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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?**

Housing is a top priority, and we need to address it on two fronts: private development, including legal apartments and infill, and City-supported social and subsidized housing. More rental supply can ease pressure on rents, while subsidized and supportive housing gives people with very low incomes a place to live. When priorities compete, I would put housing and the infrastructure it needs ahead of lower-priority projects, including some trail and cycling projects. I would also remove costly curb-and-bollard cycling lanes that require ongoing maintenance.

- 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?**

We need to understand exactly where projects are getting stuck, but planning approvals and infrastructure capacity are likely part of the gap. Council can make the process clearer, reduce unnecessary roadblocks, and help staff manage risk without defaulting to delay. I would explore more senior mentoring for junior planning staff and tools, including AI, to help review applications and identify issues earlier. The City should also reward sustainable development and infill that fits its neighbourhood.

- 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 support clear approval timelines and quarterly public reporting. The current process can be unclear, with moving goalposts that make it difficult for businesses and developers to plan. I would first identify

why the City is missing a timeline and require a public explanation and corrective plan. The City needs to be a facilitator wherever possible and keep pace with the people trying to build here.

- 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 would bring for-profit and non-profit housing providers together, listen to what is slowing projects down, and work toward a more stable and predictable process. In my first year, I would establish a housing roundtable with those providers and the relevant City staff. We should also recognize projects that help meet other community goals, such as climate adaptation, transit, and access to parks and services.

- 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.**

Residents should track housing units permitted, housing units started or completed, and affordable or supportive homes delivered. Success would mean permits are translating into construction, approval times are improving, and more affordable and supportive homes are actually available. I would also want residents to see whether the City's actions are improving satisfaction with the housing process and its results.

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 would work through municipal economic development channels to put Guelph's business voice in front of provincial and federal decision-makers. We should promote trade within Canada, strengthen local supply chains, and advocate for Guelph's manufacturers and agri-food employers. Companies such as Linamar and Polycon are important Canadian industrial assets, and governments need to understand what is at stake in keeping them strong.

- 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 would review proposed increases alongside a close examination of City spending. My approach is to use a flashlight, not a chainsaw: find structural savings, starting with non-salary costs, while protecting essential services. I would also pursue new revenue through the Guelph Municipal Holding Company, the Guelph Junction Railway, a municipal housing corporation, tourism, and film activity. Lower operating costs and more non-tax revenue can help keep property taxes lower over time.

- 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?**

The City needs clearer public reporting on both spending and revenue. The current online operating-budget information is difficult to use, and residents should be able to see where the money goes and what it delivers. I would support a capital budget report card that explains project costs, progress, infrastructure renewal needs, and the renewal deficit, as well as reporting on revenue from new sources.

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.**

Before supporting a deal, I would need a clear, credible commitment for the funding that replaces the lost development-charge revenue. The City should publicly report what the Province has committed, what has been received, and what gap remains. That reporting would help hold the Province accountable and give Council an early warning if the deal is putting taxpayers at risk. If the funding falls short, I would press the Province to cover the gap before the City shifts growth costs onto existing taxpayers.

- 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 would ask for predictable, growth-linked funding for the water, wastewater, transportation, and other infrastructure needed to support housing. Guelph should show where its plans align with provincial and federal priorities, where capacity gaps remain, and what projects could proceed with support. I would build two-way relationships with the people responsible for those priorities so they understand Guelph's needs and the city's importance to the region and the province.

- 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 County leads the local homelessness service system, while the Province has major responsibility for health, mental health, addictions services, and funding. The City contributes funding and controls important local tools, including land use, housing, and municipal services, but it should be more active in coordinating the response. I would support a City team working with the County, paramedics, police, and community organizations to develop a shared strategy, set goals, coordinate action, and measure results.

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. I support supportive and transitional housing and a clear, expedited approval process for qualifying projects. We also need to think beyond one model: some people need year-round community-based housing with on-site services, while others may need subsidized housing or different supports. A City housing corporation could help build and manage subsidized housing, and there is room for these projects in every ward, including Ward 5.

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. Predictable infrastructure funding is critical, and growth-linked revenue should help older cities renew existing infrastructure as well as build for new residents. Guelph should offer realistic targets that account for local limits, including water and energy capacity, and prioritize infill and sustainable projects that serve several purposes at once. We need to fix the roof while making room for responsible growth.