

Niagara Association of REALTORS® Election Survey Summary

For many Canadians, homeownership can seem like an impossible dream. As REALTORS®, the Members of the Niagara Association of REALTORS® witnesses first-hand the anxiety Canadians feel as they look to enter the housing market and the challenges they face when it comes to buying a home. The 2019 federal election is our moment to advocate for the policies and solutions we know will make a real difference for Niagara residents and REALTORS®.

Recognizing the importance of the October 21st, 2019 Federal Election, **the Niagara Association of REALTORS® conducted a survey of candidates running for office in the Niagara Region.** The following is a summary of the survey and responses from those who responded. **For the full report, [click here.](#)**

The questions that Niagara candidates were asked during this survey:

1. Would you support an increase in the HBTC and if so, by how much?
2. In your opinion, what impact would making the HBTC reflect regional differences have on home ownership in Niagara?
3. Would you support a review of the “stress test” and what changes would you endorse?
4. If elected, how would you propose working with all levels of government to ensure a more robust and comprehensive approach to the important issue of homeownership in Niagara?

Summary of Responses from Niagara candidates:

Candidates from Liberal Party of Canada

1. We support an increase in the HBTC
2. There would be a much bigger impact in Niagara if regional differences were not considered.
3. Recommendations would include a potential decrease of the current test threshold.
4. A re-elected Liberal government will fully implement First-Time Home Buyer Incentive, expand the incentive, and address the impact of foreign speculation. In addition to introducing First-Time Home Buyer Incentive, the Liberal government also launched Canada’s first-ever National Housing Strategy, created the Canada Housing Benefit, funded the construction of nearly 140,000 more housing units to be built, established more than 7,000 shelter spaces for survivors of family violence, and committed to ending Veteran homelessness by 2025.

Candidates from Conservative Party of Canada

No responses from any candidates.

Candidates from New Democratic Party

1. The NDP will double the HBTC
2. The NDP believes it's time to help people now. We have an ambitious plan that will make a difference in every community. It's time to relieve the stress and worry that people feel by choosing to make it easier to buy a home.
3. The NDP is open to reviewing the "stress test" to understand the full impact and consequences for first time homebuyers.
4. It's critical that we work in partnership with provinces and municipalities to ensure a more robust and comprehensive approach to the important issue of homeownership in Niagara.

Candidates from Green Party of Canada

1. Safe and affordable housing of different types should be available to all Canadians. Initiatives that support this objective should be encouraged.
2. The specific impact to Niagara would depend on the specific details and limitations of the program. A coordinated effort across all levels of government is needed but the final analysis and results must point to easing the financial burden of home ownership for many areas suffering from the same lack of supply and affordability as that in Niagara.
3. The mortgage stress test will require ongoing review as interest rates change, housing availability and therefore costs change and average income amounts increase.
4. Certainly Greens support a cooperative model of decision making at all levels of government. Evidence-based best practices combined with honest, informed dialogue among stakeholders has been a hallmark of Green policy. We believe that municipalities in particular are not afforded the support they need to institute policies in many areas, regulations for housing being one.

Candidates from People's Party

1. Home ownership for our children is a priority. We must do everything we can to ensure that our children are given every opportunity to purchase a home to cut down on poverty and homelessness.
2. Every area across the province has different housing needs. Giving the same tax credit to somebody purchasing a home in a lower cost area, compared to a rapidly growing area like Niagara, is not particularly effective.
3. We support a review of the stress test and ease restrictions on buying homes.
4. One of the main policies for the People's Party is lowering the levels of immigration to reduce the amount of foreign buyers in the market, reduce the effect foreign buyers have on driving up house prices, and reduce the overall cost of living.

Candidates from Christian Heritage Party

No responses from any candidates.

Candidates from Independent - Mike Strange

1. I would increase the HBTC to the \$2500.00 amount as it is so difficult for first time home buyers to afford a home.
2. The HBTC and the increase would help reflect regional differences and would support the now hardships of affordable housing in Niagara.
3. There definitely needs to be a review of the current “stress test “ and would love to see the down payments of first time buyers back down to 5%. I am a current REALTOR® and see the struggles for these young buyers who don’t have a chance with the new stress tests that the federal govt is asking for of our financial institutions.
4. I would making it my priority to work with all levels of government. I am a current city Councillor of Niagara Falls and we have just made a motion of council to work with our regional, provincial, and Federal governments to come up with a strategy to help our affordable housing in 12 municipalities of Niagara.