

# NICK HALFYARD

## WARD 12

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### **1: What are the top three issues facing your Ward?**

**A:** The top issue in my ward is the lack of fiscal management on city council. Too many people speak to about the waste and efficiency of tax payer's money. They would like to see city council hold off on spending, spend more wisely. The next issue falls into the first with tax increases on all accounts. My ward is fed up with the increases to everything, and having little or nothing to show for it at the end of the day; the current recycling program idea also has my ward up in arms. Many people believe it to be a good idea; however they are furious that this council is yet again charging them for something new.

### **2. What are the top three issues facing the city as a whole, if different from above?**

**A:** Transit, Crime, Housing

-Many people see the transit problem as turning into an epidemic. Especially for my ward here in the south; the south houses most of the people in the city and most of those people work in the city centre or the north, and yet in order to get to both places we are only serviced with two options, the Deer Foot, or McLeod Trail. Anyone who has taken either road during the peak periods understands however annoying and frustrating this can be, everyday. Those that don't take the roads, but prefer transit, are not much better suited. The ride is annoying, crammed in, and frustrating. Trains seem to come and go as they please despite the every five minutes clause during the peak periods.

-Housing is also seen to becoming a crisis with no real solution being offered and with no one willing to listen in order to come up with a solution. This issue doesn't wholly affect my ward, save for the major issue of the Blackfoot Trail Court, where this issue comes very close to home. And with this our current Alderman has shown little leadership and has betrayed the people of the court, while city council does very little to prevent this crisis.

-The next issue is the rapid increase in crime. City council seems to be ignorant to this, and does very little to increase police presence in the communities or hire more additional police officers.

### **3. a; Do you support the concept of extending Transit-Oriented Development throughout the city, including in established neighborhoods generally and in your ward? What is your stance on the proposed development of Dalhousie Station (In Varsity)?**

**A:** I support an increase to transit oriented capacity. As it stands now this city is only concerned with increasing the length of tracks, which only adds more people to a system that can not handle its current capacity as it is. My plan would be to increase capacity to allow more people to ride in the current system, before we completely overwhelm the system. We don't need a C-Train in every community; buses would work just as fine for the more isolated communities especially in my Ward, Cranston, and New Brighton. However as it stands those communities have limited bus services which is unacceptable. Before this city deals with any expansion we first need to deal with the people that already use the system, before adding more people to a failing system.

**B: Are we facing a housing crisis in Calgary? If so, what should be done about it?**

**A:** We are not facing a housing crisis yet, but we are certainly as close as we can be. We have too many people right now not being able to afford their monthly rent despite working maybe two jobs and of course for those who come here, finding a place to stay is a full time job in and of itself. What we need are practical working solutions, we need to give tax breaks, and incentives to lower to middle income families, and to landlords to build more apartments and renting units. This issue is far to complicated and big to be worked out by just the local level of government, we need to work constructively with the province and not have a combative role with them in order to come up with the best solution to this growing problem.

**C: Do you support legalization of secondary suites in all existing neighborhoods, subject only to reasonable safety concerns? Why or Why not?**

**A:** Yes; the fact is that we already have them only not officially. There is no reason not to be able to have them should they be proven to be safe and adequate for living, which most of the times they are. This would help ease the burden of our impending housing crisis.

**D: Do you believe that urban sprawl is a problem for the city? If you believe it is a problem, what will you do to address it?**

**A:** I don't believe that it is a problem; however it turns into a problem when the city designed the more roads as poorly as they did. When most that live outside the city come into work they are forced to use just two main roads, the Deer Foot and McLeod. This is the problem that is created. However Urban Sprawl does help the city by reducing the amount of people that live directly in the city limits. Having people spreading out eases up on congestion, however the transit part of this is what the problem is.

**4. Has the city been doing a good job of addressing transportation needs? What if anything would you do differently?**

**A:** No the city has done one of the worst jobs ever. They want to continue to expand the C-Train when we already can not deal with the current capacity of people. My plan would be to first deal with what we have than worry about what we could have. I would right away add a forth cart to the C-Train during the peak rush hours of the day. A slight delay with a forth cart at the station far outweighs the nuisances of not having it. Than I would add more buses, especially to communities that are not being serviced as of now, or have limited service, or at the very least get buses to run to the train stations so that these people can transfer to another bus or the train if need be.

**B: How often do you use public transit?**

**A:** I use both the bus and train everyday. I know the inadequacies of them system and its many problems and would move to address them very quickly.

**C: Does out current transit system meet the needs of the city?**

**A:** NO! We need to increase transit capacity, to allow more people to use the transit right now. We need more buses to run to isolated communities to allow people there to integrate the city more easily and not be forced to remain in there communities because they don't have another means of transportation. Than we need to increase the time the buses run, some buses end far too early leaving people to scramble to get home. This is also a major problem for the last train going north, as that train ends far too early. We need to hire more drivers, which can be done if the wages were higher, and the city would stop attacking the transit workers and start running the city as a city, and not a corporation that wants to make massive profit. S

**D: Are you in favour of the current strategic plan for transit? Why or why not?**

**A:** No, it only addresses mainly expansion, and not dealing with the problem that we already have. First we need to deal with the people we have already, before adding more people and completely collapsing the system.

**E: The city's current plan does not envision direct C-Train service to either the airport or Mount Royal College. Would you favour amending the plan to reach these places?**

**A:** No, I don't believe either place needs a C-Train, especially Mount Royal. The very cost would be too high to build there and really no place for a train station to be put. What I would favour is increase buses to both places for Mount Royal, during the peak periods that students need which can be worked out on a ad hoc basis, and for the airport, I would have shuttle services that only lead to the airport, one every hour, from various stations throughout the city. That way it is a more practical measure regarding expenses and tax money.

**F: Are there other areas of the city that are underserved by transit, how would you address this?**

**A:** Most of the city is underserved. Trains end too early, as do buses, and many of the newer outlining communities have no service or very limited service. I would address adding more buses, to run longer, and service those communities.

**5: A: What will you do to address homelessness and urban poverty in the city?**

**A:** I don't have a concrete answer, nor do I have a great solution. All I can really offer on this subject is to not be a know it all. I would listen to what the experts have to say, what other people have to say and create a dialogue with everyone. It is clear that this problem can not be solved by just one level of government, or with just one solution. We need to listen to all solutions, and to everyone, and to work together with all levels of government, and to make sure when working with other levels of government that we don't allow who is going to control what interfere with solutions and progress.

**B: What is your stance on arts funding? Do you support the recent recommendation of the City of Calgary Arts Development Authority?**

**A:** I tend to be torn between this. I believe the arts are vital to society creative growth, at the same time though there are more important things to be considered when funding is involved for now; as the for the recommendation much like my answer I'm not sure as yet, I will have to review it some more.

**C: What is your stance on the city's curbside recycling plan? Would you extend the plan to include recycling organics and plastics? Why or why not?**

**A:** I'm a big fan of recycling, but not this plan. I think it falls way short, and also I would never support anything that adds more taxes or fees to my ward. I would implement a plan that is free, by cleaning up mismanagement of public funds, and working with the province constructively, we can create a plan that is affordable for the city, and free of cost to the tax payer.

**D: What other environmental initiatives, if any would you favour?**

**A:** The environment is very important to me, and as such I would suggest tax breaks, or incentives to those that wish to make their homes more energy efficient, or use a newer type of car that is easier to the environment, or people who wish to car pool. There are many options, and suggestions, and of course I want to hear and listen to them all, before making any firm commitments.

**E: What will you do to address crime and safety issues in Calgary?**

**A:** We need to add more police to the force and have a stronger presence in all communities especially having state of the art surveillance in the very trouble hot spots.

**6. A: Does the current tax system of funding municipal government largely through property taxes work well? If not what changes would you make?**

**A:** This is a yes and no question. It works to an extent, but that extent fails when the current council wastes so much money on themselves, and other useless projects, and no because the city is growing too fast and too big and can not hope to cope with just property taxes. We need a system that doesn't allow council to waste so much money and also to have the province contribute a large portion of money annually as well, because as it stands now, Calgary, and Edmonton, make up 2/3s of the province, so the province can not ignore these two cities.

**B: Is there enough money in the system to currently fund your priorities?**

**A:** Yes there is. My priorities can be funded through better management of tax money, and not be raising or creating new taxes. It really all comes down to how we spend the money we have.

**7 A: Does the current system of campaign financing work well?**

**A:** No, we need to make sure the public knows who is contributing to who and how much. We also need limits to how much can be given and limits to as whom be give money. I would be in favour of limiting donations to 500 per person, per year, and for corporations to be limited to only a 1000 per year. I would in favour of having all funds donated have to publicly display.

**B: In the absence of rules around disbursement of campaign surpluses, what would you do with any left over funds?**

**A:** If I knew whose money I still had I would return it to them, if not, I would use the left over money to fund projects in my ward outside of tax money.