

Campaign Trail: From Municipal to Federal Elections

Moderator:

- **Paisley Sim, Director of Research and Operation at Réseau Canada Grid, worked at the office of Alberta Premier Rachel Notley, former Special Advisor to Alberta's Minister of Justice.**



Paisley Sim is the Director of Research and Operation at Réseau Canada Grid, an initiative of The Transition Accelerator focused on grid integration and Canada's path to net zero. Her previous experience includes working as a Research Associate at the Institute for Research on Public Policy, in the office of Alberta Premier Rachel Notley, and as Special Advisor to Alberta's Minister of Justice. She holds a Fine Arts Conservatory Diploma, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and completed a Master in Public Policy at McGill University's Max Bell School of Public Policy.

Panelists:

1) Courtney Walcott, Councillor, Ward 8, Calgary City Council



Before his election to City Council, Courtney was a teacher at Western Canada High School, a basketball coach, and an equity, diversity, and inclusion facilitator. He graduated from Mount Royal University with a degree in history and the University of British Columbia with a degree in education.

Courtney is a strong community advocate, builder, and organizer; his life has been dedicated to helping people realize their place in the world. In 2020, Courtney petitioned the Calgary Board of Education to form an anti-racism task force and helped to bring together 15 community organizations to successfully advocate for \$8 million in additional community funding from The City of Calgary. This was a good start, but there is always more work to do. By the end of 2020, Courtney decided to run for City Council and asked thousands of Calgarians, “what kind of city do you want to live in?” The community and momentum behind Courtney’s vision for building a more equitable, accessible, and anti-racist city showed up during the campaign and in the polls.

2) Janis Irwin, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, Alberta NDP Caucus



Janis Irwin was elected to represent Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood in 2019. Janis is currently the Official Opposition Deputy Whip and the Critic for Women and LGBTQ2S+ Issues.

Prior to serving as an MLA, Janis devoted over a decade to the field of education, where she worked for Alberta Education as the Senior Manager, Social Studies, and then as the Executive Director for High School Curriculum. She started her career working in rural Alberta as a high school teacher and as a vice principal.

Janis holds a bachelor’s degree in education from the University of Alberta and a master’s degree in education from the University of Calgary. Over the years she has served as a board member for several nonprofit associations, and has volunteered with a number of organizations. Janis enjoys an active lifestyle and spending her spare time running and biking and exploring Edmonton’s beautiful River Valley.

3) Stephanie Valenzuela, City Councillor, Cote de Neiges-Notre Dame de Grace, Darlington borough, Ensemble Mtl



A graduate from McGill University in Political Sciences and International Development, Stephanie Valenzuela has focused her efforts on non-profit organizations and community initiatives. In 2014, post-graduation, she volunteered and worked in Monterrey, Mexico for an NGO called “La Paz Comienza Con Los Niños” (Peace Begins with Children). Her experience in Mexico also led her to return to Montreal with a desire to work on local issues and give back to her community. She was involved with the Strengthening Families Program team led by the Côte-des-Neiges Black Community Association and she was the director of Communications for the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal.

4) Chelsea Craig, Director of Operations and former Campaign Manager, Member of Parliament Anthony Housefather – Liberal Party



Chelsea Craig has a bachelor's in political science from Concordia University and is currently completing a DESS in Management from HEC Montreal. While completing her undergrad, Chelsea was President of Liberal Concordia and in 2016, was elected President of the Young Liberals of Canada in Quebec (YLCQ). Throughout her career, Chelsea has consulted for non-profit organizations alongside political campaigns municipally and federally. During the 2021 federal campaign, she was the Campaign Manager for

Anthony Housefather in Mount Royal, for whom she currently works as his Director of Operations in Montreal.

- 5) Anthony Koch, Managing Principal of AK Strategies, Political Analyst and Commentator on CBC's Power & Politics, former Conservative Staffer in the Office of the Opposition under two Conservative leaders.**



Anthony Koch is a former Conservative staffer with extensive experience working and managing campaigns at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government. He worked in the Office of the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition under two Conservative Leaders. He is currently the Managing Principal of AK Strategies, a public affairs firm that specializes in interprovincial mandates and media strategy. Anthony also serves as a paid political analyst and commentator on CBC's Power & Politics and is a member of Pierre Poilievre's Conservative leadership campaign team.