



# **A Taxpayer Friendly Council?**

## **2013 Edmonton Mayoral and Council Candidate Survey**

Derek Fildebrandt

Canadian Taxpayers Federation

T: 1-800-661-0187

E: [dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com](mailto: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](mailto:dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com)  
Website: [taxpayer.com](http://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.

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## Participation

The CTF invited five mayoral and 66 aldermanic candidates to participate. The CTF emailed candidates from addresses provided on the Edmonton Returning Officer's website. As such, candidates with no email address provided were excluded from participating.

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## Questions

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

1. Do you support posting council and mayoral expenses (including receipts) online every quarter as the province does for ministers and MLAs?
  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. Will you oppose any additional municipal funding (including the CRL) for any reason (eg. cost overruns, design changes, etc.) for the downtown arena/entertainment centre?
  5. Have you accepted or will you be accepting campaign contributions (financial or in-kind) from Daryl Katz, the Katz Group, any of the Katz Group of Companies (including but not limited to Rexall, The Edmonton Oilers, Edmonton Oil Kings, etc.) or any employee of, or person related to, Daryl Katz or his companies?
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6. Will you disclose if you have accepted donations from unions or professional associations that do business with the City of Edmonton, 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.

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## Summary

- All candidates except for one commit to posting their expenses online with receipts
  - 67% of candidates commit to limiting property taxes to the rate of inflation (CPI) with 26% opposed and 7% unclear.
  - 48% of candidates commit to limiting city employee raises to the rate of inflation (CPI) with 44% opposed and 7% unclear.
  - All candidates except for one oppose additional funds for the professional NHL arena.
  - All candidates except for one claim to have accepted no donations from Daryl Katz or his related businesses, with one candidates unclear in their answer.
  - 85% of candidates commit to disclose if they have received donations from unions doing business with the city before election day, with 15% unwilling.
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# Responses

## Summary

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
<b>Mayor</b>	Diotte, Kerry	Yes*	Yes	Unclear*	Yes	No	No*
	Iveson, Don	Yes	No	No	Yes (Unclear)*	No	Yes
	Lebovici, Karen						
	Semotiuk, Joshua						
	Ward, Gordon	Yes	Yes*	No (Unclear)*	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Ward 1</b>	Amato, Sean						
	Knack, Andrew	Yes	No*	No*	Yes	No	Yes
	Maclise, Sharon	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes
	Pasay, Rob	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*
	Post, Jamie Kenneth	Yes	No*	No*	Yes	No	Yes
	Sandilands, Bryan						
<b>Ward 2</b>	Ali, Mustafa						
	Esslinger, Bev						
	Grant, Ted	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Jalkanen, Nita	Yes	Yes*	No*	Yes	No	Yes

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Koziak, Don	yes	Yes (Unclear)*	Yes	Yes	No*	No
	Millar, Jason						
<b>Ward 3</b>	Bernshaw, Rob	Yes	Yes	No*	Yes	No	Yes
	Dodge, David						
	Isse, Hakin						
	Loken, Dave	No*	No	No	Yes	No	Yes*
<b>Ward 4</b>	Gibbons, Ed						
	Hachem, Sam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Ward 5</b>	Arcilla, Rodolfo "Rudy"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Demers, Terry Diane						
	Gibbon, Jim						
	Grandish, Mark	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	No*	Yes*
	Hennigar, Rob	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Kendrick, Brian						
	Oshry, Michael						
	Santos, Allan						
	Ternikova, Alla	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
<b>Ward 6</b>	Bouchier, Taz						
	Brown, Kyle	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Dorsey, Candace Jane						
	Forsythe, Derrick						
	Frost, Carla						
	Gudanowski, Andrzej						
	Hollis, Melinda						
	Mackenzie, Heather						
	McKeen, Scott	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Parada, Terry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*
	Pirbhai, Adil						
	Sommers, Javed						
	Williams, Dext						
	White, Alfie						
<b>Ward 7</b>	Caterina, Tony	Yes	Yes (Unclear)*	No	Yes	No*	No
	Colburn, Dave						
	Eniafe, A. Daniel						

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Prouse, Tish	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Rolls, Terry						
	Williams, Mimi	Yes	No	No*	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Ward 8</b>	Deacon, Brian A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Henderson, Ben						
	Workman, Heather						
<b>Ward 9</b>	Anderson, Bryan						
	Gorman, Andrew						
<b>Ward 10</b>	Bessel, Ray						
	Devji, Hafis						
	Feehan, Richard John						
	Johnstone, Dan "Can Man Dan"						
	Walters, Michael						
<b>Ward 11</b>	Bitar, Sonia						
	Chak, Mujahid						
	Gane, Dennis John	Yes	Yes*	No*	Yes	No	Yes*
	Maglalang, Roberto						
	Nickel, Mike	Yes	Yes*	No*	Yes	No	No*



Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Panesar, Harvey						
	Schaffrick, Brent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Ward 12</b>	Okelu, Chinwe						
	Sohi, Amarjeet						

**Written Answers**

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
<b>Mayor</b>	Diotte, Kerry	Moreover, as mayor I will push for Canada's first municipally initiated "sunshine law" enabling full public disclosure of salaries (including bonuses) for all senior City managers, directors and advisors. Taxpayers already know how much the mayor and councillors make, they		Labour agreements, of course, are subject to negotiation between the City and unions. I won't pre-suppose how those negotiations go, but I would certainly encourage both parties to be mindful, during bargaining, of the fiscal climates we are in. In tough			I will disclose all my donors and amounts following the election, in accordance with the current law. Other campaigns have published selective, incomplete donors' lists. As mayor, I will push to change the law to compel full donor disclosure prior to future elections.

		also deserve to know what top civil servants are paid.		economic times, limiting increases to the rate of inflation would help protect city workers' jobs and sustain city services.			
<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Post council expenses online?</b>	<b>Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?</b>	<b>Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?</b>	<b>Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?</b>	<b>Accepted Katz donations?</b>	<b>Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?</b>
	Iveson, Don				My intention would be to manage any cost or design changes with the arena within the budget with scope revisions and partner funds		
	Lebovici, Karen						
	Semotiuk, Joshua						

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Ward, Gordon		But, the overall target would be to reduce or limit tax increases. Council should not assume that tax increases can be an automatic source.	Candidate did not <u>circle</u> no: "City employees are varied. Contracts and compensation should be viewed individually, not as a previously fixed expectation. In principle, the CPI is a baseline.			
<b>Ward 1</b>	Amato, Sean						

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Knack, Andrew		Although this has been my goal all along and I have specific actions that we can take as a city to help accomplish this, I do not think it is responsible to ever guarantee something like that. There may be times that even after we have taken every possible step, there may be a unique situation that arises that requires a slightly higher	See reply for question 2.			

			increase.				
Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Maclise, Sharon	There is no reason to refuse to do this. Public scrutiny of public money is not only necessary, it is desirable. It should be especially desirable to councilors and mayors who say they want citizens to be engaged in the political process. It is pure political hypocrisy to declare how much you desire public consultation	I support limiting all tax increases to the rate of inflation. If there are exceptional needs that may cause the government to go beyond these limits there should be a referendum for spending that exceeds the rate of inflation. Citizens will support something that is necessary under exceptional	But more than that. There needs to be some mechanism put in place to reassess civil service initiatives that are not meeting the functions that they were meant to meet. Here in Edmonton we have a service established in 2008 (311 Onc Call) that is costing the taxpayer at least ten million and a lot of frustration –			

		<p>and then on the other hand refuse to be transparent about your own expense reimbursements and how they are used. If I am in council I will publish all of my expenses and you can hold me to that.</p>	<p>circumstances . If the public is consulted on these sorts of issues that dip deeply into their pocketbooks they will be less reluctant to pay for them.</p>	<p>not only does it not help, it hinders but Council has never reexamined the efficacy of this added level of bureaucracy. This is not acceptable. We are stuck with a non-functioning service that costs us millions of dollars but no one on Council has ever had the courage to change the situation. This is a massive waste of taxpayer dollars.</p>			

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Pasay, Rob						I have received zero dollars from unions, corporations, or any of their sources
	Post, Jamie Kenneth		I've proposed that city administration should be preparing the annual operating budget based on the revenue that they know will be available, and not on what the city desires to spend in a given year. That said, Council must be nimble and	I would strongly suggest that Council requires a benchmark with which to manage the size and cost of city administration. However, independent advice is needed to establish what that is.			



			<p>prepared to respond to multiple budget realities, needs and project proposals. Limiting the property tax increase to CPI could well be artificially restrictive. Council does need to establish benchmarks for things like net taxes, fines, user fees, etc. For taxes, I would suggest that GDP be that benchmark.</p>				

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Sandilands, Bryan						
<b>Ward 2</b>	Ali, Mustafa						
	Esslinger, Bev						
	Grant, Ted						
	Jalkanen, Nita		I am also interested in beginning discussions, as soon as possible, about alternative forms of taxation, as based on my own research I have come to believe that our current dependence on property taxes is unsustainable both for the City, and for our citizens.	I do believe in annual cost-of-living increases, and that the CPI rate applied should include energy and food costs. I will not, however, go so far as to say that increases should be limited to this rate.			

			<p>We must start looking for alternative revenue flows. Since doorknocking in mid-June, I have met too many seniors (and others) who are being forced out of their homes due to rising property taxes, utilities, etc.. This is absolutely unacceptable to me, and something must be done to provide relief as soon as possible.</p>				



Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Loken, Dave	Candidate did not circle a yes or no: "I have always been in full compliance with the rules and will do so in the future, whether they are changed or not.					I will provide a list that details contributions from businesses, union and individual contributors
<b>Ward 4</b>	Gibbons, Ed						
	Hachem, Sam			At this point, and we will see how this plays out, I think they city is putting more than their fair share.			
<b>Ward 5</b>	Arcilla, Rodolfo "Rudy"						
	Demers, Terry Diane						
	Gibbon, Jim						

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Grandish, Mark		Candidate did not circle yes, but answer implies a yes: "I do support that property taxes should be limited to the rate of inflation. Going above this is not required the city should look at how they spend tax payer dollars. People's wages don't increase every year with the rate if inflation."	Candidate did not circle yes, but answer implies a yes: "Limiting city employee compensation should not inflate above the rate of inflation. Again lets have a city council more accountable of how money is spent."	Candidate did not circle yes, but answer implies a yes: "Any cost overruns would not be supported by myself. They proposed a cost in building the arena and the builder should be full aware before accepting the project."	Candidate did not circle yes, but answer implies a no: "I have not accepted any donations from the Katz group or others. I'am running a self funded campaign. I'am spending my own dollars limited as they are. Working hard and within a budget are some of my strong points. No I will not accept any donations from any group."	Candidate did not circle yes, but answer implies a yes: I would disclose if I had received any donations from any person, union or corporation. Again I'am running a self funded campaign.

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Hennigar, Rob						
	Kendrick, Brian						
	Oshry, Michael						
	Santos, Allan						
	Ternikova, Alla		With a review of taxation levels every 10 years	However, there is more to the story. Remember that practically every city employee is a union member that pays union fees. I think that nobody has a tally on how much in total is diverted from those employees pockets to support everybody			

				who is on union's payroll. Actually, I think that there is also no tally on ratio between city employers and union employers. In the end of the day we, the taxpayers, support all the city employers and all the people on the unions payroll.			







Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Williams, Mimi			<p>We have collective bargaining process in place. If the parties to those agreements agree on the terms you propose at the bargaining table, I would fully support them. Management and council are free, of course, to limit their own compensation at any time.</p>			

Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
Ward 8	Deacon, Brian A						If I ever thought about taking a donation from any union or professional association i would disclose it right away, but as i stated above i am not taking any donations from anyone i do not know personally. I feel that, i should finance my own campaign and not be in the back pocket of large business when the citizens of this city are our bosses on city council.
	Henderson, Ben						
	Workman, Heather						



Position	Name	Post council expenses online?	Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?	Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?	Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?	Accepted Katz donations?	Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?
	Gane, Dennis John		Yes, but what if we have another 1 in 100 storm? I will not reduce social programs to accommodate extraordinary events, this would cost us more in the long run.	No, I believe compensation is tied to performance and our ability to remain competitive.			You have left out another important source of funding, individual developers. All candidates should post their donations from all sources prior to the election.
	Maglalang, Roberto						
	Nickel, Mike		To the best of my abilities – need seven (7 ) votes on Council for this.	Not sure where we are sitting presently as to these contracts.			But we will do so following the election. Donations are still coming and not all have been tabulated into the Elections report.
	Panesar, Harvey						

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Post council expenses online?</b>	<b>Limit property tax increases to inflation (CPI)?</b>	<b>Limit city employee raises to inflation (CPI)?</b>	<b>Oppose additional public funds for NHL arena?</b>	<b>Accepted Katz donations?</b>	<b>Disclose donations from unions doing business with the city?</b>
	Schaffrick, Brent						
<b>Ward 12</b>	Okelu, Chinwe						
	Sohi, Amarjeet						