



Fax

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To: China **From:** Al Koenig

Attn.: **Pages** (including cover sheet): 7

Fax: 205-3100 **Date:** Sep 28

Re: Election Survey

Urgent For Review Please Comment Please Reply

● **Comments:**

SEP 28 2007

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Better Calgary Campaign
2007 General Election
Candidate Survey

Information for candidates

The Better Calgary Campaign is an organization with members from across the political spectrum who are interested in improving the overall quality of civic government in Calgary. We share a desire for a Calgary that is built on "smart growth" principles. We seek a better civic government - one that takes action to build a great city, requiring assertiveness and a progressive view of growth. This means seeing beyond the needs of narrowly-defined special interests and focusing on sustainability in all its forms. More information on us can be found at www.bettercalgary.ca.

We intend to assist voters by publicly endorsing one or more candidates in each race, which we intend to do before October 1, 2007. Our endorsement will be published on our website and through local media outlets. Major media outlets in the city have indicated that they will be following our process closely.

Our results will also be distributed directly to individual electors who register through email. In addition to the endorsements, we will publish the full survey responses of each candidate on our website.

In order to make our endorsements, we will examine your websites and campaign literature, and we will attend all-candidate forums where we can.

However, we want to give all candidates a chance to better detail their stands on issues important to us. Please look over this survey, and **return it no later than 6 PM on Thursday, September 27.**

We understand how busy you are with the election, but this is a vital tool for voter education. Please also feel free to send us your campaign literature in electronic format. If you are unable or unwilling to respond, please let us know so that we do not harass you,

The best way to send in your response is by email to info@bettercalgary.ca. If you prefer to fax your responses, please contact the Co-Chair of the Better Calgary Campaign, Chima Nkemdirim, at 403-390-9994 or at chima@bettercalgary.ca. Chima can also answer any other questions you have.



Candidate Name:	Al Koenig
Ward:	9
Website, if any:	www.vote4al.ca
Contact name/number:	836.6000

1. What are the top three issues facing your Ward?

- Public safety
- Affordable housing
- Transportation

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

- As above

3. Urban Sprawl and Housing

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

Transit-Oriented development is a viable concept, provided that input is first received from existing communities that may be impacted by any new development. In new neighbourhoods the development obviously will be part of the planning process and any inconvenience during and after construction factored in.

With reference to the Dalhousie situation, to date I have not been made aware of the issue, and therefore cannot offer informed comment.

b. Are we facing a housing crisis in Calgary? If so, what should be done about it? If you are an incumbent, what have you specifically done about this?

The Calgary housing situation is constantly evolving. After an extended period of time of very limited housing availability, the re-sale market has an abundance of properties available. I believe there will be a trickle-down effect in the rental market in very short order. This will assist in the short-term, however long term strategies must also be developed. I have spoken at various community meetings about solutions, however have one caveat; my ideas must be researched, (if I am successful), by city legal counsel before they are brought to the next level.

- c. Do you support legalization of secondary suites in all existing neighbourhoods, subject only to reasonable safety concerns? Why or why not?

I do support secondary suites; however they should be viewed as a short-term solution only.

- 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? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see it as a problem, please explain why.

Urban sprawl is a problem for any city that does not listen to its residential and business community. These two stakeholders can more effectively dictate any form of urban sprawl more effectively than some civic planners. Constant consultation and flexibility is key to acceptable and viable solutions to this problem.

4. Transportation

- a. Has the City been doing a good job of addressing transportation needs? What, if anything, would you do differently?

Our transportation system is world class; however it is working at near capacity. Additional C-Trains and buses are paramount. In addition to enhanced routing.

Express C-Trains from outlying areas should be explored to reduce commute times. One pet peeve of mine has always been the resistance by the city to build new interchanges in a clover-leaf formation. For some reason, most new interchanges have an inordinate number of traffic lights in at least one direction, defeating the purpose of the interchange.

- b. How often do you use public transit? Bus, C-train, or both?

I use public transit regularly, primarily the C-Train, as well as the bicycle pathway system during spring/summer/fall, to and from work.

- c. Does our current transit system meet the needs of the city? If not, how specifically would you improve it?

Meeting the needs of the city does not allow for the variable that we are currently experiencing. Some improvements were mentioned in 4(a) above.

- d. Are you in favour of the current strategic plan for transit? Why or why not? If not, what changes would you make?

The current strategic transit plan is well done, however does not appear to have much flexibility built into it. As to changes, these would be made after consultation with users.

- 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 two destinations (both within close distance of planned lines)? Why or why not?

I do support amending the plan to at least Mount Royal College. Obviously some students are not in a position for easy access to MRC without extended travel on buses. An MRC stop just makes sense.

The airport is a slightly different issue. Clearly this line would be for a specific purpose, and the expense may be too great for the taxpayers of this city, based on the rate of return. There is probably a greater need for residents in existing communities for LRT service than for airport commuters.

- f. Are there other areas of the city that are underserved by transit? How would you address this?

There is no C-Train service to the south-east quadrant of the city and this is an emerging issue for Ward 9.

I would address this first by defining the need and then acting upon the need or seeking alternatives.

5. Vibrant and sustainable communities

- a. What will you do to address homelessness and urban poverty in the city? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

Strategies for homelessness and urban poverty cannot be solved without support from the provincial government and a decision from Calgary City Council as to whether it will be a priority in the next term. If there is no clear consensus, efforts may be wasted.

- b. What is your stance on arts funding? Do you support the recent recommendations of the Calgary Arts Development Authority?

I support arts funding within reason, and not at the expense of basic needs of the city and its residents.

- c. What is your stance on the city's curbside recycling plan? Would you extend the plan to include recycling of organics and plastics? Why or why not?

I support all recycling. The city's full plan is scheduled to commence in 2009, aside from minor modifications I would not wish to see anything delay the start up.

- d. What other environmental initiatives, if any, would you favour?

The elimination of pesticides, with a few limited exceptions.

- e. What will you do to address crime and safety issues in Calgary? (If you are an incumbent, what have you already specifically done?) If you don't see this as a problem, please explain why.

A good portion of my platform is based upon public safety. Staffing police/fire/EMS to minimums is not conducive to a safe city.

I hope to be appointed to the police commission after election. I will be able to bring a unique perspective to the commission, as well as a voice to city council, something that has perhaps been lacking in the past.

6. Taxes and Revenues

- a. Does the current system of funding municipal government largely through property taxes work well? If not, what changes would you recommend?

It is somewhat presumptuous, as a candidate, to be espousing changes to taxation systems. I am a taxpayer as well, and do not appreciate tax increases for the same reasons as everyone else. I can state that I will not support raising taxes merely for the sake of raising taxes.

- b. Is there enough money in the system currently to fund your priorities? If now, how will you fund them?

The answer to this question will not be known until the community decides what these priorities are.

7. Political reform.

- a. Does the current system of campaign financing work well? If not, what changes would you favour?

I would prefer a universal system for federal/provincial/municipal campaign financing that includes tax receipts, audits, and surplus guidelines.

- b. In the absence of rules around disbursement of campaign surpluses, what will you do with any leftover funds?

Leftover funds will be donated to a charity.

- c. Are there any other structural reforms you would favour?

At present, no.

- 8. **FOR INCUMBENTS ONLY:** What are your three major accomplishments this term? Of what are you most proud?

Thank you for filling out this survey. Please send your results **before 6 PM on Thursday, September 27** email (preferred) to info@bettercalgary.ca. If you would prefer to fax your responses, or if you have other questions, please contact Chima Nkemdirim on 390-9994 and he will be pleased to help you.