



## Sangat Youth YEG CC Survey

### How do you plan on tackling rising rates of youth substance abuse and youth crime?

At the heart of every strong, vibrant neighbourhood are hubs where people can gather, share stories, and build community. These hubs support community wellbeing and fight social isolation. They stimulate social connections and economic development, acting as places to grow and support local businesses, create flexible community spaces, and provide support for creative community-building ideas. Additionally these community hubs provide preventative and health promotion opportunities to create meaning and connections for youth to stay away from substance abuse and crime.

As someone who has long worked with youth, including those struggling with complex histories of mental health, addiction, unemployment, and homelessness (in my previous capacity as a youth coordinator for a Native Friendship Centre and a South Asian Women's Community Centre), I know all too well the importance and impact of welcoming spaces for young people to feel like they belong. Currently, we have limited space and opportunities in Ward Karhiio dedicated to youth to create this kind of connection. For many years I have had a vision of adapting existing infrastructure (e.g., the public library, transit centres, recreation centres, expanded Corner Store Program to reinvigorate strip malls and underutilized neighbourhood retail spaces) to become community hubs that are welcoming and open to young people. To realize this vision, it will be important to work with local communities and groups like the ones mentioned [in this CBC article about the demand for youth hubs in Mill Woods.](#)

If elected, I also want to continue the work I started several years ago with the Southeast Youth Action Committee, a proactive and strength-based initiative. This committee is a partnership with REACH Edmonton for Safer Communities, MAPS Alberta, the library, recreation centre, several youth initiatives in Mill Woods, the Edmonton Police Service, and various constituency offices. When I was last

involved there was no representation from City Council/Councillors offices - I would like to see this change. I would also like to see more youth leaders involved in this Committee like those who are part of Sangat Youth.

**How do you plan on working with our community leagues to ensure that youths have access to recreational activities and resources?**

As a councillor, I would be a major point of outreach to inform people including youth about opportunities to access recreational activities and resources through the City. By working with City programs and staff, but also with local groups like yours and community media like many of the ethnocultural newspapers and the Mill Woods Mosaic, I will aim to reach a broader spectrum of young people. In turn, these connections will also provide opportunities for community leagues and the wider network of resources to learn about and promote youth programs across the community.

**How do you plan on making high schools and post-secondary institutions accessible to youth? This can be in the form of transportation, new high schools etc.**

As a long-time transit user, I am extremely disappointed in the bus network redesign work that took effect in April this year. As much as we need to revamp a 20-year old transit system, the redesign has left many people out, especially those who count on public transit as their main means of transportation. In conversations with communities and at the doors, I am hearing countless stories about how many – particularly seniors, students, newcomers, and low-income families – have been negatively impacted. Transit is a public service, and I want to see it accessible for everyone.

Transit and mobility are priorities for me. When elected, I would want to revisit the bus network redesign in our ward, which has seen the most removed and the least on-demand bus stops added. As part of this update to the redesign, I would like to see a focus on user experience and improving ridership, ensuring that the bus routes work for people and easily provide access to schools and post-secondary institutions.

Another key issue arising in the ward, especially in the South, is the lack of access to high schools for the growing number of young people in the neighbourhood to attend. While parents are already working with their school board trustee and local MLA in organizing and advocacy, I will continue the conversation like the one I had

recently with the Public School Board Chair about this particular issue, and look to model case studies like the new Anne Anderson High School to support partnership between the City Council and the School Board and other innovative models for school development.

**You are running in a ward that has a diverse youth population. If elected, how will you work with other councillors and school trustees to ensure that the diversity of the youths is encouraged and supported?**

My demonstrated strengths include bridge-building and working interculturally and intergenerationally across communities. I will continue to play the role of a connector, which will be amplified in an elected position. I already have strong relationships with some Edmonton school board trustees, and will continue to build new ones with the trustees I don't know, as well as neighbouring city councillors in wards Sspomitapi and Ipiihkoohkanipiahtsi. Above all, it will be important for me to keep my ears to the ground, listen to diverse youth, and stay connected with communities and youth groups like yours to understand how I can best support young people in the ward and in Edmonton. These conversations can provide the foundation for an informal ward-specific youth advisory group to help inform decision-making, and complement the existing Youth Advisory Council at the City.

**How can youth get involved in your campaign?**

We are looking for help on all fronts and have been proud that many young people, some as young as 10-years-old, have been pitching in during this campaign. Some will even vote for the first time in this municipal election! As we near election day, we encourage folks to help us door knock, distribute literature, and make phone calls. We will provide training and food, all with COVID-safe protocols. No prior experience is needed, and interested youth can sign up to volunteer here: <https://www.kerentang.ca/volunteer>

**Describe your campaign in 100-150 words or less.**

I am a public health advocate, community organizer, city builder, and your neighbour. I began my career as a teacher in a rural, Indigenous community. I have experience in public, private, and non-profit sectors and have worked with diverse communities and families.

I am ready to be the City Councillor for Ward Karhiio. I want to walk alongside you, to learn from you, and to build an inclusive and strong City, together.

My campaign focuses on:

- Community. I will make decisions that build community and are based on local expertise, so we can all live in vibrant and inclusive neighbourhoods.
- Economy. I will take action to enable a strong and diverse local economy so you can easily start and grow your business in Edmonton.
- Climate. I will bring forward local solutions to climate change so we can all benefit from a healthy and resilient environment for generations to come.