



A Taxpayer Friendly Council?

2013 Calgary Mayoral and Aldermanic Survey

Derek Fildebrandt

Canadian Taxpayers Federation

T: 1-800-661-0187

E: dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com

About the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) is a federally incorporated, non-profit and non-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to lower taxes, less waste and accountable government. The CTF was founded in 1990 when the *Association of Saskatchewan Taxpayers* and the *Resolution One Association of Alberta* joined forces to create a national taxpayers organization. Today, the CTF has more than 84,000 supporters from coast-to-coast.

The CTF maintains a federal office in Ottawa as well as provincial and regional offices in British Columbia, Alberta, the Prairies, Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Provincial and regional offices conduct research and advocacy activities specific to their provinces in addition to acting as local organizers of nation-wide initiatives.

CTF offices field hundreds of media interviews each month, hold press conferences, utilize social media like twitter, Facebook, YouTube and our own blog, as well as issuing regular news releases, commentaries and publications to advocate on behalf of CTF supporters. The CTF's flagship publication, *The Taxpayer* magazine, is published four times a year. *Action Update* e-mails on current issues are sent to CTF supporters regularly. CTF offices also send out weekly *Let's Talk Taxes* commentaries to more than 800 media outlets and personalities nationwide.

CTF representatives speak at functions, make presentations to government, meet with politicians and organize petition drives, events and campaigns to mobilize citizens to affect public policy change.

All CTF staff and board directors are prohibited from holding a membership in any political party. The CTF is independent of any institutional affiliations. Contributions to the CTF are not tax deductible.

Canadian Taxpayers Federation - Alberta Office
2625 Shaganappi Trail NW,
PO Box 84171 Market Mall
Calgary, Alberta T3A 5C4

Phone: 1-800-661-0187
Email: dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com
Website: taxpayer.com

Derek Fildebrandt
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Introduction

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) regularly surveys candidates for public office during federal, provincial and major municipal elections. This is done for the purpose of providing an overall summary of where candidates stand on important issues to CTF supporters and to the broader public.

The CTF strictly abstains from endorsing or supporting any candidate for elected office, but hopes that this survey will better educate voters as to where candidates stand.

Participation

The CTF invited nine mayoral and 49 aldermanic candidates to participate. The CTF emailed candidates from addresses provided on the Calgary Returning Officer's website. As such, candidates with no email address provided were excluded from participating.

Questions

The CTF asked each candidate five short 'yes' or 'no' questions. The questions were:

1. Do you support using municipal tax revenues or city infrastructure grants from the province to fund the construction of a replacement for the Saddledome?
 2. Do you support limiting increases on the city portion of the property tax to the rate of inflation (Consumer Price Index)?
 3. Do you support limiting city employee compensation agreements to no more than the change in inflation (Consumer Price Index) each year?
 4. Do you support returning the "provincial tax room" taken by the city to taxpayers in the next fiscal year?
 5. Will you disclose if you have accepted donations from unions or professional associations that do business with the City of Calgary, and in what amount, prior to the October 21 vote?
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Answers and Interpretations

Where candidates found a 'yes' or 'no' answer overly restrictive, a space was left for a short written answer. These written answers are generally only included when they diverge significantly from the standard 'yes' or 'no.' Where candidates refused to circle a 'yes' or 'no,' the CTF has done its best to interpret their answers, but has included their written answers. In several cases, candidates gave a nominal 'yes' or 'no,' but provided a contradictory written answer. In these cases, their answers have been interpreted by the CTF with the candidate's written answers provided. In some cases, a candidate's answers were too unclear or ambiguous for the CTF to make a determination. In these cases, they are listed as 'unclear' and their written answer is provided.

For ease of use, the CTF has highlighted answers corresponding its positions and policies in green, answers in contradiction in red, and unclear answers in yellow. Where answers are listed as 'unclear', CTF supporters are strongly encouraged to read the written answers and decide on the meaning for themselves.

In the case of question five, candidates did not necessarily declare if they would accept donations from unions that did business with the city, but only if they would disclose those donations or not.

Summary

- 75% of candidates commit to opposing public funding for a replacement of the Saddledome with only 9% of candidates supporting, and 16% unclear.
 - 69% of candidates support limiting property tax increases to the rate of inflation (CPI), 22% do not, and 9% were unclear.
 - 84% of candidates support limiting city employee compensation by the rate of inflation (CPI), only 3% are opposed and 13% were unclear.
 - 72% of candidates support returning the "provincial tax room" to taxpayers in the next budget, 19% are opposed, and 9% were unclear.
 - 88% of candidates promised to disclose if they have received donations from unions doing business with the city before election day, 9% would not, and 3% were unclear.
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Responses

Summary

| Position | Candidate | Public funds for Saddledome? | Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)? | Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)? | Return "provincial tax room" to taxpayers next year? | Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city? |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Mayor | Bruce Jackman | | | | | |
| | Carter Thomson | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Jon Lord | No* | Yes* | Yes* | Yes | No* |
| | Jonathan Joseph Sunstrum | | | | | |
| | Larry Heather | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| | Milan Papez Sr. | | | | | |
| | Naheed K. Nenshi | Unclear* | No* | Yes (Unclear)* | No* | Yes* |
| | Norm Perrault | | | | | |
| | Sandra Hunter | | | | | |
| Ward 1 | Chris Harper | No | No* | Unclear* | Yes | Yes |
| | Dan Larabie | No | Yes* | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | John Hilton O'Brien | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Judi Vandenbrink | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| | Ward Sutherland | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ward 2 | Bernie Dowhan | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Joe Magliocca | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Richard Poon | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Shawn Ripley | No (Unclear)* | Yes (Unclear)* | Yes* | Yes (Unclear)* | Yes |
| | Terry Wong | Unclear* | Yes* | Yes* | Yes | Yes |
| Ward 3 | Jim Stevenson | No | No* | No | No* | No* |
| | Tanveer Taj | | | | | |
| Ward 4 | Blair Houston | | | | | |
| | Gael MacLeod | | | | | |

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|----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | Michael Hartford | | | | | |
| | Sean Chu | No (Unclear)* | No* | Yes | No | Yes |
| | Yuri Shterngartz | | | | | |
| Ward 5 | Bev Hearn | | | | | |
| | Pritpal Dhaliwal | | | | | |
| | Ray Jones | | | | | |
| Ward 6 | Bob Bowles | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | James Istvanffy | | | | | |
| | Joe Connelly | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Richard Pootmans | Yes* | No* | Yes (Unclear)* | Unclear* | Yes |
| Ward 7 | Brent Alexander | | | | | |
| | Druh Farrell | | | | | |
| | Joylin Nodwell | | | | | |
| | Kevin Taylor | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ward 8 | Evan Woolley | | | | | |
| | Ian Newman | No | No* | Yes* | No* | Yes |
| | John Mar | | | | | |
| Ward 9 | Darwin Lahue | | | | | |
| | Gian-Carlo Carra | No | No* | Yes (Unclear)* | No* | Yes |
| | Jordan Katz | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Richard Wilkie | | | | | |
| | Stan The Man Waciak | | | | | |
| Ward 10 | Andre Chabot | No | Yes (Unclear)* | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Nargis Dossa | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Numan Elhussein | | | | | |
| Ward 11 | Brian Pincott | | | | | |
| | James Maxim | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Wayne Frisch | | | | | |
| Ward 12 | Shane Keating | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Stephanie Kusie | Unclear* | Unclear* | Yes | Unclear* | Yes |

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|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Ward 13 | Adam Frisch | | | | | |
| | Diane Colley-Urquhart | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Scott Sorokoski | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ward 14 | Peter Demong | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | Shawn Kao | No | Yes | Yes | Yes* | Yes* |

Written Answers

| Position | Candidate | Public funds for Saddledome? | Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)? | Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)? | Return "provincial tax room" to taxpayers next year? | Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city? |
|--------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Mayor | Bruce Jackman | | | | | |
| | Carter Thomson | I believe that as a major piece of infrastructure for the city we do have a role to play with funding. The arena is a major tax revenue generator which we will see our investment back. | | | | |
| | Jon Lord | | I'd like to see it reduced. I am well known for having successfully identified major savings in government spending. | The issue is really upper management, over-staffing and unclear direction. | | I will not disclose any individuals' names or anyone who may be fearing retaliation as a result of prior disclosure. |
| | Jonathan Joseph Sunstrum | | | | | |
| | Larry Heather | | | | | |
| | Milan Papez Sr. | | | | | |

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|----------|------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| | Naheed K. Nenshi | I do not favor using tax revenues. There may be dedicated infrastructure grants that the province creates for purposes like this, but the use of such grants, if any, must be predicated on a true public benefit from the construction (like public recreation facilities). I don't philosophically believe in using public funds to underwrite private profit. | The increases need to take into account population growth as well as inflation. I support a goal of limiting rate increases to the Municipal Price Index (MPI) plus Calgary's population growth for the operating budget. Capital budgets could be additional, if funded from provincial tax room. But the real issue is to move away from the property tax - - a horrible, regressive unfair mechanism -- to fundamental tax reform. I hope the province is up for this. | Our current employee contracts are at wage increases lower than our forecasted wage inflation rates. I favour holding the line on these collective agreements to below average wage inflation in Alberta. | The money has been returned to the taxpayers, returned in services they need and use every day. Public consultation pre-flood showed about 2/3 of Calgarians favour investing the tax room. But they could not agree on how. Post-flood, we need to fund the city's portion of flood recovery and mitigation costs. In November 2013, we will have a public debate on the 2014 portion: flood relief or something else. For the 2015-2018 budget, we will have a debate on what to do at that point. | I'm interested in why you're not asking about corporations and individuals that do business with the city. I strongly believe we should disclose everyone. I disclosed all donors to my campaign, up to September 15th, on nomination day and this list will be updated prior to the election. You can find the list of donors at http://www.nenshi.ca/campaign_finance . |

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|---------------|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Norm Perrault | | | | | |
| | Sandra Hunter | | | | | |
| Ward 1 | Chris Harper | | But I also don't support using MPI as measurement | For exempt employees. Must ensure flexibility for market changes. | | |
| | Dan Larabie | | We need to rein in tax increases and spending. This would be a good first step. | | | |
| | John Hilton O'Brien | | | | | |
| | Judi Vandenbrink | | | | | |
| | Ward Sutherland | | | | | |
| Ward 2 | Bernie Dowhan | Only if all four parties (Flames, federal gov't, provincial gov't, City of Calgary) involved share equally in the costs of the expenditure | However, it cannot rise above 5%, which is highly unlikely. | City employees deserve fair compensation just like the private sector. | I listen to the citizens of my ward. They want the money back. | |
| | Joe Magliocca | | Yes and I would take it one step further and support a tax freeze for the next term in its entirety. | | | |

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|----------|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Richard Poon | | | | | |
| | Shawn Ripley | This is not an issue that has been on the radar for residents in this ward. More information is required, with community consultation to follow. | I do support this idea, however it is an overly simplistic approach in reality. This approach should always be the goal. | The exception would be for areas that show we cannot compete for the right talent when 'industry' wide compensation rises for that pool. | As a matter of principle, it should be returned, based on feedback from Ward 2 residents. Most, however, accept and understand that in the case of flood relief and other services, money would have to come from elsewhere, even taxes. | |
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|----------|------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Terry Wong | <p>No. Not as a subsidy to private entities. If there is a request, I would only support it if we are a shareholder. Firstly, there must be public consultation and a vote or referendum that support this. Secondly, the Province, City or a public board must have a seat at the table and receive both operating influence and revenue rights (i.e. ROI). We cannot give money to something that we cannot influence, if not control, public value.</p> | <p>Before this though, we should limit 2014 taxes by 1/ eliminating the 2013 provincial tax space increase for 2014; 2/ by restricting any new 2014 budget adjustments to net zero and/or budget reduction initiatives; 3/ replacing 2014 salary/wage increases with a 1/2 cost of living rate increase and a pay for performance system that nets performance where permitted; 4/ remove shared services internal chargeback; and seek corporate procurement to seek better material purchases if not</p> | <p>Yes, overall budget increase equal to cost of living; however, I would immediately negotiate 1/2 cost of living rate increase with pay for performance (bonus) clauses especially for management.</p> | | |

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|---------------|------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| | | | in 2014, certainly in 2015. | | | |
| Ward 3 | Jim Stevenson | | The CPI does not accurately reflect the reality of City operating costs. That's why we use the MPI | | While it's been labeled "tax room", it's part of the provincial initiative to provide increased streams of predictable funding to municipalities. | My commitment is to provide a complete list after election day, when all donations are received, so people have a full list of my donors. For now, feel free to check past campaigns as not much has changed. |
| | Tanveer Taj | | | | | |
| Ward 4 | Blair Houston | | | | | |
| | Gael MacLeod | | | | | |
| | Michael Hartford | | | | | |
| | Sean Chu | Short answer no. Long answer there really are limited sources of funding for buildings like the Dome here in Canada. Often the only way new ones are going to be built is with public money. | I am more in favor of a set % of property value with any excess being put into a fund for future projects or unexpected drops in property values. | | | |

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|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | Yuri Shterngartz | | | | | |
| Ward 5 | Bev Hearn | | | | | |
| | Pritpal Dhaliwal | | | | | |
| | Ray Jones | | | | | |
| Ward 6 | Bob Bowles | | No to any increase at all until the city figures out how to use the \$4 billion it already collects more effectively | | | |
| | James Istvanffy | | | | | |
| | Joe Connelly | | | | | |
| | Richard Pootmans | Yes to a limited extent | Increases held to MPI and growth | Candidate did not circle a yes: "Employees held to CPI – Councilors too potentially" | Candidate did not circle yes: "Will vote to return tax room next year" | |
| Ward 7 | Brent Alexander | | | | | |
| | Druh Farrell | | | | | |
| | Joylin Nodwell | | | | | |
| | Kevin Taylor | | | | | |
| Ward 8 | Evan Woolley | | | | | |
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|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| | Ian Newman | | Candidate did not circle one. Gave answer: "I believe they should be pegged to the rate of inflation - possibly 2x rate of inflation to allow for growth | Excluding relevant bonus structures based on cost savings | Candidate did not circle one. Gave answer: "I support returning "tax room" funds to pay down city debt | |
| | John Mar | | | | | |
| Ward 9 | Darwin Lahue | | | | | |
| | Gian-Carlo Carra | | No, I support limiting increases to inflation (Municipal Index) plus growth (until we're able to fix how we grow). Read more at: http://www.carra4ward9.ca/tax-piece/ | Yes, but I respect the bargaining process. | No, I support working to ensure even more of the taxes we're already paying stay in Calgary in the service of Calgarians. Read more at: http://www.carra4ward9.ca/tax-piece/ | |
| | Jordan Katz | | | | | |
| | Richard Wilkie | | | | | |
| | Stan The Man Waciak | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

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|----------------|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Ward 10 | Andre Chabot | | However some consideration needs to be given to inflation as it relates to municipal costs vs consumer costs. Inner-city growth currently has no funding mechanism or levy associated with it. | | | |
| | Nargis Dossa | | | | | |
| | Numan Elhussein | | | | | |
| Ward 11 | Brian Pincott | | | | | |
| | James Maxim | | | | | |
| | Wayne Frisch | | | | | |
| Ward 12 | Shane Keating | | | | | |
| | Stephanie Kusie | I would prefer to see this corporately funded | If possible, yes | | I would prefer to see civic taxes reduced by this amount to avoid administrative fees for the refund process | |
| Ward 13 | Adam Frisch | | | | | |
| | Diane Colley-Urquhart | | | | | |
| | Scott Sorokoski | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

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|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Ward 14 | Peter Demong | | | | | |
| | Shawn Kao | | | | | Any additional funds deemed necessary by City Council should go through the budgetary process. |