

# Vesna Sokol Higham

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Vesna Sokol Higham — a retired lawyer, appeal board adjudicator and current Red Deer city councillor — initially ran for office in 2001 because she felt a “strong, unmistakable direction from the Spirit,” even though her youngest was just a toddler. She says, “It was a great stretch and leap of faith for me, but I felt a spiritual imperative to serve our community in this way.” After one term on the city council, she took a break from politics for 13 years following the birth of her fifth child before returning to public life in October 2017.

Higham acknowledges that “many voices, diverse perspectives, strong vision and hard work are needed to strengthen individuals, families and communities. Elected office is a sacred trust. I hope to participate in building a better community for my children and their children, by leaving a legacy of vision, integrity and engagement, but most of all *faith* — so all in my sphere of influence remember me as a woman of faith and spiritual conviction above all.”

Higham reminds us that there are many ways to engage politically without the formality of being elected to office. Any time we speak out in our school councils and town halls, on social media or on the blogosphere, whenever we volunteer in our communities or serve our neighbours, we leave a wake of influence that ripples far and wide.

“Start somewhere, *anywhere*, to step outside your comfort bubble and reach out for something new. Keep making connections in your community. Doors will open. Your circle of influence will grow. Be open and brave. Remember your priorities. Above all, remember *whose* you are,” she counsels. “Put God first, and everything else will fall into its proper place or drop out of your life.”