

Michael Janz

- 1. As a member of City Council, what would be your vision of the City of Edmonton's role to advance the goals of the [Live Active Strategy](#) to achieve "A healthy, vibrant Edmonton in which people embrace active lifestyles that improve their individual well-being as well as that of their families, neighbourhoods and communities"?**

The core principles of the Live Active Strategy (inclusion, accessibility, collaboration and innovation, etc.) very much align with my approach and the priorities that I will seek if elected as a councillor and I believe we can meet the timelines that have been set out by this strategy to create strong physical literacy, to encourage being more active at any age and to have a high quality, inclusive, accessible and affordable recreation and sport system in our city. I have a track record as a School Board Trustee of 11 years working with schools and parent groups to advocate for better physical activity opportunities including expanded and new playgrounds, green spaces and parks, and ensuring that our joint use agreements with schools allow for extra curricular activities after hours. I will bring this experience to the Council table and extend my support for initiatives that foster a more physically active community.

- 2. What does an inclusive and accessible Edmonton look like to you? How will you make sure that inclusion and accessibility are part of all sport, physical activity, and active recreation opportunities (including events and programs) in Edmonton?**

Building a safe, equitable and inclusive city for everyone is one of the major priority areas of my campaign. I am a strong supporter of the City Plan and the creation of 15-minute communities and in order to achieve these outcomes we need to ensure that every resident has access to affordable, accessible and inclusive sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities. We are very lucky in Edmonton in that we have so many natural green spaces, including our River Valley, that gives access to almost every community to outdoor physical activity and recreation opportunities but I realize that we need to do a better job at creating spaces for indoor and facility based sport. A number of initiatives could include creating better and more flexible joint use agreements on municipally owned facilities and schools to ensure their availability after hours to the community for sport and physical activity. We can encourage more people to get involved by creating safe spaces by enacting anti-racist and anti-discrimination policies supporting all equity groups, allow people to feel welcome in any space.

- 3. Many Edmontonians qualify for the [City of Edmonton's Leisure Access Program](#), but many do not and can not afford the City of Edmonton's active recreation programs and services. What should the City of Edmonton do to ensure no one is left out of these opportunities?**

Affordability of public services is a very important issue to me and I think that Council and city administration need to do more to ensure that when we offer services they are as equitable as possible and where we can't decrease the cost of a service we step in to provide opportunities to support individuals so that they can participate. Often sport and recreation facilities are on the outskirts of communities and affordability extends not just to the cost of the program but to the need for transportation. The eco-system wherein sport and recreation programming exists needs to be looked at whenever we create a new program to ensure that it can benefit as many people as possible. This can extend to not just the cost but where it's located, the times of day the program is offered, etc. We have a lot of control over this..

4. As you think about the economic recovery of Edmonton and the health of Edmontonians, how do you see sport and active recreation contributing, and how do you believe the City of Edmonton should support this important work?

The Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation sector in Alberta is a major economic driver and I realize that due to public health restrictions the sector has been significantly impacted as a result of the pandemic. Live events and experiences are crucial to the cultural fabric of our city so we need to do everything that we can to ensure that the public feels safe to return to these events and facilities, that they spend money, attend programs and seek out opportunities as much as possible. This also extends to our sport, physical activity and recreation organizations who have seen a significant decrease in revenues as a result of not being able to hold classes, loss of their seasons and facility closures.

I also think that we have to advocate with other levels of government as much as possible. Provincial funding for the sport, physical activity and recreation sector has been stagnant for years, yet the sector contributes millions of dollars to our GDP every year and is a significant contributor to quality of life and mental health. As we recover we need to ensure that the province doesn't balance the budget on the backs of this sector and advocate for more supports.

5. If Edmonton is a [FIFA 2026](#) host city, what should the [social legacies](#) be from this event?

FIFA is a private corporation and I struggle with public money being given to private organizations for one off sporting events. If Edmonton is a FIFA 2026 host city I will be advocating as strongly as possible for investment in community sport, physical activity and recreation investment - we should be investing the money we would spend on this event in the upgrading and renewal of our existing playgrounds, building new playgrounds, basketball courts and soccer fields. Investing in our community swimming pools. A true social legacy isn't what's left after the FIFA games are over it's the investment in opportunities and experiences our children today will have by having access, within their own communities, to inclusive, accessible and affordable opportunities for sport, physical activity and recreation.

6. Please share with us anything else you would like us to know about your thoughts, experiences, or plans for sport, physical activity, and active recreation for the City of Edmonton.

As stated above I have 11 years of experience as a School Board Trustee (elected in 2010, re-elected in 2013 and 2017) and as the Marketing Director for the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues working with communities to build better opportunities for sport, physical activity and recreation. Edmonton is a sports and physical activity city - not only are we known for our successful (fingers crossed) NHL and CFL teams but our world renowned river valley and trail network ensure that Edmontonians have access to some of the best places to be outside, to be physically active and to engage in active living, active recreation and sport. I think we can do better, we can invest more and ensure that we have affordable options for everyone, regardless of income or location, to participate.