

**Copper's
guide to the
Ward 14
Councillor
Election**



Question	Lanrick Bennett	Chris Budo	Dixon Chan	Marisol D'Andrea	Paula Fletcher	Mary Fragedakis	Ryan Lindsay	Lawrence Lychwyd	Chris Marinakis	Alexander Pena
<p>With now more than 100,000 residents per councillor, how will you ensure that community voices are heard, and individual and local needs addressed at City Hall?</p>	<p>With Doug Ford expanding the size of our ward, we need a representative who will ensure our community is heard at City Hall. That's why I will be accountable and transparent to our community by hosting regular meetings to hear your concerns. In fact, my first action as City Councillor will be to open up the first municipal constituency office in our community since 2002. This is important because residents need a space to be heard on a regular basis, not just when it's convenient. City Councillors should work together once elected to find budget for additional resources to be responsive to constituents. There may be other mechanisms that can be employed like ward councils or community councils to provide greater access by constituents. Climate change is real. It is one of the big issues on the minds of Toronto-Danforth residents that isn't being talked about this election. We need to do more now to slow down, if not reverse its effects</p>	<p>We need to bring local governance into the 21st century utilizing social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to spread monthly updates and notifications of any important updates. My office and I will be posting monthly voting records publicly in easily understandable layman's terms and reasoning personally provided as to why I voted a certain way. I plan to hold rotating meetings every month from community to community and invite the public out to ask any questions and get more involved with their local representative.</p>	<p>The number one thing a councillor and their office should do is to reply and follow up to constituents' calls/messages. Total budget is approximately \$383,000 currently (Office budget, staffing and Councillor salary). I would from there maximize the staff that could be hired with that amount. Similar to how I budget at my work for the last 26 years, it's about analyzing the amount of people needed to be responsive to the servicing of the community. My salary will be reduced to accommodate more help. It's a team effort. Any new raises or increases in office budgets the new council will vote for themselves will be used to hire even more help. Given that there will be more staff, we shall utilize the office space provided at East York Civic Centre so there will be a team at City Hall and in the Ward. I would also take advantage of our community centres and library meeting rooms to schedule meetings in all areas of the ward and not just at East York Civic Centre and City Hall. I've proven throughout my campaign to truly engage online and with digital tools (not just advertise). There are many constituents who are comfortable using these tools to connect and engage. I will be responsive using these newer tools also.</p>	<p>There are several ways I will address this: Set up online chat-rooms to answer questions and concerns that may come up in the ward. They will be held frequently - every two or four weeks. Organize town hall meetings to update the community about what is happening at City Hall. I will locate my office in the ward and hold regular office days where I will deal with local concerns. My staff will also be working full time to address any issues that arise and how we continually make improvements to the ward.</p>	<p>Access to your City Councillor is so important - from local traffic safety solutions to community planning consultations, municipal issues reach everyone very directly.</p> <p>I am well-known for ensuring broad public consultation and for being accessible to residents. I am very committed to ensuring this access is maintained in the new, larger-ward model. I want a robust, formal consultation process that looks at a range of options we've been hearing about (neighbourhood councils, etc.) and also looks at what works for larger engagement. Toronto-Danforth is lucky to be home to a number of very active stakeholder and neighbourhood groups, so we already have a strong network to build on to ensure local voices are heard. I am also committed to look at voting reform that includes robust consultation and looks at what other cities are doing. We need to make sure civic elections are more democratic and that every person across the city is represented.</p>	<p>Public consultation is an integral part of democracy and greatly improves public policy. To help strengthen that, I am proposing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating ward/neighbourhood councils like the TDSB and other cities have to amplify local voices Collaborating with community-based organizations to engage residents, especially those in marginalized & racialized communities, on key issues Enhancing our use of secure, online consultation Strengthening the role of residents associations <p>These steps will help counter the terrible decision made by the Doug Ford government.</p>	<p>I will raise expectations for communication, hiring an energetic, tech-savvy team that is more responsive, using 21st century communications. I would also turn Ford's disaster into an opportunity -> having 2 trustees, elected, at the community council level, being more accountable at the local level, with a budget downloaded from council.</p>	<p>I believe that it is important to have an easily accessible, well staffed constituency office as a start. Councillor staff would be able to handle certain matters and make sure that those issues that need the attention of the Councillor would be brought to my attention. In addition to that, I would hold meetings in all parts of the ward on a rotating schedule. I would come to you in community centres, or other locations that would make sense as far as accessibility and location. I am primarily elected to represent you while participating as a team player in the overall council. When there was a conflict between the two, I would always side with the best interests of my ward.</p>	<p>In order to ensure that the 107,000 people in our Ward 14 are heard I would open a constituency office where my constituents will be able to meet with me to discuss their concerns. I will also be setting up "Neighbourhood committees" where I would meet with the "Neighbourhood committees" on a regularly scheduled basis to discuss their specific issues and how we will resolve these issues. We will also set up a proper online communication platform where people would be able to communicate with us over the web if they are not able to personally meet at our Ward 14 office. I will be available for the people of our Ward 14 (Toronto-Danforth) and I will be their voice at City Hall.</p>	<p>Work with the people To design the community with want</p>
<p>A United Nations report gives the world barely a decade to make radical changes to avoid irrevocable climate change. What concrete steps would you support the City in taking to address climate change?</p>	<p>Climate change is real. It is one of the big issues on the minds of Toronto-Danforth residents that isn't being talked about this election. We need to do more now to slow down, if not reverse its effects.</p> <p>I fully support the TransformTO Plan but I know implementing it over the next 4 years will be a challenge. The cancellation of the Green Ontario Fund by the current Ontario government disrupts our ability to effectively fund TransformTO. The federal government has publicly suggested an interest in working around the province to support local initiatives. I will collaborate with our local MPs and the federal government to continue to make TransformTO happen.</p>	<p>We should all be concerned about the climate change that will lead to irrevocable damage of our earth that the future generations will inherit. As a world class city we should be leading the world by example and showing how we can reduce our carbon footprint. We need to speed up adoption of greener technologies such as electric vehicles, solar panels, environmentally friendly building materials and much more. We must incentivize people to start adopting newer technologies through greater subsidies and better public service announcements about their benefits.</p>	<p>The City can lead and contribute meaningfully. Things that I would like to progress are increasing green spaces, adding more permeable surface areas to mitigate run off, supporting electrical vehicle charging for street parking, decreasing recycling contamination and limiting single use plastics. More ambitious goals would be to convert to Bullfrog Power (renewable energy) to power more of our facilities and buildings.</p> <p>We need a complete plan to reduce car ownership: solving and returning free float car sharing (Car2Go), even higher street permits costs for 2nd vehicles, transit and cycling infrastructure before you allow more density in single family neighborhoods (multiplexing, basement and laneway housing).</p>	<p>Promote and work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Implement education and training programs for the use of alternative building materials, cleaner fuels, better batteries, and efficient energy usage in general. Increase incentives for living green and home energy retrofits. Vehicles generate about one-third of the greenhouse gas emissions in Toronto today. Therefore, we need to build more bike lanes to encourage more cyclists on the road, and make public transit more accessible (better service and lower fares). Address waste management (making recycling easier and support the use of products that can be recycled, this includes encouraging manufacturers and retailers to seek ecologically friendly alternatives. E.g., replacing black-coffee lids). Encourage more green space and enforce the by-laws to protect it. As an incumbent, I will recommend that Ontario always takes firm action on fighting climate change.</p>	<p>Climate Change is one of the most important issues we're facing. I chaired the City's first climate change initiative under Mayor David Miller. I also championed Toronto's climate action strategy, TransformTO, which will reduce emissions by 80% below 1990 levels over the next 32 years. The most important step we can take is to fully fund this plan - not to pick and choose initiatives from it like a buffet.</p> <p>I have also assisted in the development of local community-led initiatives TransformCarlaw and Pocket Change. I will continue to support local groups working to reduce emissions and reimagine our neighbourhoods for a carbon-neutral future.</p> <p>We need to increase funding for these initiatives and be bolder in what we're doing to address climate change.</p>	<p>We have to foster the Green Energy Economy to address climate change, make our city more affordable and create good jobs. This is what the City's TransformTO climate change action plan is all about, but we need to make sure we fund that program fully and monitor it carefully so we can improve it as we go. Investing in retrofitting and weatherizing buildings will pay dividends in lower greenhouse gas emissions, lower energy costs for people, making homes healthier. It will create jobs that will give people important skills. In the case of apartment buildings, installing smart cooling systems will allow tenants to keep cool for less money and use less energy. We need to extend all of these programs to houses and design them to include low-income households. In Toronto, buildings and transportation account for almost 90 percent of our emissions. So, the other half of this is investing in public transit and making active transportation - walking & cycling - safer & more convenient.</p>	<p>First, we need to simply fund the city's climate change plan. \$60 million, until recently NO money was added to it. Let's add that many - we have it. I am for polluter pays - coffee cups, gas - whatever it is. Retrofit old buildings, with local workers, creating jobs, lowering energy bills, lowering GHGs.</p>	<p>Where to start? New housing must be required to include green technology to save on energy consumption and all new development must include green spaces. The TTC is underused because it underperforms. We MUST support the TTC to elevate it to the point where people will actually want to use it. Accelerate the upgrades to make the TTC work NOW. Until then we will be faced with the gridlock on our streets that only contributes to greenhouse gasses. Better protected bike lanes will encourage people to give up their cars and hop on a bike. I feel much more confident driving alongside a cyclist when there is a physical barrier between us so I would promote more routes similar to the one created on Sherbourne.</p>	<p>Canada has shown to be a country that is arguably Carbon neutral. However, more is needed, and it will start at the City (municipal) level. In terms of what can be done to address climate change here are a few that I would support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building more efficient buildings (city to mandate that more "efficient buildings" are being built) i.e. smart heating and cooling, solar panels, LED lighting, new insulation, technology is always expanding. We need to be innovative. Creating viable "green" paths for alternative energy modes of transportation i.e. bike, skateboard, roller blades, ebikes, etc Improve our transit system that will result in less idling traffic and thereby reduce pollution Preserve our Parks and ensure that Permits for new developments include green space Provide incentives and education on "Green Roofs". Non asphalt roofs absorb heat from the sun rather than radiating heat back into the atmosphere Work to limit plastic usage by requiring a minimum amount of recycled material to be used in production of products. Educate towards the elimination of plastic where possible. 	<p>Work with clean energy and sustainable development.</p>
<p>Would you support a ban on non-recyclable coffee cups or on plastic bags?</p>	<p>Initiatives like the Long Term Waste Management Strategy need to be implemented. Some of the changes we are facing as residents and small businesses like reducing our reliance on single-use plastics is going to require us to think differently about our day-to-day living and working in Toronto-Danforth. As your City Councillor, I will support you through the transition.</p>	<p>Yes as councillor I will support a ban on non-recyclable coffee cups and on plastic bags. There is no reason that we should have these materials in our landfills. I will even go a step further and put a ban on single use items such as plastic straws or bags like many other world class cities and countries have already done. I was very glad earlier in the year the ban on micro-bead products went into effect, we really need more of that action.</p>	<p>Yes!</p>	<p>Yes, I would support it. Single-use coffee cups and plastic bags generate a huge amount of environmental waste globally.</p>	<p>Yes I would. I voted for Toronto's short-lived ban on plastic bags, and am inspired by the activism in our community and around the world to reduce and, ultimately, eliminate single-use plastics from our lives. We can take steps to recycle more items and switch over to recyclable versions of products we frequently use like to-go cups (though ultimately a travel mug is the best solution!).</p>	<p>Yes, I would. I voted at City Council for the plastic bag ban. We cannot leave future generations with an insurmountable environmental debt.</p>	<p>Yes. We need to work with, but also pressure industry, providing incentive, and a 2-year timeline to pay better materials or pay higher fees.</p>	<p>Absolutely. Consumers must, however, be realistic in realizing that this will result in an increase in the price of their coffee etc.</p>	<p>I would support an initiative to work towards ensuring that the amount of non-recyclable coffee cups is substantially reduced and trend towards elimination, and that plastic bags are swapped out for alternate bags i.e. reusable bags where possible. In terms of coffee cups part of the problem is that the plastic lid is thrown out with the cup itself which reduces the quality of the recycled material. Education is key, as well as recycling programs by the companies that sell coffees. Municipal government will need to work with these companies and focus on "producer responsibility" whereby these companies that profit from the sale of their coffee will need to take on responsibility of recycling them as well.</p>	<p>Yes. Totally.</p>
<p>What can be done in our riding to preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing? What would you do?</p>	<p>I have a simple strategy to help create affordable housing in our community. First I will advocate for incentives for private sector investment in a variety of housing stock, including the use of city-owned land such as parking-lots, subway stations and libraries. Second, I will work with communities to ensure smart development near new and existing transit that will accommodate our new neighbours, with limited-impact on the unique neighbourhoods of Toronto-Danforth. Third, I will work to find innovative ways to meet the housing shortage such as laneway housing, coach-houses, zoning for more side-street units and renting unused bedrooms in private homes</p>	<p>To preserve and increase the stock of our affordable housing in our riding we have to be constantly investing and always saving to repair expected future depreciation on our housing assets. A lot of our affordable homes have fallen well below living standards and are in a state of disrepair. I will as councillor personally push for the expediting of the development of affordable homes especially when it comes to the Portland's development. We as a city also need to be looking at the lack of affordable housing from the supply and demand side of things. Rents are very high on many individuals because we have an extreme lack of supply to meet demand, we need to be encouraging the creation of more rental units from private entrepreneur and corporations. We can't focus on short term cash grabs through fees to give up long term gain with more rental units created.</p>	<p>Expand market housing with mid-level development and gentle density on or near transit lines</p> <p>Expand Open Door program. Aim bigger than Tory's 40k affordable housing units and strive for the 100k proposed by his opponents in the next ten years.</p> <p>Inclusionary Zoning: Use the city's leverage of zoning, available land and development costs to get more affordable rental units mixed into new developments.</p>	<p>Preservation is extending the affordability of rental homes that are at risk of no longer being affordable for low-income households. Ensure that the existing social housing stock and maintains a state of good repair. We need to increase grants and loans to support the repair, renovation and retrofit of affordable housing units. We need to create housing catalogues to identify which units to preserve, along with information about the types of subsidies and rent restrictions that apply to each development and when those subsidies are going to expire. Integrate affordable housing into the community (e.g., licensed rooming houses also provide an effective way to integrate affordability). Build partnerships with owners and developers by making it a condition that the owner lease a portion of a building's units to low-income persons at rents that are affordable to them. The housing subsidy and the affordability period both typically have a set term, at which point owners could recapitalize the development and convert it. Collaborate: Work with social housing sector organizations to develop training that strengthens the capacity of housing provider boards and staff. To increase the stock of affordable housing the City needs to secure suitable and affordable land and buildings with a focus on sites near or at public transit stations. In summary, Assist families and individuals to afford rent.</p>	<p>Building more affordable housing is a key priority for me. City Council passed my motion that will ensure at least 30% of new housing built in the Port Lands is affordable. I have also secured \$6 million in Section 37 funding for a new co-op at Riverside Square and I am looking at many other opportunities to increase affordable housing in Toronto-Danforth. We also need to fund the state-of-good-repair backlog so that those living in TCHC feel respected and valued. Earlier this year I hosted a Town Hall on affordable housing and heard from so many in our community about their struggles and ideas. There are many creative proposals to create more affordable housing - using City-owned land and inclusionary zoning for example. We need to use these and many other tools to make sure everyone can afford a home to be proud of.</p>	<p>I support the call for building 100,000 new affordable housing units in Toronto over the next ten years and unlocking the value in City-owned land to make that happen. We also need inclusionary zoning policies so every new development has affordable housing units. Though cranes have filled the Toronto skyline over the last many years, we still have a housing affordability crisis - that is hurting both low and middle-income families. So, though I am committed to investing more in affordable housing and strict inclusionary zoning policies, we need to do more. The current tools we have at our disposal are not good enough, we need to develop new tools. If re-elected, I am committed to calling for the City's new Housing Committee to make affordability its number one goal and to develop the necessary new planning tools to do so. For example, co-op housing has proven to be very successful and provides homes for people with both middle and modest incomes. We also need to better preserve the affordable homes we have. That's why as a member of the Tenant Issues Committee I pushed for RentSafeTO I personally go on apartment inspections in my ward and know firsthand how important it is we pressure landlords to keep their buildings well-maintained. As well, I support the Tenants Defence Fund and led the campaign to have City Council add its voice to the call to strengthen rent control.</p>	<p>Modest development on the TTC stations - valuable land not being used. More housing = cheaper housing. Luxury tax on homes over \$3 million - proceeds to build subsidized housing. -Pressure developers - we have the land and the laws, they need us. More rental in each development, more subsidized, family-sized units, more daycares in all new developments.</p>	<p>I would push to reduce the onerous costs associated with converting a basement space into an apartment. I am absolutely in favour of all basement apartments being to code so as to make sure that lives are not lost due to cutting corners but there should not be such high fees attached to creating new living spaces. I would support a review of the possibility of laneway housing. Other jurisdictions have placed a vacancy tax on owners who have empty residential units. If it is realistic to do so here, I would support such a program with the money collected going towards affordable housing projects. Any new development must also include an affordable housing element or a cash payment to the City in lieu of it.</p>	<p>More affordable housing and the creation of policies to control population needs.</p>	
<p>Do you support the existing safe injection site in South Riverdale? What strategies would you promote to address the opioid crisis in Toronto?</p>	<p>The opioid crisis has had a devastating impact on countries around the world, and our community is no different. We need more evidence backed safe injection sites like that at the South Riverdale Community Health Centre to mitigate the damage that opioids have done and will continue to do in our community.</p>	<p>Yes. The city of Toronto needs to push for better education of the public when it comes to opioid use and relaying the addictive nature of them. We also need to work in coordination with the federal and provincial government for better education of the doctors prescribing the opioids that so many of our citizens get addicted too. We need to prevent this from ever happening again through better education and control for opioids.</p>	<p>It is an essential health service to minimize the death of over 4000 Canadians now. Increase more sites around the city, to minimize concentration in certain areas. Encourage more on site use. The whole point is to mitigate the dangers of a fentanyl overdose and being able to apply naloxone quickly. Encouraging a needle exchange instead of sending unknown quantities of "kits" out. It does need a coordinated plan to mitigate the issues in the neighbourhood though. More regular clean up of high traffic parks and alleyways. Coordinate with 311 and identify areas. Continual vigilance to maintain this standard. Education programs on what to do if you discover sharps.</p>	<p>Yes, these sites save lives. The sites allow people to use illicit drugs under the supervision of a medical professional in case they overdose. The sites provide sterile equipment, information about drugs, basic health care, and addiction treatment referrals. It is only one part of a solution. Canada is facing a national opioid crisis. The growing number of overdoses and deaths caused by opioids, including fentanyl, is an urgent matter. In terms of strategy, I will work collaboratively with the Canadian Medical Association and Canadian Pharmacies Association to try to limit the sales of opioids, and encourage them to find alternative pain killers for those in need. There is always more than one solution for any problem.</p>	<p>Absolutely. Harm reduction services like the safe injection services at South Riverdale Community Health Centre save lives. I assisted in all of the consultation that brought this site to be and I was on the Board of Health that approved the first three sites.</p> <p>I will continue to work with the community to ensure these services are delivered at the highest standard for clients and for neighbours.</p>	<p>Yes, in fact I have voted in support of that safe injection site. The number of opioid poisoning deaths in Toronto is at a crisis point. Though the City's 2017 Toronto Overdose Action Plan is a good first step there is more work to do. For example, though access to naloxone has dramatically increased over the past year, there have been gaps in funding for naloxone kits for community service providers to use should one of their clients overdose. The key to any successful long term strategy in this area is to address the root causes of the issue like poverty, drug & health policies and barriers to access to drug treatment.</p>	<p>Yes. We know this works. We can beat Ford by setting the science & the results into the media. We are saving lives, how could he stop that? In the battle of ideas, we need to set politically smart, media-savvy and be proactive with the fight BEFORE Doug brings his bad ideas.</p>	<p>I do. If this project can save lives as well as prevent even greater drains on our already taxed health services then I am all for it. We must rely on the experts in the field to guide us to best practices in this regard and then evaluate them to see what makes the most sense for our City.</p>	<p>I have an issue whereby the City allows people to inject themselves with drugs that they bring to injection centres. We need to stop the opioid crisis not enable it. To do this we need to provide help and resources for addiction at the root cause. I want to see a mandate of assisting people that are addicted to drugs into rehabilitation, education programs and support groups.</p>	<p>Wherever there's a problem. To address this matter and take policies to control it.</p>

Note: Responses were those provided at the October 17 Ralph Thornton Community Centre All Candidates Meeting.