

### **1. What is your overall vision for the City of Peterborough?**

A city that listens to citizens and implements policies that address their needs; a city with a bureaucracy that is responsive and nimble and isn't afraid to make bold choices to address critical issues (housing, drugs, climate, crime/safety, the health of our downtown); a city that spends its money wisely by not duplicating services and wasting taxpayer dollars on systems that don't work so we can continue to spend on the ones that do. I believe that with a strong, creative, hardworking City Council whose members come together to listen (to each other no less than citizens) and advocate on behalf of the community with upper levels of government, we can do all of this and more.

### **2. What is your plan to build a strong local workforce?**

As Town Ward councillor, I would push for increased investment in the downtown. The goal is specifically to create a rich social and economic fabric where people can find meaningful work in Peterborough. My idea of a thriving downtown is one where opportunity exists for everyone – not just developers or big-box stores, etc. Double down on investing in arts and culture; make it easy for small businesses and home-grown entrepreneurs; make it a little harder for absentee landlords and developers who contribute little to the community – these are my goals, and I'm running in part to help cultivate that sense of opportunity downtown. I want to think outside of the box to start to fill in some of the big gaps left in our community by the loss of PCVS, the YMCA, Trent's departure from downtown, etc. There has been a divestment in the downtown in recent decades, but by looking to reverse that trend I believe we can create jobs and foster a sense of opportunity.

### **3. Housing has become less affordable and accessible, especially for first-time home buyers. What is your plan to address housing needs in our community?**

Build more rent-geared-to-income housing, and do it quickly. I've spoken to various experts in this sector, and it's clear that Peterborough is lagging way behind similar-sized towns in Ontario, and I don't just mean in terms of the number of units being built, I mean our politics: we've had a risk-averse council that's focused on hiring outside consultants but seems unwilling to make hard decisions. I'd like to see the City look really closely at its development process and find ways we can be more agile so we can get moving on projects that deal with our housing crisis. Developers looking to build *truly* affordable housing in our city, who have already secured federal funding, are being turned away because the municipality is unwilling to show any sort of flexibility in terms of zoning and the like. I know we can do better.

### **4. A lack of serviced employment lands is an ongoing issue. The emphasis for a long time was on negotiating agreements with bordering townships, but the draft Official Plan calls for those lands to be found within current city boundaries. What is your plan to increase access to serviced employment lands?**

I think we have to do this carefully. We've been campaigning since May and not one resident has brought this up as an issue. What has come up is a clear preference for urban density over sprawl. It's clear people have little appetite for mismanaged, short-term development without any forethought. So whatever steps are taken, I feel we need to be guided by the community.

**5. The draft Official Plan calls for greater consultation and increased dialogue with neighbouring First Nations communities. What involvement and relationships do you plan to pursue with First Nations communities to move our region forward on our path to reconciliation?**

This is without question an area where the City of Peterborough can play a meaningful role as a force for economic development by contributing in a tangible, material way to reconciliation in our area. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action include specific suggestions for how the corporate sector – and that includes municipalities – can (in the words of Call to Action #92) “ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.” So, for example, as a councillor, I would certainly support the City signing on to the Community Economic Development Initiative, which in recent years has brought several municipalities in our region together with Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations in a formal economic partnership. I don't see any reason why Peterborough, as a major employer and place of business in the region, shouldn't be a part of this. It could increase the opportunities for a mutually beneficial partnership with our neighbours in Curve Lake and Hiawatha in a way that could bring tangible benefits to those communities, not to mention ours.

**6. Our community is dealing with an addictions crisis that is now more visible than ever. What is your plan to address this crisis?**

This issue has effected me personally. My experience as an addict in recovery, and as someone who works intensively with those who continue to struggle with harmful substance use, is what initially pushed me to seek municipal office; my run for Council is really an extension of the community work and organizing I've been doing for years now. I'll continue to do everything in my power to push for evidence-based solutions that are proven to save lives. These would follow a strategy of implementing the principles of harm reduction where they're most needed, including in the shelter system; advocating on behalf of our front-line workers and health-care professionals with the provincial and federal governments; and acting as a liaison between the various agencies and organizations already doing impactful work in the community, and helping to connect those who need help with the experts who can help them. With my knowledge and experience, I think I can have a real impact in these areas.

**7. The efficient movement of people and goods is important to business competitiveness. What is your plan to address our transportation challenges?**

It's something I'll certainly be considering further. I work downtown, and talking to fellow business owners in Town Ward, there's a clear sense that Peterborough is all over the place and dysfunctional when it comes to transportation, and that includes public transit and parking. No one is happy with the current system. One of my goals is to create more of a dialogue between people downtown and the City. The people I have spoken with feel unheard. This is also another place where I think a major part of the job is going to be acting as a liaison between the various levels of government. So I'm going to continue to listen and learn and see where I can have the most impact.

**8. Crime is an increasing concern within the local business community, from vandalism to shoplifting to after-hours break-ins. What will you do as a member of council to ensure businesses feel protected and supported?**

Whether we want to admit it or not, we need to address the systemic issues plaguing the community and resulting in a further breakdown of the social fabric. The community is facing deep-seated issues of poverty, mental health, addiction. We didn't get here overnight, but the blame is being unfairly placed on those marginalized members of our community for the state of the downtown, when many past decisions have contributed to where we are at today. The police that I have spoken with don't have time to do actual police work because they are spread thin as it is responding to crises of mental health, addiction, lack of housing, etc., and they don't have the resources or systems in place to help people with the calls they are getting. I saw a huge benefit to the DBIA's short-lived program that employed mental health workers to patrol downtown and de-escalate the sort of situations that police are typically called to. This worked well both for people in crisis and for business owners who don't know where else to turn for help. I'd like to see a smarter use of police resources and a greater emphasis on social services that really address people's needs.

### **9. How should the city engage local business to help meet climate change goals and move toward net-zero emissions?**

First of all, I think this framing is correct: it can't be a top-down solution imposed only by government, certainly not at the municipal level. Local businesses will play a key role in the success of our efforts to address the climate crisis. And in Town Ward especially, I think there's a lot of economic benefit to be derived from these efforts. I would certainly push for more investment in our downtown: a community with a thriving downtown is a community that walks and bikes more, that shops local, that supports innovative civic projects. In terms of specific policy areas, I'd like to see the City level up the incentives it offers local businesses who are willing to adopt climate-forward policies and practices. As Town Ward councillor, I'd also support an increase in urban density in the downtown core so that we can build a cleaner, more walkable and bikeable city, and as I see it that would entail a higher degree of mixed residential/commercial properties, which would alleviate some of our need for housing while also contributing to a more robust business environment in Town Ward.

### **10. What three things would you like to see council implement that will make local businesses more competitive?**

- Take guidance from planning studies to improve pedestrian access to downtown. The downtown is already very car-friendly; there is a mountain of evidence to show that making it more hospitable to walkers and cyclists will bring increased profits to local businesses.
- Adopt tax incentives to encourage small businesses to relocate downtown. This will be key to reversing some of the divestment in the downtown we've seen in recent decades.
- Increase our investment in local arts and culture. Again, the data is clear: Downtown Peterborough, as an arts-and-culture hub within the wider Central Ontario region, generates an outsize impact in terms of the economic benefit it brings to the city. With every dollar we spend on the downtown, we're investing in the future prosperity of the city as a whole. Arts and culture in Ontario directly contributes **\$27.5 billion annually to the provincial economy, representing 3.3% of Ontario's GDP**. There are more than 288,306 culture jobs in Ontario – or 4.1% of total Ontario employment.

