

Questions for the political parties

As part of the Quebec election campaign, the Association de la construction du Québec (ACQ), the Association des professionnels de la construction et de l'habitation du Québec (APCHQ), the Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec (CORPIQ) and the Institut de développement urbain du Québec (IDU) have joined forces to question the political parties on the issues that directly affect housing and construction. Construction and renovation costs, regulatory relief, the completion of new projects and workforce training are among the topics covered.

Answers from



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General

01 If your party forms the next government, what will be the first action you take in the first 100 days of your mandate to help resolve the housing crisis?

A Parti Québécois government will quickly tackle the excessive regulatory burden on builders and begin the process of revising the Building Code to ease its requirements.

02 Housing falls under several ministries, institutions and public policies. What measures does your party intend to put in place to ensure clear government leadership, better coordination and greater predictability for industry stakeholders?

The Parti Québécois has committed to offering pre-filled forms to construction contractors to speed up the renewal of applications and declarations with the CNESST, the CCQ, the RBQ and Revenu Québec, in order to reduce paperwork and simplify builders' dealings with the various ministries.

Construction costs

03 What does your party propose to reduce the construction costs of projects?

Among other things, the Parti Québécois has committed to:

- Streamlining plans and specifications: lighten the plans and specifications submitted in calls for projects to give bidders more freedom in execution, modifications and choice of materials;
- Distributing contracts more effectively: structure asset maintenance programs as smaller contracts, making it easier for a greater number of SMEs to bid;
- Revising the Building Code: harmonize the Building Code across Quebec to reduce administrative irritants for contractors.

04 How do you plan to stimulate businesses' interest in public procurement and thereby increase competition for public contracts?

The Parti Québécois fully recognizes that the government's calls for tenders for public infrastructure lack flexibility and are designed without any real dialogue with the industry. That is why we have committed to streamlining the plans and specifications submitted in calls for projects to give bidders more freedom in execution, modifications and choice of materials.

Payment delays

05 How does your party intend to ensure that the prompt payment regulation comes into force for municipalities, and on what timeline?

A timeline has been set for the launch of the second phase, and we are committed to meeting it.

Regulatory relief

06 What measures does your party propose to ease the administrative burden on construction contractors?

The Parti Québécois is committed to introducing pre-filled forms to centralize the information that contractors must submit to government authorities.

07 How would your future government apply a regulatory simplification approach, such as the “two-for-one” principle, to reduce the burden on real estate projects?

A Parti Québécois government will launch a major initiative to eliminate bureaucratic barriers and ineffective government programs, while encouraging municipalities to undertake the same exercise. We are also committed to harmonizing the application of the Building Code across Quebec to make building and house designs easier to replicate. We intend to reduce paperwork by offering pre-filled forms to construction contractors to speed up the renewal of their applications and declarations with the various government agencies.

Building permit processing times

08 What do you plan to do to reduce building permit processing times?

A Parti Québécois government will put in place a certification mechanism for prefabricated and standardized buildings to speed up permit approvals, with a target processing time of 30 days.

09 How does your future government intend to reform public consultation and referendum approval processes to help residential projects move forward?

The Parti Québécois has committed to reforming the national land use planning policy to simplify zoning and speed up the development and replicability of projects, particularly medium-density projects in urban areas.

Housing

10 How does your party commit to increasing investment in municipal infrastructure to support residential development?

A Parti Québécois government will review funding programs in order to combine municipal financial assistance programs into a single general conditional transfer that is stable, predictable and flexible.

11 What concrete commitment is your party prepared to make to accelerate residential construction during the next mandate, and how will you measure the results?

The Parti Québécois wants to maintain a high rate of housing starts, approaching Quebec’s estimated capacity of 70,000 starts per year. We have proposed several initiatives, including regulatory relief, simpler zoning, harmonization of the Building Code, digitization of plans and specifications, and a QST credit of up to \$45,000 on new homes for first-time buyers to stimulate demand and make builders’ work easier.

Renovation of the rental housing stock

12 What does your party intend to do to simplify access to assistance programs and accelerate the renovation of the existing rental housing stock?

The Parti Québécois has taken note of the APCHQ’s proposal for a major energy-efficiency renovation initiative and announced in its environmental plan that renovations to optimize building performance will be facilitated through dedicated programs.

Taxes and levies

13 What measures does your party propose to reduce the tax gap with neighbouring provinces and lower the cost of real estate projects?

In addition to the initiatives mentioned in our other answers to ease the administrative burden on builders, the Parti Québécois is proposing a general cut of nearly 20% in the corporate income tax rate.

Health and safety representative (RSS)

14 Does your party commit to abolishing this position?

The Parti Québécois is committed to finding a way forward that guarantees health and safety on job sites while avoiding unnecessary duplication of staff, which is costly for the industry.

Trade versatility

15 What does your party propose regarding the trades in the construction industry?

The Parti Québécois will soon be announcing commitments that will affect, among others, workers in the construction industry.

Updating training programs

16 What does your party propose to promote training pathways in the construction industry?

The Parti Québécois has committed to making the promotion of vocational training a priority in its education reforms. We believe that young people should be better informed about vocational training pathways, particularly in the construction trades, and better guided toward them if they show the aptitude and interest for these trades.

17 How do you plan to improve training programs in the construction industry?

A Parti Québécois government will hold an Estates General on education and make vocational training a priority. We will be open to proposals from construction professionals to improve training and job-integration programs.

About the organizations

Association de la construction du Québec (ACQ)

The leading organization promoting and defending the interests of contractors in Quebec's construction industry, the Association de la construction du Québec (ACQ) is the largest multi-sector, voluntary-membership association in the industry. Under Act R-20, the ACQ is the employer bargaining agent for all employers in the institutional, commercial and industrial (ICI) sectors. The ACQ represents more than 20,000 businesses that generate over 64% of the total hours worked and reported in the industry. It is also active in the residential sector, notably because hours worked on the construction of new residential buildings of more than six storeys are counted in the commercial sector, and through its subsidiary ACQ-Résidentiel. With a network of 10 regional associations located in 17 cities across Quebec, it offers its members a wide range of tools and services.

Association des professionnels de la construction et de l'habitation du Québec (APCHQ)

Founded in 1961, the Association des professionnels de la construction et de l'habitation du Québec (APCHQ) is a private non-profit organization that, through its network and regional associations, represents and supports more than 28,000 businesses in the residential construction and renovation industry. Since 1995, it has been the employer representative mandated to negotiate the collective agreement on behalf of employers in the residential construction sector. The APCHQ's mission is to be a unifying agent of change for the benefit of Quebec society, and it acts as a driver of social and economic development by promoting sustainability and quality in housing.

Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec (CORPIQ)

A non-profit organization bringing together 30,000 landlords and property managers who own nearly 600,000 rental units and condos, the Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec (CORPIQ) has been the largest association providing services to residential landlords and defending their interests for more than 40 years. It serves every region from four offices with a total of 60 employees. Quebec landlords provide housing to 1.4 million tenant households and, in seven out of ten cases, own a duplex or triplex.

Institut de développement urbain du Québec (IDU)

Founded in 1987, the Institut de développement urbain du Québec (IDU) is an independent non-profit organization. The IDU is the largest representative of the commercial real estate industry in Quebec. The IDU produces content on real estate and the urban fabric. It acts primarily as a partner between industry members, public authorities and all stakeholders in the commercial real estate ecosystem. The commercial real estate industry contributes more than \$20 billion annually to Quebec's GDP and more than \$5 billion in tax revenue for governments and municipalities. For Quebec's seven largest cities, it accounts on average for nearly half, or 45.8%, of their total property tax revenue. With combined spending of more than \$24.5 billion, it supports close to one hundred thousand jobs.