

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

I believe Peterborough is a great place to live, work and enjoy and that together we can make it an even greater community.

We have been blessed with a wonderful natural environment, substantial built infrastructure, proximity to large markets, and resilient residents who value community and hard work.

To achieve our full potential, as Mayor, I intend to work with the City Council and the community to build a consensus on our key priorities and the pathways to achieve them.

Fundamentally, this means providing businesses operating locally the opportunity to create wealth so that as a community we have the resources to effectively address homelessness, addiction, mental health, and provide security for our residents.

I have proposed specific actions that address economic development, housing, transportation, community well-being, policing, and other areas that, together, will transform my vision for our community into a reality.

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

Ensuring we have a suitable workforce needs to be a priority. One that is addressed through partnerships between businesses, the academic sector, training agencies, the Municipal Government, and the community at large. For the past four years, as a Member of the Board of Employment Planning and Counselling, I had the opportunity and pleasure to witness first-hand individuals with barriers to employment successfully enter the workforce due to new training opportunities.

We need to partner with Trent University, Fleming College, and the local school boards to ensure that they are training our students for future jobs that prepare learners for constantly changing technology and other skill sets needed by our local businesses.

It also means ensuring that our community is an attractive place for people to move to and to take up new employment. This means addressing issues like access to family doctors, providing a range of recreational activities, and most importantly, the ability to access affordable housing and accommodation.

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?

Having adequate housing is fundamental to both our economic growth and the quality of life for our residents.

I have proposed a three-part strategy to address the housing crisis in our community.

First - to establish Service Peterborough – a proposal to reorganize the planning department within the City of Peterborough to provide priority to those projects establishing new housing generally, and affordable housing in particular.

Second - to secure new land by working with adjoining municipalities so that there is sufficient space for the development of new housing.

Third - conducting a review of our zoning bylaws, including potential modifications to exclusionary zoning, with the intention to allow for more innovative solutions to housing including secondary suites, tiny homes, Boxabl homes, and new and innovative construction techniques.

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?

In order for Peterborough to grow in a manner that can create additional jobs, attract new businesses, and provide space for new housing, it is critical that new lands for development be secured.

As Mayor, I have pledged to work cooperatively with neighbouring townships to ensure that new lands can be made available, not just for the benefit of the City of Peterborough, but for the entire region.

I believe that it makes sense that some adjacent property to the city be incorporated within Peterborough so as to facilitate the provision of servicing (water and sewer) and to provide potential investors a consistent and unified approach and application process.

I also believe that the Peterborough Airport should be incorporated into the City of Peterborough to facilitate the strengthening of our burgeoning aerospace sector.

It is important, however, that as we pursue this initiative, we engage in cooperative dialogue - one designed to achieve a solution beneficial to all interests, but also with the determination to achieve an outcome that will be a benefit to all the residents of our region.

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?

Working with area First Nations is not only the right thing to do, but it is also a required thing to do. The duty to consult is constitutionally protected and has been affirmed by the courts as a necessary step in pursuing development.

As a former Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, I have developed a good understanding of the importance of our relationship with area First Nations as well as Indigenous populations living in our city.

I was pleased to see Council's agreement to enter into the CEDI process that was previously started by local municipalities, the county, and PKED. It is this type of cooperation that is essential for moving all of our communities forward and providing the best outcomes for all our residents.

More specifically, I believe that planning applications that have a specific impact or potential impact on our First Nations should be circulated to them for comment and that the pathways to decisions are respectful and appropriate.

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

Addiction and drug poisoning is a crisis for our community and many others in Ontario.

I believe our first priority is to keep people alive. That is why I supported the establishment of the CTS. I am committed to work with the Peterborough drug strategy partners to find ways to assist those suffering from addiction and provide them with the treatment and services they need for recovery.

More specifically, I intend to lobby the provincial government at both the political and bureaucratic levels to establish a Drug Treatment Centre in Peterborough. The statistics, particularly the tragic statistics of deaths, indicate that Peterborough's problems are significant and that the establishment of a Treatment Centre in our area is warranted.

Addiction is something that affects almost every family in our community and addressing it needs to be a fundamental priority and one which I will pursue.

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

We need to ensure that our public transit system best serves the people of our community. This includes reviewing modifications to the spoke and hub system, ensuring that residents have access to GPS information about scheduling, and to work towards greening the fuels used by the system's buses.

It is also important that we undertake a regular program to re-invest in our road infrastructure. By being proactive, we can reduce the escalating costs. I am also proposing the creation of a Director of Purchasing and Contracts position to avoid costly overruns.

I intend to work with Council and staff to develop an asset management plan that properly identifies the types of investments that need to be made in order to keep our road infrastructure up-to-date.

I also will work to deploy new technologies designed to assist in moving traffic efficiently throughout the community.

It is important that the City of Peterborough be linked, in an appropriate manner, to the GTA. I was proud, as your MPP, to work on both the 407/115 initiative, as well as the establishment of GO Bus service to our community.

Going forward, I intend to lobby Metrolinx and the provincial government to ensure that a new GO Bus express route be established to link us to the new GO station at Bowmanville and to lobby the federal government to move expeditiously in implementing its frequent service rail proposal that will link Peterborough to downtown Toronto.

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?

Businesses create the economic wealth upon which our residents build a good standard of living and a high-quality of life. Their well-being will be a priority for me as Mayor.

I have proposed a three-part strategy to address the issues which are currently facing our downtown.

A. Implement the components of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan in an expeditious manner.

B. Make investments into programming that address the underlying problems that manifest themselves in our downtown. This includes drug addiction, mental health issues, poverty, and the unacceptable level of homelessness in our community.

C. Make new investments in our local police to ensure that they have the resources to keep our residents and businesses safe. The police need to be supported by a network of experts and community partners that can address the social issues that plague our downtown. By engaging others, the police are freed up to do the work that they are specially trained to do.

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

Climate change and its impacts are a significant crisis for our community, province, country and the entire world community. The impacts of climate change have dramatically manifested themselves in our community in two “100 year storms” within a two-year period.

The cost of addressing flooding, wind damage, and other natural resources is significant. It is critical that we continue to undertake mitigation measures and work with the community to both educate our residents and adapt to the new climate realities.

Climate change, as much of a danger as it is, can also be a new economic opportunity as we create technologies that help to address it. The Cleantech Commons in the City’s north end provides an opportunity to attract new businesses and new research facilities that commit to finding climate change solutions. As Mayor, I will work to foster new partnerships with Trent University, Fleming College, the City of Peterborough, and the Cleantech Commons that will create new economic opportunities, new jobs, and new technologies.

As part of my campaign I have proposed specific activities which we can undertake.

A. Ensure that new proposed developments are consistent with our new official plan - measures that ensure new builds are done in a manner which lessens greenhouse gas emissions and help to adapt to the new climate reality.

B. Adapt new alternative green fuels for both our public works and our transit fleets.

C. The construction of the Organics Collection Centre at the Bensfort Landfill Site will provide a repository for green waste and organics facilitating the introduction of green bins.

D. Provide the Chamber and PKED with resources to work with businesses to access government programs designed to invest in initiatives that lessen greenhouse gas emissions and diminish our environmental impact on our local environment.

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

The top four proposals I would undertake as Mayor to assist our business to be competitive include:

A. Establish transportation links to the greater golden horseshoe. This includes maintaining up-to-date highway links, new bus transportation that links to the new GO transit expansion in Durham, and to encourage the federal government to move expeditiously with its frequent train service to downtown Toronto and an update from VIA Canada regarding the introduction of train service.

B. Revitalize PKED to ensure that it is better equipped to attract new investments to our community and to assist businesses seeking new markets elsewhere in the province, the country and internationally. We need to ensure that businesses have access to technology such as high-speed Internet that will allow them to be competitive beyond our borders.

C. Establish Service Peterborough to ensure that applications, both planning and building, can be dealt with expeditiously, particularly those involving new affordable housing.