



Laura Shantz: 2022 Candidates Survey

Municipal Election Priorities	Campaign Asks	Would you work with us to achieve these goals?
Improving Our Democracy	That the City ensure section 6.1 is enforced (Province of Ontario, Municipal Elections Act) where polls are advised to be present “in buildings containing 100 or more dwelling units”. We would like to see the City of Ottawa pass a policy reflecting access to voting.	We need to ensure that voting is easy and convenient. Removing barriers helps more people get out to vote.
	Ensure polling stations open from at least 10am-8pm.	We need to ensure adequate access to polling stations, especially for those who work non-standard schedules.
	The city should bring back door to door to find eligible voters.	This would have the highest impacts in neighbourhoods with large shares of renters and lower average incomes. Target these neighbourhoods to ensure the best use of city resources.
	Ban developer lobbyist donations to city councillors	Municipal election campaigns should not be funded by developers
	Split the Planning Committee into separate urban-core and suburban committees similar to Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee	

Build Affordable Housing	ACORN wants to see a strong Inclusionary Zoning policy with 25-35% affordable rental housing targeting those in core housing need, citywide in perpetuity.	We need to use a variety of tools to tackle the housing crisis. An aggressive inclusionary zoning policy would be an excellent start.
	Convert empty office buildings to non-market affordable housing	We need to work with provincial and federal governments to identify empty office buildings that are suitable for conversion, and to ensure that there is funding to both acquire and convert them into social housing.
	Any developments getting municipal public funds must have rent control on all units (not just the affordable units). This is in addition to Vacancy Control on all units - so when the tenant leaves, the landlords can't double the rent.	Rent controls are an important tool in order to help rein in skyrocketing rents in Ottawa.
	Reserve public land for affordable housing	
Fund Affordable Housing	We are calling on the City of Ottawa to dedicate \$40 million to building affordable, non-market housing to match its budget for emergency shelters.	We need to push the provincial and federal governments to match or ideally exceed the housing dollars we put forward to increase our impact.
	5% Vacant Unit Tax with revenues funding affordable housing projects	
	Tax all luxury homes- increase property taxes on houses worth more than 2 million.	Due to the rapid rise of housing prices that we are seeing, a policy such as this requires caution and thoughtfulness from councillors. Any such tax would need to be progressive so that higher value properties are taxed at higher rates, but it should also account for events in the market where housing prices become inflated.
Protect Affordable Housing	We need the City to enact an Anti Displacement Policy to protect affordable housing and stop tenants from being priced out of their neighbourhoods.	
	Ottawa needs an Anti-Renoviction Bylaw similar to New Westminster, BC's where the bylaw effectively ended renovictions.	Tenants deserve protection when buildings are slated for renovation; ensuring tenants' rights to return is important.

	No public funds, or permit approvals, to predatory landlords.	We have seen some planning approvals denied to negligent landlords. This sets a strong precedent that landlords need to be good stewards of their properties.
	The City should expand its existing programs to introduce a Rent Bank like other Ontario cities.	
	Explore a Non-Profit Acquisition Strategy that would give non-profit & social housing providers, co-ops and land trusts the right of first refusal to purchase at risk apartment buildings on the private market similar to Montreal.	There are exciting proposals in the works that could bring such an acquisition strategy to Ottawa. I want to see such a plan in place to ensure that social housing providers are ready to meet the growing demand for social housing.
Tenant Engagement	Ottawa ACORN is calling for a proactive education program to inform tenants about their rights/resources when there are signs of potential renovictions/demovictions.	We need to ensure tenants have a good understanding of their rights. Currently, this often falls on legal aid clinics which can not always meet the demand. I would like to see the municipality work with Provincial MPPs on this as a joint effort.
	We want to see a public registry of tenant buyouts, building permits, home and rental building sales	A public registry is an excellent way to improve transparency for everyone.
	We want to see Ottawa follow the lead of cities like Toronto and Hamilton by creating a Tenant Defense Fund that would allow tenant groups to apply for funding for legal assistance when challenging renovictions, AGIs or when submitting tenant applications to the LTB.	We would need to look at how this fund was set up in other cities to ensure that it is both equitable and sustainable.
Healthy Homes	Enforcement mechanisms of property standards at the municipal level need to be improved. There should be more severe consequences for negligent landlords. We need Landlord Licensing, similar to Toronto, which would include a landlord registry, proactive inspections, increased enforcement and better standards of repair.	Tenants often struggle to get their landlords to complete essential repairs. Having a licensing system would help to ensure that tenants have quality accommodations and to reduce the chance of housing deteriorating and thus being susceptible to renovation and demoviction, which are both problems in our community.
	More funding in the city budget for repairs and maintenance in Ottawa Community Housing	We need to ensure that capital repairs to Ottawa Community Housing communities are prioritized. This will help ensure that the housing stock lasts as

		long as possible, and will help ensure that it is greener along the way.
Infrastructure and Employment	The City should support community organizations advocating for Community Benefits Agreements during development projects.	We need to ensure that community benefits are part of all new development projects. It is important that community organizations have a seat at the table to ensure that the proposed benefits reflect their actual needs.
	The City of Ottawa should create an Ethical Purchasing Strategy that protects workers' wages and benefits and avoids contract flipping. All employees working on city grounds should be paid a living wage.	The City needs to ensure that work done on its behalf, whether by city staff or subcontractors, is properly compensated.
Internet for All	The City should leverage its own assets to create a municipal broadband program that can provide \$10-30/month home internet to low and moderate income households similar to Toronto's ConnectTO program.	One special consideration will be how to deliver broadband service to Ottawa's rural residents, many of whom cannot access broadband regardless of the price.
	Expansion of programs that offer free or subsidized devices to low income people	During the pandemic, we know that many people were denied internet access as libraries and community centres closed. Ensuring that there are programs to provide devices to those in need helps keep people connected and should be prioritized.
	Provide FREE public wifi in all public spaces such as bus shelters, parks, community centres and more	The City is off to a good start with public wifi in libraries and many community centres. Expanding this service offers people the chance to participate fully in society, especially as the costs of cell phone plans and data are often unaffordable to low income residents.
Community Services	Prioritize city funding for youth services, street lighting, mental health supports, addiction supports, sidewalks and traffic controls in underserved, often low income & working class communities	We have tools and data that show us which communities are most in need of increased resources. We must invest equitably to ensure that everyone has access to the build environment, services and programs they deserve.

	Support ACORN's national campaign to end predatory lending by calling on the Federal Government to support alternatives to payday and installment loans, lower the criminal interest rate and more.	The City has a role to play in advocating for postal banking and similar measures that would benefit low income residents.
Childcare	We need funding for affordable public/non-profit daycare spaces to be prioritized in lower income neighborhoods and communities	We need to ensure that all residents have access to affordable, quality childcare.
	Parents need easier access to information in order to understand Ontario's patchwork childcare system. We need transparency and accountability to parents through a simplified online process and face to face assistance when applying for subsidies.	We need advocates to help people navigate social service systems, and childcare is no different. Making processes easier, both over the computer and face-to-face, means that more people will get the services that they need and deserve.
	Expanded programming for parents who work non-standard hours (ie. shift work, overnights).	We need greater accessibility to accommodate families with non-standard schedules.
Affordable & Reliable Transit	We believe transit should be free, starting with those living on social assistance.	Transit ridership is still at 40% of pre-pandemic levels. We need stable financing to ensure we have the transit we need. The City's proposed study of free transit is a good first step to see the costs and the benefits. I believe we need to fight for free transit for those living on social assistance who often have to pay out of pocket for their bus passes, money that often means less food in their cupboards. Transit is a matter of dignity and equity, and free transit for low income folks represents a small financial cost for a huge benefit in terms of equity and dignity.
	Presto passes should be free for anyone under the low income measure, and there should be no minimum payment to upload Presto passes for people under the low income measure.	Fees for presto cards are often a barrier for folks on low incomes. Taking away the financial barriers to get a presto card and load funds helps ensure that people can access transit.
	Increase bus service in underserved neighbourhoods.	Public transit is an essential service for many folks on low incomes. Ensuring that low income neighbourhoods are better served by transit

		increases equity and helps ensure that everyone can get around the city with dignity.
Climate Change	Retrofitting Canada's aging highrise communities from a tenant led perspective is an important step in reducing Energy Poverty. Ottawa needs an Energy Equity Program that targets the lowest-income and least Energy efficient private apartment buildings across the city.	I would like to see the City pursue these retrofits along with other levels of government as we know that this is a national issue, not just a local one. Older buildings are often not equipped with air conditioning, are often very energy inefficient, meaning higher utility costs for tenants
	Financial support for low and moderate income households impacted by natural disasters	Unfortunately, many low and moderate income families cannot afford insurance and cannot absorb the costs associated with disasters (rotten food due to power outages, costs to clean up sewage when sewers back up, etc.). These are public health concerns and the City needs to be ready to support low income neighbours.
	Ensure low and moderate income renter communities have access to green space	Green space in our communities is not evenly distributed. Lower income neighbourhoods often have fewer trees; we need to ensure that these neighbourhoods meet the 40% tree canopy targets to help reduce the effects of climate change on residents. We also need to prioritize parkland acquisition in these neighbourhoods, ensuring that we receive parkland in new developments, instead of cash-in-lieu.