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Future-Proofing Guelph: Council Candidate Questionnaire

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Ward: 3

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Priority One: Build More Homes, Faster:

- 1. Will housing be your first priority for the 2026–2030 term? If so, name one current city priority you would subordinate to it when they conflict. If not, what ranks ahead of it and why?**

Housing will indeed be my top priority for the 2026-2030 term. The context and particulars of the situation would influence my decision but I can see myself subordinating/modifying current land use planning/zoning if it meant getting affordable housing units.

- 2. Guelph has unlocked over 22,000 potential units but issued permits for a fraction of that. What do you believe explains the gap, and which parts of your explanation are within Council's power to change?**

Part of the gap is due to market conditions: the proposed developments are not profitable enough given labour shortages, supply problems, etc. Part of the gap is due to over-reliance on large, for-profit developers: the City needs to make it easier for smaller developers to get projects approved and started. Part of the gap is just the time it takes developers to adjust to the new land use changes and updated permitting process.

- 3. Would you support publishing binding end-to-end approval timelines by application class, reported quarterly against actuals? What consequences should follow when the city misses them?**

I am open to this idea but I confess I do not know enough about the details of the current approval process to make a definitive statement for or against this proposal.

- 4. Getting approved housing built depends on strong working relationships with the people who build it — both for-profit developers and non-profit housing providers. What would you do to**

build genuine working relationships with both, and what's one concrete step you'd take in your first year to strengthen them?

As a Councillor with Housing as a top priority I am happy to meet and work with those who build but I think the relationship between builders and City Staff is even more critical to get right. I need to understand the current status of that relationship better before I could suggest ways to improve it.

5. What three housing metrics should residents use to judge the next Council — and you — at the end of the term? State the values you would consider success.

1. Affordable units approved, 2. Affordable units built/converted, 3. Affordable units preserved/protected. I think doubling the city's affordable unit stock would be "success".

Priority Two: Make Guelph More Competitive

6. Guelph is one of Ontario's most tariff-exposed communities because of its manufacturing and agri-food base. What's one specific thing you'd do as a councillor to help those employers weather this period, and how would you work with the Province and Ottawa to bring supports to bear and ensure Guelph's business voice is at the table?

Close collaboration with Queen's Park and Ottawa will be critical. I am unsure what I as an individual Councillor can do but I am open to suggestions.

7. Guelph businesses and residents consistently raise the cost of property taxes as a concern. How would you approach property tax increases while ensuring the City can continue to deliver the services residents expect?

I believe we need to prioritize infill development to increase the tax base that is using our existing infrastructure and services. This will lower the individual property tax burden.

8. What would you do to make major municipal spending decisions more transparent and ensure residents and businesses can clearly understand the value they are receiving for the taxes and fees they pay?

I really want the city to publish financials with more visualizations alongside balance sheets, cashflows and such. I would also like to see some comparisons of the proposed budget alongside alternative budgets.

Priority Three: An Effective Strategy to Advocate for a Fair Deal

9. Guelph's pending development-charge reduction trades short-term relief for long-term financial risk if the offsetting funding falls short. Name one non-negotiable condition you'd require before supporting a deal like this, and one safeguard you'd put in place to protect taxpayers if it doesn't pan out.

I will freely admit I don't know enough of the details of the current "deal" to speak confidently. I definitely agree that Guelph should have some non-negotiable conditions and guarantees but what they should be I cannot say at this time. That said, I think it is long past time that the municipalities of ON banded together in order to collectively bargain with the Province for serious reform of how municipalities are able to raise and spend revenues.

10. When infrastructure capacity is the reason a housing application stalls, the City's real power may lie in advocacy for provincial and federal funding rather than in saying no. What specific ask would you bring to Queen's Park or Ottawa to unlock that funding, and what would you do to build the kind of relationship that gets a yes?

I am confused why there is not a Public Provincial Infrastructure Bank that offers lending at preferred rates to any infrastructure development plans that can be reasonably demonstrated will pay themselves off in an appropriate time frame. I think Guelph should work with the Association of Municipalities and the Province to establish such a lending institution so that municipalities are constantly asking for grants etc.

11. Describe, in your own words, the division of responsibility among the City, Wellington County as service system manager, and the Province on homelessness, mental health, and addictions. What is the city's job, specifically?

My understanding is that the City is legally obligated to ensure provision of social services using Provincial funding. The City has a service agreement where essentially we have hired the County to provide the services. Under this arrangement the City's only legal "job" is to pay the County for services rendered. Personally I think most of the funding/administration and such should be uploaded to the Province with local governments only involved with front line service provision strategies. In the meantime we must deal with the current reality which is woefully inadequate Provincial funding.

12. Would you support supportive and transitional housing, with expedited approvals for qualifying projects? Would you accept such a project in every ward, including your own?

Yes.

13. Do you endorse the municipal sector's case for rebalancing provincial-municipal finances (cost uploads, predictable infrastructure funding, growth-linked revenue tools)? What should Guelph offer in return?

Yes. I'm not sure what Guelph should offer in return, if anything. Many of these obligations were incorrectly downloaded onto local government in the first place so reversing this mistake should not cost local governments anything.