

GLEN MURRAY

FOR WINNIPEG

Dear Mr. Hambley,

President
Winnipeg Construction Association
rhambley@winnipegconstruction.ca

The construction industry plays a critical role in the development of 21st Century Winnipeg, and you can count on an open door and a spirit of partnership as we build a more prosperous, resilient, and sustainable Winnipeg – together.

Here's what I've said so far about development in Winnipeg:

From my “5 Campaign Priorities”:

<https://www.glen4wpg.ca/mediareleases/topfivepriorities>

By 2040, Winnipeg Is a Global Model for a Prosperous and Resilient, 21st Century City

1. A beautiful city in a state of good repair.

By 2040, Winnipeg is a city renowned for its stunning architecture. A beautiful city known for its urban forest, its state of good repair, and for advancing new green hard construction materials. There are fewer potholes, and each neighbourhood has infrastructure performance standards and reporting. To get there, we must model all infrastructure projects and future developments to ensure they build the net tax base.

2. Canada's leading green, innovation economy.

Winnipeg is a prosperous, inclusive city with Canada's leading innovation economy. We lead the country in the bio economy, and the convergence of online and on-ground technologies. By 2040, we've developed urban procurement and innovation platforms that have made Winnipeg the leading North American city in green buildings, zero-carbon technology, distributed energy and heating technology, and electrified transportation.

By 2040, the world-leading technologies of Red River College Polytech and Innovation Centre, Hydro Place, and the Mountain Equipment Company's circular economy building have been translated into the mainstream across the city, forming Canada's largest green building cluster. Winnipeg is net-zero waste and net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Restoration of comprehensive, funded neighbourhood housing plans and community development partnerships.

The city cannot tackle every problem, but it has set priorities and a vision, leading the way on issues like poverty, mental health and addictions. By 2040, Winnipeg is a city where everyone has a key to a safe place to call home, a commitment pursued until we have succeeded in making it real. Rebuilding and restoring the broad housing partnerships, community development corporations and Council-approved plans have been the foundation for a successful housing strategy to rebuild mature neighbourhoods.

From my commitment to conduct a sweeping review of City governance:

<https://www.glen4wpg.ca/mediareleases/blog-post-title-four-779ld>

The City's official plan OurWinnipeg has been slow to implement, and the underpinning Complete Communities direction strategy seems detached from a significant number of policy directions and government decisions. Secondary plans and downtown plans are reviewed or updated as mandated.

There are conflicting plans and zoning in many areas of the city which require otherwise unnecessary zoning variances and appeals, and there is an urgent need to modernize and update our planning, zoning, permitting and land use decision-making processes to create a user-friendly, evidence and policy-based approach to city planning and development.

We do not have a process for evaluating, modelling or planning for the costs and revenues of major developments and infrastructure projects. This leaves us with increasing long-term budget pressures as the capital that drove up costs created structural deficits or flattened revenues impacting operating budgets. James Mahron of [Strong Towns](#) noted this challenge during a recent visit to Winnipeg.

Undertake a review of CentreVenture with a focus on restoring its past authority, budgets and capacity to deliver redevelopment and residential infill projects in the city centre using the successful precinct approach to downtown renewal, as laid out by Ken Greenberg in the Original Centre Plan Strategy. Also, recommend a renewed mandate for the development agency consistent with the Complete Communities direction strategy in OurWinnipeg. Retool and enhance CentreVenture's ability relative to best and leading practices in other jurisdictions

Some have suggested that such a review would duplicate the City's existing look at opportunities to improve governance.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The City's current efforts are inward focussed, looking at minor improvements to existing processes, and they explicitly exclude boards and commissions, and the broader opportunities between and among City departments, agencies, and external organizations. It would fail to address the root causes of projects that are ensnared in process, and years delayed. And it would fail to create new opportunities through open dialogue and partnership – new opportunities to transform our City, make it more beautiful and vibrant, and create the cutting-edge jobs of the future that will keep our kids here in Winnipeg. And I will, of course, also incorporate any good ideas that emerge from the City's exercise.

In response to your specific questions you ask about Planning, Property and Development Department permits and inspections:

1. What would you do to ensure the permit department is adequately resourced in the future?

Simply put, I would ensure the permit department is adequately resourced. I will ensure my governance review addresses the following questions:

What exactly is the adequate level of resources required to ensure we have a thriving construction industry in Winnipeg?

What is the best approach to cost recovery that allows the City to be agile and deal with fluctuations in applications due to seasonal and normal economic fluctuations?

I will then proceed to implement all reasonable recommendations from the review and include good ideas from the City's current review as well.

2. Would you support changes to the Permit Reserve Fund to increase the total fund and ensure it is replenished prior to any funds leaving the permit department for consolidated revenue?

Yes. But I will go further and also ensure that all resources collected from your industry are used for their intended purposes, and do not end up becoming a tax that ends up in the City's consolidated revenue.

3. **Would you support the use of the widely-accepted standardized documents (CCDC) for City of Winnipeg construction tendering?**

Yes. As much standardization of documentation as possible will make for a more predictable and fast application process.

4. **How do you plan to balance the responsible use of taxpayer dollars and funding important infrastructure projects?**

Like business, the City should view infrastructure spending through the lens of return on investment. Return on investment in the public sector, however, means a broader return. Any investment should be justified based on whether it anchors and furthers our long-term success and prosperity, and helps build a robust city that can thrive in the 21st Century.

5. **What will you do to improve collaboration in the Winnipeg Metro Region to attract outside investment?**

Collaboration and partnership are at the core of how I approach government. When I was the mayor previously, I brought together all stakeholders to deliver many signature projects in Winnipeg. We accomplished them by working together. So much more is possible when we all get in a room together and build the city we want. This is why the governance review I committed to would include boards and commissions, and external agencies and partners – because they are critical to our city's success, and I have a track record of delivering through this approach.

I see the Winnipeg Metro Region in the same way. Getting mayors and reeves together in a room to work together on common goals will help us advance more collaborative and efficient approaches to planning, delivery of water and sewer services, and building of roads.

6. **As the City embarks on more significant infrastructure projects, what will you do to ensure Winnipeg construction projects can be executed more smoothly and efficiently?**

Vision is required, but without execution you fail. I am committed to a bold vision for Winnipeg, together with a more serious look at how we can improve existing processes, all while working together to achieve success in executing projects of any scale.

In closing, I will introduce a quick-start program for our first 100 days in office, and lay out the first of four, five-year planning targets.

I look forward to working with you all to turn our vision into reality, and make Winnipeg a leading city in Canada again. Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

Glen Murray