

# FEDERAL CANDIDATES DEBATE OUR DOWNTOWN: Q&A

## FEDERAL CANDIDATES DEBATE *our* DOWNTOWN



ACROSS CANADA, DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATIONS ARE HOSTING FORUMS WITH FEDERAL CANDIDATES TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF DOWNTOWNS IN CANADA'S NATIONAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY!

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2015** → 5:00 – 7:00 PM  
PORTAGE PLACE SHOPPING CENTRE (EDMONTON COURT)



**DON WOODSTOCK**  
GREEN PARTY



**PAT MARTIN**  
NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY



**ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE**  
LIBERAL PARTY

### TOPICS INCLUDE

- DOWNTOWN IS THE ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR CITIES, IT NEEDS LONG-TERM FUNDING PROGRAMS
- MAKE DOWNTOWN THE EMPLOYMENT CENTRE OF THE CITY
- SHOW US THE MONEY FOR DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSIT INVESTMENT
- SUPPORT THE CREATIVE CLASS BY INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL SECTOR
- END HOMELESSNESS DOWNTOWN FOR A HEALTHY CITY AND PROSPEROUS COUNTRY



LIGHT FOOD & REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

## **DON WOODSTOCK, GREEN PARTY OF CANADA**

**Q1: How would you rank the importance of transit and transportation for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q2: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national transit strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

Fund 'Green Cities' initiatives, ensuring that the funding is not used in ways that encourage urban sprawl, but instead to reduce sprawl and GHG emissions, conserve electricity and water, increase densification, and expand public transit. Increase existing federal funding to stimulate a massive re-investment in public transportation, pedestrian, cycle and car-sharing infrastructure in all Canadian towns and cities. Re-invest in our national rail systems, building more train cars in Canada, increasing train speeds, phasing in high speed rail where feasible, and creating green transportation and energy infrastructure corridors in key sectors.

**Q3: How would you rank the importance of a strategy to address affordable and social housing for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q4: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national affordable/social housing strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

Implement a National Housing Strategy based on Housing First principles, quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing, and providing additional supports and services as needed. Subsidize private developers to include a percentage of affordable housing in their housing projects. Develop timelines, funding strategies and targets for retrofitting existing buildings in Canada, with the goal of retrofitting 100% of Canada's buildings to a high level of energy efficiency by 2030. This can help stop the urban sprawl.

**Q5: How would you rank the importance of a national crime prevention strategy for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q6: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national crime prevention strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

Canadians want safe communities, to live without fear of crime, security for our children, and judicial integrity. Criminal activity hinges on societal factors like socioeconomic equality, on community based factors like unemployment and the lack of services for victims of crimes, on relationships such as ineffective or inadequate parenting, and on individual factors like psychology and habits. The Green Party is "committed to addressing underlying social causes of crime, such as poverty, racism and inequality as well as to putting forward a balanced approach to make manifest substantive equality in Canada while ensuring serious crimes are dealt with fairly by means of proportionate sanctions." A community that knows who their neighbours are can bring huge gaps between people, closer. Let's bring our community together and let's see what happens.

**Q7: How would you rank the importance of mental health and addiction resources for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q8: What is your party's position or policy on developing mental health and addiction resources that address municipal and urban needs?**

Greens understand that health is about more than 'health care.' We are in the midst of a cancer epidemic, and no one is willing to speak of it out loud. Hundreds of chemicals used in our everyday life carry risks of increased cancer, infertility, learning disabilities and other intellectual impairment, and damage to the immune system. There are less-toxic substitutes for these products, but industry lobbies to maintain their registration and legal use drowns out the voices of concerned health professionals and families concerned about health. The Green Party of Canada will act to remove from use those chemicals known to have a significant risk of human cancer, immunosuppression, endocrine disruption, neurotoxicity, and/or mutagenicity. We have also focused on treating acute health problems after they arise, and failed to place sufficient priority on preventing illness in the first place. We have also failed to provide adequate services for mental health, especially for the young. Services to assist young people and others with addiction issues are also woefully inadequate. Greens subscribe to the World Health

Organization's definition of health as "a complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Our present health care system addresses only one dimension – the treatment of disease and/or trauma by qualified professionals in publicly-funded medical facilities. Greens applaud the creation in 2007 of the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC). The MHCC has estimated that mental illness costs the Canadian economy \$50 billion per year. We support the call from the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations that the MHCC's mandate be extended for another ten years (2015-2025) and to ensure a focus on the mental health of youth. I guess, because of my stance, I won't be receiving any fully-paid golf trips from the Pharmaceutical industry.

**Q9: There is a need for an increased commitment with continued and sustained resources from the Government of Canada to work with municipalities to assist in critical initiatives related to deteriorating municipal infrastructure in the downtowns. What is your party's position or policy on funding municipal infrastructure deficit?**

Municipalities need stable and predictable funding. Urban Canadians need their garbage & recyclables collected, good transit services, safe roads, and dependable water supplies. They also want new investment in green urban infrastructure including recycling, mass transit, energy efficiency upgrades to buildings, water conservation, and community amenities like parks, sports fields, and arts, culture and community centres. Underlying this is an urgent need to replace aging sewer systems, roadways, and water pipes.

1. Invest in Green Technology: Canada has the potential to capitalize on the single biggest business opportunity in human history - the shift to a green economy. Investment in green energy –like wind, solar and hydro– creates over 7x more jobs per dollar invested when compared to investment in traditional energy sectors.
2. Invest in small business: 69.7% of the working force is employed by small business. We will establish a federally-funded Green Venture Capital Fund to support viable local 'businesses start-ups', and I will personally advocate for each and every business who wishes to start-up in the Winnipeg Centre area.
3. Redress Tax Dollars: Currently, 8% of Canadian tax dollars goes to municipal governments. Canada's biggest fiscal imbalance is the imbalance between municipal governments and everyone else. As

Jane Jacobs pointed out in *Dark Age Ahead*, taxes are collected disproportionately at the wrong level. Most Canadians' experience their government at the level where it collects their recycling, runs their buses, and provides their water. The Green Party will redress the real fiscal imbalance facing the level of government least able to tax fully to cover its costs.

4. The Green Party will create a new pool of municipal infrastructure funding by changing tax rules to create a Municipal Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP).
5. Increase the Gas Tax Transfer to municipalities to five cents/litre to be used in funding the above sustainable transportation initiatives.
6. Fund 'Green Cities' initiatives, ensuring (through contractual agreements) that the funding is not used in ways that encourage urban sprawl, but instead to reduce sprawl and GHG emissions.

## **PAT MARTIN, NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA**

**Q1: How would you rank the importance of transit and transportation for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q2: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national transit strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

Across Canada congestion is costing billions each year in delays, wasted fuel and pollution. Fast, efficient public transit is the best way to tackle congestion. And investment in transit creates jobs. Tom Mulcair's Better Transit Plan will tackle gridlock, and cut commute times, by the end of our first term, the NDP's 20 year plan will provide \$1.3 billion every year in predictable and transparent transit investment across Canada. There will no longer be a complicated application processes or competition with other cities. The NDP plan will give Winnipeg the opportunity for long-term planning with dedicated revenue to fund transit priorities for our city.

**Q3: How would you rank the importance of a strategy to address affordable and social housing for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q4: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national affordable/social housing strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

The NDP has a concrete plan to make sure more Canadians have a safe, comfortable and affordable home. Sadly, 3.2 Million Canadians-one in nine-live with housing need. This means they spend more than they can afford on housing or they live in homes needing major repairs or are overcrowded. On any given night, 35,000 Canadians are homeless. Tom Mulcair and the NDP will partner with municipalities, provinces and First Nations communities to restore long-term, stable investments in affordable housing. We will sustain investment in Canada's affordable housing agreements, and provide incentives for the construction of 10,000 affordable and market rental housing units. The NDP is committed to renewing cooperative agreements that are set to expire and invest over \$2 billion in coops and social housing by 2020.

**Q5: How would you rank the importance of a national crime prevention strategy for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q6: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national crime prevention strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

Tom Mulcair has pledged that a NDP government would devote \$250 million to a police recruitment fund during its first four years in office. This up-front investment would be followed by \$100 million in annual, ongoing funding. The money would put 2,500 more front-line police officers on the streets in communities across Canada.

**Q7: How would you rank the importance of mental health and addiction resources for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q8: What is your party's position or policy on developing mental health and addiction resources that address municipal and urban needs?**

Tommy Douglas' NDP pioneered public health care in Canada, and New Democrats are determined to defend it. Unfortunately demands on our healthcare system have increased and significant gaps remain in several areas, in particular the area of mental health. Experts tell us that making health care better takes a national approach. Yet our government has backed away from its leadership role in health care. An NDP government lead by Tom Mulcair will stop Harper's unilateral cuts and get back to working collaboratively with the provinces and territories. One of our top priorities will be better mental health services, along with improved access to primary, long-term and home care, improving prescription drug coverage, and measures to prevent long-term illnesses that affect millions of Canadians. Details on our full healthcare policy including mental health will be released later in the campaign.

**Q9: There is a need for an increased commitment with continued and sustained resources from the Government of Canada to work with municipalities to assist in critical initiatives related to deteriorating municipal infrastructure in the downtowns. What is your party's position or policy on funding municipal infrastructure deficit?**

Canada's municipal infrastructure deficit is a staggering \$172 billion and rising. Municipalities own 60% of our public infrastructure, yet collect only eight cents of every tax dollar. After years of downloading and neglect, too many municipalities are struggling. Past infrastructure plans have failed to get funding out the door – with complicated application processes and public-private partnership requirements that shut out smaller communities while adding years of uncertainty and delays to important projects. Tom Mulcair and the NDP will ensure that roads, bridges and vital infrastructures are there when we need them. We will start with investing the equivalent of one additional cent of the existing gas tax. This will provide additional funding in the first year that will ramp up to an additional \$1.5 billion invested at the end of a first mandate. This NDP initiative will provide annual, stable, long-term investment in core infrastructure.

## **ROBERT-FALCON OUELLETTE, LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Q1: How would you rank the importance of transit and transportation for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q2: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national transit strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

We are committed to long term, stable funding for transit in co-operation with cities

**Q3: How would you rank the importance of a strategy to address affordable and social housing for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q4: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national affordable/social housing strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

The Liberal party established a policy for affordable housing in 2012. Access to affordable quality housing is a first step in reducing poverty, hunger and homelessness, especially among vulnerable populations including low income seniors, new immigrants, Aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities and illness. We have a plan that will provide sustainable and predictable tax measures to support the development of market rental housing and that governments ensure existing affordable housing and homelessness investments are permanent.

**Q5: How would you rank the importance of a national crime prevention strategy for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q6: What is your party's position or policy on developing a national crime prevention strategy that addresses municipal and urban needs?**

The Liberal Party of Canada believes in crime prevention, first and foremost. Efforts should be aimed at crime prevention, not punishment. It's not about being tough on crime, it's about creating less crime.

**Q7: How would you rank the importance of mental health and addiction resources for municipal development?**

- Strongly believe it's important

**Q8: What is your party's position or policy on developing mental health and addiction resources that address municipal and urban needs?**

The Liberal party has a policy on a National Framework for Mental Health. A new Liberal government will create an office of a national mental health ombudsperson who will issue an annual report for parliament on the status of mental health and mental health care in Canada

**Q9: There is a need for an increased commitment with continued and sustained resources from the Government of Canada to work with municipalities to assist in critical initiatives related to deteriorating municipal infrastructure in the downtowns. What is your party's position or policy on funding municipal infrastructure deficit?**

If elected, we will boost federal infrastructure spending by \$60-billion over the next decade, on top of the currently planned spending of \$65-billion.