danger, but it also means there's empty space between you and your destination. If we can develop more residential and mixed use buildings downtown - so that people are living, working, or studying in the same place - people will be able to walk more.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

9. Would you create a public/private sector partnership to stimulate the arrival of a grocer downtown, to expedite residential growth, and address the food needs of those who work, live and play downtown?

BRIAN BOWMAN: One of the keys to my vision of downtown is to create a larger, denser, residential population. Our downtown should continue to be one of our richest and most diverse neighborhoods. As Mayor, it will be my mandate to continue to enrich the lives of our citizens who live downtown. As Mayor, it will be an integral issue to me to assist in bringing a grocer to our downtown. As well, I am particularly interested in the co-op model that is so widely used in Minneapolis. As Mayor, I would like to provide supports to new co-op groceries to help them establish, expand and grow. Co-ops provide affordable food, are community owned hubs of activity, and help provide the area with a specific identity. They are community builders and I would love to see Winnipeg share the same experience as Minneapolis.

DAVID SANDERS: I know that considerable effort has gone into the search for a new downtown full-service grocery store. I will review the studies and the results of all the previous and current negotiations, and then seek to ensure that adequate service is provided within the Downtown, using whatever combination of public and private investment and management will work. Neechi Foods on North Main Street is being made to work, with substantial but justifiable investment and support from governments and the private sector. The City has just approved additional financing for Neechi Commons on a TIF basis. I am sure we are creative enough to find a way of providing the desired level of service within the Downtown now.

GORD STEEVES: Yes, I would do whatever I could to help.

HAZEM ASLAN: I will create a public private sector partnership to stimulate the arrival of a grocer downtown it's very important to work with everyone. It takes committed leadership in both the public and private sector to successfully revitalize downtown. Success requires a long-term vision and comprehensive approach, instead of one easy fix. I'll encourage stores to move downtown and open 24/7 such as 7/11 or pals super market.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I am troubled by the lack of a downtown grocery option in Winnipeg. I am encouraged by the efforts of the Downtown BIZ to bring innovative solutions to the area such as farmers markets at the Manitoba Hydro and Workers Compensation Board buildings. However, the current situation is not acceptable. I am committed to work with private sector partners to find a long term option for residents to purchase their groceries in their own neighborhoods. The current situation is unacceptable. When I was a Member of Parliament, I worked with community activists to ensure financial and mail services stayed in the North End of Winnipeg. I will use that experience at City Hall when I work with you for your downtown grocery store.



MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: In order to create a successful downtown, we MUST create partnerships. This is necessary, in order to succeed. What I strive for is to make the business landscapes, such that all businesses can grow and survive. This will include tax incentives, the partnerships, private investors, incubators-- my plan to create the business economic development through my tax plan, of three million dollars per a year, to help incubate new start-up businesses. This will create lower business tax, and help create a huge opportunity for new entrepreneurs.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: As Mayor, I would work towards facilitating at least one grocery element in the downtown based on what the current downtown demographics would support.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: It is worth considering the kind of zoning that New York implemented to deal with "food deserts" downtown. The issue needs a multi-pronged approach. It is not only a social and economic issue, it is a public health issue, especially for families with children. When people talk about "food deserts" or a lack of grocery stores - (although there are some grocery stores downtown) the real problem for people living in these areas is not only that they can't access affordable fresh fruits or vegetable, they don't have access to transportation to shop for groceries. Instead of expecting people to come to a downtown grocer, we could look at ways of getting groceries to people. In New York, they licensed "Green Carts" the size of hotdog carts that would bring fresh fruit and vegetables into specific neighbourhoods. They have improved people's access to good, fresh food in those neighbourhoods, but the Green Carts themselves provide job opportunities. Other levels of government need to recognize that this is an issue that is affecting the nutrition and health of children and seniors. For children it is important because it can affect their development and commitment at school. For seniors it is important because they live on fixed incomes.



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10. How would you rank Winnipeg's Chinatown as a tourist destination, compared to other cities in Canada? What would you do to improve this neighbourhood?

BRIAN BOWMAN: Winnipeg's Chinatown has wonderful potential to be a beacon of our city's cultural diversity, but I would say that it currently has room to improve. One key to this is to continue driving residential growth in the area and to ensure that no more historic structures, like the Shanghai building, are destroyed. I would also encourage street festivals and outdoor Chinese markets within the community.

DAVID SANDERS: The Dynasty Building, which is home to the Winnipeg Chinese Community Cultural Centre and the City of Winnipeg Chinese Garden, was one of the many projects funded by the original 1981 Winnipeg Core Area Initiative Agreement. I chaired the tri-level committee of officials which assisted the three levels of government in negotiating that agreement. The Dynasty Building project was a fascinating example of collaboration, involving land owned by the Province, leased to the City (which manages the Garden), and subleased to the commercial developer of the office building, part of which was subleased in turn to the Cultural Centre. The underground parkade was subleased to the Winnipeg Chinatown Development Corporation, providing funds for rejuvenation of the rest of Chinatown. And the City of Winnipeg was a major tenant of the office building at first. There have been other major developments in the area, and they continue. However, if the neighbourhood is to achieve its potential as a tourism destination, it will require further development and character design.

GORD STEEVES: improvements to the exchange district that I have announced already in my campaign will help develop the area.

HAZEM ASLAN: I am not sure if it's a tourist destination right now nothing happening in Chinatown, I haven't seen another Chinatown in other cities but it's a good idea to see what other city's doing with there Chinatown.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Winnipeg has some world-class features to attract tourists, and the rest of Canada is really beginning to take notice. Chinatown is certainly an emerging tourist destination, but much like the rest of Winnipeg it has a lot to offer: unique cultural dining experiences, fascinating shops, distinctive sights and a warm, welcoming community. And it's just a stone's throw away from other destinations, like the Exchange District, the MTS Centre and the Forks. As mayor I will be committed to partnering with all levels of government to promote downtown neighbourhoods and create opportunities for local businesses so the downtown can realize its potential as a world-class destination.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: Chinatown needs significant improvement, before it can be considered a tourist destination. In order to have a successful Chinatown, creating a tourist attraction, you need to complete the project. We need to clean up the streets, clean up the neighbourhoods, attract more businesses with tax incentives-- make the area more conducive to foot-traffic. This last part might involve re-routing traffic, vegetation. There can be much benefit derived from simply improving the aesthetic. Further attraction may be gained through more areas which allow one hour of free parking. We must also tackle the issues around safety. Lastly, we must heavily infuse the Chinese culture. Our incorporation must not be modelled after stereotypical notions, but influenced by active manifest of the Chinese culture and heritage.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Winnipeg's Chinatown needs an improved vibrancy with the support of the City of Winnipeg. As Mayor, I would support more residential, a retooling of the current Biz model to make it possible to have more streetscaping and I would encourage day and night markets similar to other cities providing grocer options for the surrounding residents and businesses.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: There are significant historic aspects to Winnipeg's Chinatown, but it needs revitalization. That is true of a number of areas right next to City Hall. The Exchange district just to the south has seen significant improvements with an influx of restaurants, cafes and boutiques, as well as living spaces, as well as the Red River downtown campus. The answer really needs to come from the community- both current residents of the neighbourhood and the Chinese community in Winnipeg - but it needs to respect, draw on and build the historic tradition of the neighbourhood.



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11. While perception of downtown safety during the day is improving, people still feel unsafe during the evenings. What will you do to combat both real and perceived safety challenges in downtown?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, downtown safety will be a primary concern to me. One of the keys to improving the safety of our downtown, is stimulating residential growth. The safest downtowns don't require additional police presence. A large residential population keeps eyes on the street 24/7. We must bring more residents downtown. In the short term, we will be examining, how best to provide safe and secure housing to our downtown residents, the addition of extra pedestrian scale lighting, providing social resources to help people get off the street, and expanding the police cadet service patrols in the area at specific times on streets that are statistically more problematic.

DAVID SANDERS: With respect to the real safety issues, I would begin by reviewing all of the present good work being done by the Downtown BIZ, the merchants, the Winnipeg Police Service, and the many agencies which serve the different needs of people who are in difficult circumstances. I believe the proper role of the City and its staff is to provide co-ordination, advocacy, and support to those wishing to make our Downtown genuinely safe. With respect to perceptions, the real solution is to enable people to experience the Downtown as a safe place to be. Efforts to bring people downtown to festivals, the SHED, and other special events are very worthwhile, if they provide a positive experience, which then may be shared in the broader community. We do need to talk about these things.

GORD STEEVES: I announced a comprehensive strategy to deal with challenges presented by people who present these difficulties downtown. I will be pleased to speak of them in the forum.

HAZEM ASLAN: Because downtown right now only busy during work hours, we have to work hard to bring more people downtown, by opening more apartments like the avenue building we need more stores to be open 24/7 more entertainment at evening in summer and winter. I will consult the city's divers and knowledgeable community organization, policy think tanks, business labor groups and academic to develop, grassroots and effective approaches to address our most pressing issues.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I am committed to working with police, community and business organizations to help build a culture of safety in Winnipeg. The community-based approach led by organizations like the Downtown BIZ has been achieving excellent results, and I will build on those successes by working with partners on measures like expanding the Block by Block program, increasing foot patrols, and exploring options to support community centre services.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

Another important part of making people feel safe in the downtown is increasing employment and housing opportunities, and making amenities like grocery stores more accessible. The more we can think of the downtown as a place where people of all socio-economic backgrounds can live, work and play, the safer we all feel downtown.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: My plans is to put close-circuit cameras throughout the downtown area, which are called "safe zones." This area is monitored live, 24 hr/day. I will also enforce a stronger police and cadet presence. Safe zones will create a safer atmosphere, which will help. In addition, when you have more businesses, you have more people – there is safety in numbers.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Address issues of mental health, poverty and homelessness reduction, and revisit neighborhood watch programs. As Mayor, I would work with all levels of government to increase the level of Tax Increment Financing to allow for further development of residential units downtown to get more feet on the street, which will make the streets feel safer at night and create more vibrancy downtown.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: PR is not enough: the best way to convince people that downtown is safer is to use strategies that deliver results to make it safer. When it comes to real safety challenges downtown, we need a policing strategy based on a threat assessment, and we need to do what works. We also need to take complaints seriously and intervene quickly. When you have an unpleasant encounter, it may be for a variety of reasons: the person may be homeless, mentally ill, inebriated or they may actually be a criminal. For the person who feels threatened, it might make no difference. They have had a bad experience and may associate it with downtown. But for the police who have to deal with the person, it makes a big difference. It's not fair to treat people who are homeless, mentally ill, or addicts like criminals, and it's not fair to police to ask them to be mental health or addictions workers. We need long-term strategies to help deal these issues and with these people. Police should be arresting and charging criminals and if convicted they should face the full weight of the law for their crimes. But police need to know who to call in and partner up with when it comes to dealing with someone in each of those situations. That means an active relationship and partnership with mental health agencies and addictions services. For the long term, we need more than just a homeless strategy: we need a housing strategy. Yes, there are homeless on the street, but there are many, many more people across the city - seniors on fixed incomes among them - who are worried about having a place to live if they lose their apartment. Housing can also be part of a mental health strategy: people suffering from mentally ill who are homeless improves substantially when they have a place to live. That might require provincial and federal investment as well, but it offers a more stable long-term solution than a series of temporary measures.



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12. Over 2 million square feet of retail has left the downtown since the advent of shopping centres like Polo Park. Office worker population numbers remain consistent and stable at approximately 69,000 people. What will you do to retain, attract, and support downtown as a place for business and employment?

BRIAN BOWMAN: Downtown Winnipeg is the heart of our city. As Mayor, I will strive to continue to enhance the quality of our downtown by increasing residential development and encouraging policies that stimulate economic growth downtown. As Mayor, I will continue to help create an environment that can attract new business and attractions, especially bars and restaurants. I have also announced my support for a seasonal pedestrian mall in the Exchange District. I also support initiatives that will bring more people downtown to our local business, such as creating more parklets for patio spaces that will help grow local business and generate new business. I also believe that an enhanced transit service will make it easier for people to come and support downtown. As Mayor, it will be imperative to me to continue to make downtown more attractive and I will use that as a means for attracting business to our downtown.

DAVID SANDERS: First priority is to work closely with those who are already downtown, to deal with their issues and needs and keep them. Second priority is to work with the real estate industry and potential new retailers to find ways of levelling the playing field and making downtown a viable option for expansion. Education-based developments are particularly well-suited for downtown location.

GORD STEEVES: Retail follows people, again, the safer people feel downtown, the better the experience will be and they will spend more time there. This is the reality experienced by other cities where safety is not an issue.

HAZEM ASLAN: If we make downtown more affordable to leave, we can attract people and businesses together it's a win win, we have to make downtown safer during day and night more green and clean in all times, MTS centre is good during jets games, we need to focus on homelessness and addiction, and find them a home away from downtown.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: There is a lot of positive momentum going on downtown: the MTS Centre and the return of the Jets, condo expansion on Waterfront Drive and mixed-used developments like CentrePoint on Portage Avenue. We also have a brilliant arts community, many of whom make their art and perform downtown. All of this draws people downtown and creates a tremendous opportunity for business, especially local businesses. I am committed to



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working with business already in the downtown, as well as businesses looking to set up shop, through measures like freezing the business tax and setting up a Mayor's Community Enterprise Fund that will provide loans to help finance innovative ideas like pop-up restaurants, small businesses and events like festivals that promote economic development. I will also work with private-sector partners to improve housing and services like grocery stores and promote a strong sustainable residential population that can support downtown businesses.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: In order to bring businesses back into downtown, we first must manifest safety in the downtown environment. Secondly, we must provide a safe and effective transportation system to citizens. This, in addition to a stronger presence of police. Lastly, we must increase the variety of "people-friendly businesses" (entertainment, hospitality, specialty markets, grocery chains, etc.). This would also involve working with Downtown BIZ, as well as other organizations (including the federal and provincial government.)

PAULA HAVIXBECK: As Mayor I would work towards eliminating barriers that currently exist for mainstream retailers to be downtown.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: Downtown has to be a priority for the City of Winnipeg. I have said that I would implement a Land Value Tax in order to kickstart further development of downtown. One of the keys to that development is to ensure that it is mixed use, blending in residential, commercial and retail, with the goal of creating a virtuous circle of development. The tendency has been to think in terms of megaprojects for downtown, but by establishing a good regulatory framework (zoning, design) and the right incentives the development can occur organically.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

13. How will you increase support for the broader inner city renewal; improvements to infrastructure, housing, business development opportunities and other capital investments for areas such as the West End that are adjacent to, and complement the downtown?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, I will be examining policies to promote investment in legal rooming houses that will help provide safer and healthier housing for many low income people. Rooming houses are a solution and we need to encourage that. Housing first policies must be the driving force in helping our city's most vulnerable. I would actively lobby our provincial government to expand the 'Neighborhoods Alive' program, which provides critical funding to many inner city community organizations. I also acknowledge that these neighborhoods are more efficient for our city in comparison to new suburban developments and they deserve their fair share of infrastructure repairs and improvement.

DAVID SANDERS: I believe it is time to negotiate a new Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, encompassing all of these matters for the larger community.

GORD STEEVES: Investment and renewal is a business decision. Lower taxes and costs and less red tape and bureaucracy is the only true route to renewal.

HAZEM ASLAN: I will support community organization, community Economic Development projects and neighbourhood Alive initiative.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Urban neighbourhoods are home to a warm, vibrant and diverse community and are on the precipice of a major renewal. We are already seeing that, for instance, on Sargent and Ellice Avenues, which are becoming renowned for one-of-a-kind shopping and restaurants. As part of my plan to make Winnipeg a City that Works, I am committed to working with other levels of government, businesses, and communities to improve infrastructure and services, increase safety, and create housing and employment opportunities in neighbourhoods like these to make them even better places to live and work. Inner city neighbourhoods also tend to be home to a higher youth population. I believe that it is critical to engage Winnipeg's youth. I will create a Mayor's Youth Advisory Council to make youth partners in our municipal government and work to create more job and recreation opportunities for young people, including keeping a community centre open 24/7.

MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: This is a synergistic approach. First, and foremost, people need to feel safe (safe zones). In order to gain investments in a community, investors need to feel comfortable and safe. In addition to this, my tax incentive program and the economic development fund



(managed by YES Winnipeg) will greatly benefit both of these areas. Not only will it benefit the entire city, it will especially benefit inner-city/West End/North End.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: We need to regroup our efforts around concepts of districts—looking at our large downtown as pockets of communities each with different flavor. We need an infill strategy, look at ways to enable repurposing heritage buildings, and support other amenities, like restaurants and retail. I intend to build on the momentum created by Winnipeggers. Actions like this shouldn't fall on the shoulders of the Downtown Biz, Centre Venture, etc. As Mayor, I would lead these initiatives.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: One of the major areas of broader inner city renewal I have proposed is the relocation of the CPR yards and the conversion of existing rail lines to LRT. The CPR yards offer a large space that can be converted into greenspace and residential developments. I mentioned that there is a housing crisis in Winnipeg: there have been virtually no apartment buildings built since the 1970s, and over 5,000 rental units have been converted to condominiums. Further affordable co-op housing development is a must, but ultimately an economic development plan is required. "The best social program is a job" as the saying goes: we need to train and teach people job skills, but they also need jobs where they can apply those skills. Working together with the Provincial and Federal governments would generate the maximum return on investment for both housing and job creation.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.

14. How would ending homelessness create a more tolerant downtown?

BRIAN BOWMAN: As Mayor, I will ask our Council to adopt the United Way’s “Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg” initiative. I pledge to aid in the process of ending homelessness through the addition of new Downtown Biz outreach workers and promoting investment in practical affordable housing solutions, such as rooming houses. The first step, is to provide safe, affordable, and stable housing to those who are most in need. I would also seek to create partnerships with our Aboriginal community to foster open communication by hosting regular discussions/meetings. We will look to our community to determine how City Hall can support a better and safer downtown. There are many systemic issues that need to be addressed and as Mayor, I will actively champion initiatives that will allow us to fully understand what these issues are, and through consultation with our community, identify what are the best strategies to alleviate these systemic issues.

DAVID SANDERS: These are two different things. We need to do both. Now.

GORD STEEVES: the perception of downtown is sometimes that it is unsafe. Homelessness fosters this perception. The less homelessness, the less angst.

HAZEM ASLAN: We need to focus on homelessness and addiction. We have many homelessness with significant issues, yet, we remained committed with a housing first strategy in hand and harm reduction principles to help themselves along their often difficult journey to recovery and toward reintegration into mainstream society. We need to build more subsidized and safe social housing in a variety of neighbourhoods across the city. We need community healing strategy support program.

JUDY WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Homelessness can be the tragic outcome of many interwoven systemic inequalities that affect our communities, like poverty, mental health and addictions. The homeless do not have the security the rest of us take for granted. Beyond the human cost, there is an economic cost in loss of human potential and added financial stress on our health system and social agencies. The homeless are also vulnerable to crime and violence and we all deserve to be safe. I think it takes a community-wide approach to fix this issue, and I applaud the Downtown BIZ for its leadership role including the CHAT program, the CEO Sleepout and MOST program. I believe the city needs to be a partner with all the government, community, business and philanthropic organizations that are working to eliminate homelessness. I believe it will be a challenge to eliminate homelessness but one that we all have an interest in pursuing. If I am elected mayor, I will be an enthusiastic and active partner in the work of the Downtown BIZ and all organizations working on this important issue.



MIKE VOGIATZAKIS: I would begin by rephrasing our goal, to create a realistic approach. I recognize that this is a serious and plaguing issue, throughout our nation, and I will strive to work with all levels of government, different agencies and ministries-- taking a multi-faceted approach to resolving this situation, which is often the result of interplay between various issues. As a human being, it breaks my heart to see homelessness as prominent as it is today within our society.

PAULA HAVIXBECK: Together we can create a city where everybody has an opportunity to succeed. Ending homelessness is the right thing to do. It enables everyone to have their dignity.

ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE: Ending homeless would, in itself, be an act of tolerance. What everyone needs to realize is that every homeless person is a human being, with a name. He or she had a mother who once held them in her arms, and hopefully she loved them. When I see a homeless person, I think "There, but for the Grace of God, go I." I was homeless growing up in Calgary when I was nine years old. My mother wouldn't explain why we were camping in the park, but she was too proud and didn't want to go on welfare. I know what it is like to go to school without no breakfast or lunch, and use the money from a paper route to buy bread and milk from 7-11 to buy bread and milk to feed my family. I was lucky because I met people, teachers, who helped me and gave me a chance, and a path, to a better life. Many are people who are struggling with a mental illness or addiction, and there isn't a family in Winnipeg that hasn't been touched by them. Some want to work, but can't get a break. I have students with degrees who can't find work: imagine what it is like for people when so many low-skill jobs that used to pay well have disappeared. We can work together to imagine and build a city with better opportunities.



Note: All mayoral candidates have been asked these questions, these are the responses we have received to date.