

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

My vision for the city harkens back to the Peterborough I grew up in. A city with industry, jobs, and successful people all working towards a common goal of making our community a great place to live. A mecca of tourism with shopping, bars, and restaurants along with a thriving arts community. A city free from the shackles of drug abuse, homelessness, and rampant crime and instead a beacon of success for the rest of the province to envy. I would like to see Peterborough become a place that every company wants to headquarter and turn our community into an economic hub.

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

First, we would need to implement policies that would allow our city to be more attractive to outside industry. Focusing on fixing any gaps at the municipal level that are a barrier for outside developers or industries is the first step to remedying high unemployment in our city. Second, we need to identify areas where we can assist our residents through employment and training programs, either independently or in tandem with companies who wish to locate here. Third, having support systems in place for residents who require specialized care such as a working transit system, childcare support or low-income housing would help remove barriers to ensure that everyone has the opportunity and ability to find employment.

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?

I would like to see the city adjust zoning restrictions to allow for either more multi-family buildings or multiple single-family dwellings on smaller lots. Decreasing property taxes on new builds and instead raising taxes on available lands would pass the savings to the homeowner and allow developers to build more intensively. High-density builds in our downtown core would also allow us to house more people in a smaller area and would have the added benefit of more foot traffic for our downtown businesses.

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?

Our city faces a serious shortage of serviceable employment lands. The relationship between the city and the counties has eroded to the point where neither official plan includes verbiage that would result in us gaining sufficient property. Unfortunately, this may only leave us with two scenarios moving forward:

1. Identify those areas within the city that could be potentially significant for industrial or commercial development and then prioritize the development of those areas, ensure that traffic and transit needs are aligned with any potential development, and implement low or competitive levels of taxation on those lands. This could have a significant positive effect when trying to attract commercial or industrial development on our available land.
2. Negotiate with the county a shared land/service that would allow Peterborough to use land from outside our borders.

5. The draft Official Plan calls for greater consultation and increased dialogue with neighboring 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?

We should work with our First Nations communities to involve indigenous youth and support a healthy sense of community, identify and expand efforts to assist communities in healing/employment opportunities, remove any barriers preventing First Nations youth from seeking quality employment opportunities through municipal training and education programs and foster collaboration between elders to assist in employment development.

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

While the Consumption Treatment Site (CTS) and methadone clinics are meant to ensure people with serious drug addictions have a safe place to inject or find relief from their addiction, the current system we have of CTS/harm reduction/methadone clinics doesn't address the issue of recovery. We are currently in an emergency situation in our city and need to work with the provincial government in the building of a detox center with immediate effect. Without a detox center in Peterborough, those who have an addiction issue do not have the principal component needed to move into a position of recovery and instead maintain a constant "revolving door" of substance abuse with little options available.

Ensuring those who do have an addiction issue are utilizing the CTS (or other related services) requires buy-in from our city police as well. People who are using drugs or alcohol out in the open in our parks, greenspace, or on our streets need to be directly moved from that area and educated on using them in the proper location and educated on where they can go to find assistance. You can't police away addiction, but you can educate addicts that using illicit substances in a public space will result in the strong possibility of being detained for an extended period. We need to do everything we can to prevent needles and other materials from finding their way into our parks and keep our green space safe for everyone who wishes to use it. Hopefully by having a detox center, along with addiction education, and coordination with Peterborough Police Services we can achieve that goal.

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

In my talks with provincial party representatives, the introduction of a GO train to connect Peterborough with Toronto is unfeasible due to the lack of infrastructure between us and the 401 corridor. However, something more realistic may be a VIA rail station which would help to move people to and from the GTA, making our residents less reliant on their cars and allowing them to have a cheaper alternative for commuting.

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?

I would support raising the police budget to specifically facilitate the hiring of more constables. The current police force is overworked and understaffed, to the point where certain areas of the city (like the community I live in - Monaghan Ward) are under patrolled and are therefore more attractive to

criminals. With the addition of more constables, I would like to see the implementation of a sustained police presence in our downtown core and waterfront both during the day and especially during the evening. Another possibility could be the implementation of a CCTV system in areas of the downtown core prone to criminal activity, or the introduction of a downtown “security program” where a private security company monitors and patrols the downtown with minimal allowances to intervene but a direct connection to police to report serious criminal activity.

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

The city could partner with local or international companies to bring green technology like solar panels to homeowners/users at a low or reduced cost. Eliminating the longer wait times usually required to process these applications by utilizing application automation would also make for a much more efficient and user-friendly process.

It would also be beneficial for the municipality to work with developers to investigate the option of having solar panels installed on all new-build, single-family homes or as a lower expense addition. Those who wish to take part in that program could then apply for a one-time property tax rebate as an incentive.

We should also investigate alternate fuel sources for our transit system such as electric busing or smaller buses to eliminate or reduce carbon emissions and work with the province to install more L3 EV charging stations for electric vehicles around our city to assist residents in making an easier transition from ICE vehicles.

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

As a member of city council, I would work with our mayor and community leaders to ensure that major economic development is one of the top priorities of the new government and communicate to our residents that we are committed to the long-term success of the program. Three things I would like to see would be:

1. Streamlining and automating access to city permits and applications. This could result in a quicker turnaround for businesses and developers as well as the potential to save the municipality hundreds of work hours from application processing formerly destined to the desk of the clerk’s office - resulting in a built-in cost savings for the city.
2. Upgrading our broken transit system to ensure easier movement of people around the city, implementing express buses for north/south and east/west solutions, overhauling the inability for people to park downtown easily, as well as implementing drastic and vital infrastructure improvements to make it easier for our brick-and-mortar businesses to receive customers. We need to work closely with the provincial government to apply for any funds for city planning and development, especially if it involves infrastructure upgrades and improvements.
3. Creating innovation by attracting companies to diversify our economic base. Not relying on one type of business to prevent us from being defined as a specific brand.

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