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Future-Proofing Guelph: Council Candidate Questionnaire

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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?**

Yes. Housing drives affordability, employer competitiveness, and who can afford to stay in Guelph. Where it conflicts with other priorities, I'd subordinate discretionary spending on new amenities and "nice-to-have" projects to it, while keeping core services and safety intact. When a capital project competes with work that unlocks housing, such as servicing and staff capacity, the housing-enabling work goes first.

- 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?**

I see three parts: servicing capacity that isn't in the ground, slow and unpredictable approvals, and market conditions like interest rates and construction costs. Council can't change the market. It can change approval timelines, staffing, how servicing investment is sequenced, and how infrastructure is prioritized. I'd focus on what Council controls and be candid that the rest is not in our hands.

- 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?**

Yes. The consequence for a miss should be automatic and visible: fee refunds or reductions when a deadline is missed, plus a public staff report explaining the cause and the fix. Without a consequence, a timeline is just a target.

- 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?**

I'd treat builders and non-profits as partners with shared goals, not petitioners, with regular structured meetings rather than contact only at public hearings. In my first year, I'd meet with for-profit and non-profit housing providers to hear which city processes are slowing them down, and bring what I learn to Council and staff.

- 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.**

Permits issued against the provincial housing target. Success is being on pace for Guelph's provincial target of 18,000 new homes by 2031, which averages about 1,800 a year.

Median approval time by application class. Success is publishing timelines for each application class, meeting them in the large majority of files, and reporting results every quarter.

Affordable and non-profit units. Success is the city meeting its own affordable housing target share of new homes each year, and reporting it publicly.

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?**

I'd push for a dedicated tariff-response table of Council, the local Chamber, and major manufacturers and agri-food employers, to identify which city costs and delays we can reduce right now, such as faster permits and predictable fees. The same table would produce a unified Guelph request to Queen's Park and Ottawa for workforce support, export diversification help, and bridging supports, delivered through our MPP and MP, AMO, and direct meetings.

- 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'd hold increases to what's needed to maintain core services and infrastructure, and ask staff for more than one option in every budget. I'd test spending against a simple question: does it protect a core service, reduce future costs, or enable growth that pays for itself? I wouldn't pledge a specific number, but I would commit to explaining every increase in plain language.

- 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'd support a summary for every major project and budget line covering cost, purpose, expected outcome, and who pays. I'd push for project-level reporting on cost and schedule against the original approval, plus an annual "what your tax dollar bought" report residents can understand without reading a budget binder.

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.**

My non-negotiable condition is a written, enforceable funding commitment for the revenue the city gives up, not just a promise. The safeguard would be a trigger in the agreement: if the offsetting funding falls short, the reduction pauses or rolls back for new applications rather than the gap being covered from the general tax levy.

- 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?**

My ask would be targeted, multi-year funding for the specific water, wastewater, and transportation projects holding up approved housing, tied to housing outcomes. To get a yes, I'd arrive with data, a clear list of stalled units, and a record of delivering on what we commit to in return. That matters more than the ask itself.

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?

The Province funds and sets policy for health, mental health, and addictions care. Wellington County, as service system manager, funds and coordinates homelessness and housing programs, including for Guelph. The city's job is to enable rather than run that system: zoning and approvals for shelter and supportive housing, municipal land and partnerships, and keeping public spaces safe and accessible. It also means pressing the Province and County to fund services so the city isn't left filling gaps it can't afford.

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 to both, and yes to having one in every ward, mine included. If I'd ask other neighborhoods to accept it, mine should too. Support should come with good operators, community liaison, and clear accountability.

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, in principle. The current split leaves cities carrying costs they can't fund with property tax alone. In return, Guelph should commit to meeting published housing and approval targets, be transparent about results, and ensure new money goes to its stated purpose.