

# Rage Against the Municipal Election 2021 Candidate Survey

Email address \* [keren@kerentang.ca](mailto:keren@kerentang.ca)

What is your name? \* Keren Tang

What municipal jurisdiction are you running in? \* Edmonton

In what ward/electoral boundary are you running? If running as Mayor, please respond with "Mayor" \* Karhiio

Will you be transparent about donations to your campaign BEFORE the required disclosure dates, which are after the municipal election? \* Yes

Where will you disclose this information? \* Website [www.kerentang.ca/donate/](http://www.kerentang.ca/donate/)

Is there administrative waste in your municipality's budget? \* Yes

Other:

**In your opinion, what's the state of the relationship between your municipality and the provincial government? Is there anything you would do to improve the relationship? \***

I believe the relationship is at a low point and that the next city council and mayor will need to work hard to navigate this reality. I would work closely with AUMA and city councils from across the province, including rural municipalities, to bring a united front to the provincial government on common issues that would benefit all of us. In addition, I would focus on finding common ground and building relationships with individual elected officials and forging trust with provincial agencies.

I am continuously flabbergasted that our Provincial government, while constantly fighting the Federal government for the right to make independent decisions for the province, runs municipalities with a heavy hand.

Our municipalities deserve the same level of autonomy and independence that the province demands. For example, we should be able to decide how our own municipal elections are run, explore alternative and innovative ways of generating revenue without being limited by the Municipal Government Act, and decide on our own municipal police budgets without threat from our Minister to cut our funding.

**What are your thoughts on policing and police budgets? \***

For two years I worked at the City of Edmonton, managing a major initiative on urban wellness in the downtown core that's mired by issues of poverty and homelessness. I worked closely with many players including residents, social service agencies, businesses, and the police service. Since this experience, I have witnessed broken relationships and trust at all levels. This breakdown undermines community safety.

I think the narrative of "defunding the police" is often misused to put a wedge in our communities – it's not about whether we are pro-police or against. It's about pro-community and spending our limited resources in a way that delivers the best outcomes for Edmontonians. Currently, policing is the biggest line item in the City's operating budget. Like all other budget items, I think it deserves a level of scrutiny on how it's contributing to positive outcomes in safety and wellbeing. According to research, some of the highest 911 calls are in crisis diversion, mental health, and domestic violence. Police are not the most equipped to handle all of these complex challenges, but they are always the first to be called. Currently our systems are not synchronized enough to deliver the best outcomes. We still have a long ways to go.

If elected, I want to facilitate a rebuilding of trust between the City, the police service, the social service sector as a whole, and with communities. This requires a different kind of conversation about relationships that I'm not hearing right now. I certainly don't imagine it being easy but it's a necessary first step towards building a stronger, more coordinated response among different sectors to better meet the needs of communities.

**What role does a municipality have tackling climate change? \***

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our generation, and with 80 per cent of Canadians living in municipalities, I firmly believe that cities have an important role to play in tackling this challenge. While we still need provincial and federal leadership on this front, cities remain the level of government best

positioned to tackle the climate crisis. Cities are able to implement practical local solutions such as making city-owned facilities more energy efficient, making waste management more sustainable, and improving active and public transportation.

Changes to zoning and bylaws can reduce sprawl, encourage density, and activate green infrastructure as well as enable businesses and individuals to develop solutions to climate change which meet their needs and benefit the city as a whole.

**Are you currently affiliated with a political party at the provincial or federal level, or have you been in the past? \* Nope**

**How do you plan to collaborate with councillors who don't agree with your vision? \***

Effective city councillors need to respect each other, trust each other, and collaborate to accomplish any meaningful policy and achievements. Above all, they must build shared values and find common ground even with perspectives they don't agree with. There is no shortcut to building trust. There is no shortcut to developing an understanding. It takes time, dedication, and an open-mind.

I have served on many boards and worked within many teams, and through these experiences I have built relationships with people from all walks of life. Even when we disagreed and even when tensions were high, we managed to take the time for honest conversations that moved us ahead. If elected, I look forward to building effective relationships with my fellow city councillors and mayor.