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Future-Proofing Guelph: Council Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Brendan Clark

Ward: 4

Contact Email: info@brendanclark.ca

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 be an important priority, but my first priority is ensuring residents receive better value for their tax dollars while maintaining reliable core services. Housing, affordability and municipal finances are connected, and we cannot solve one by ignoring the others. When priorities conflict, I would put essential services and existing infrastructure ahead of discretionary spending and projects that can reasonably be deferred. I support increasing housing supply, particularly along existing corridors where infrastructure can support it. Growth needs to be planned alongside the roads, water, wastewater, transit and other services required to support it.

- 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?**

Unlocking zoning capacity is not the same as getting housing built. Interest rates, construction costs, market conditions, financing and infrastructure capacity can all affect whether an approved project proceeds, and many of those factors are outside Council's control. What Council can control is whether municipal approvals are predictable, timely and reasonably straightforward. I would focus on identifying unnecessary delays, improving coordination between departments and making requirements clear earlier in the process. We should measure ourselves on housing that actually reaches the building-permit and construction stages, not simply the theoretical number of units zoning allows.

- 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. Applicants and residents should know what a reasonable approval timeline is and whether the City is meeting it. I would support publicly reporting actual approval times by application type on a quarterly basis and identifying where delays are occurring. When targets are repeatedly missed, staff should report to Council on the cause, what corrective action is being taken and when performance is expected to improve. The objective should be accountability and fixing systemic problems rather than simply setting another 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?

Council should be willing to work constructively with anyone who can help deliver appropriate housing, whether they are a private builder or a non-profit provider. That does not mean automatically agreeing with every request; it means having an open and predictable process where concerns can be raised early. In my first year, I would support regular working sessions with builders, trades, non-profit providers and City staff focused specifically on identifying recurring barriers to getting approved projects under construction. I would also want Council to hear directly from smaller builders who may experience the approval process differently than large developers. The goal should be identifying practical changes the City can actually make.

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.

I would use three straightforward measures: building permits issued, housing completions and municipal approval timelines. By the end of the term, I would consider success to be consistently permitting enough housing to meet Guelph's housing targets while seeing completions increase rather than accumulating primarily as approved but unbuilt units. For municipal approval timelines, success means measurable year-over-year improvement, with the large majority of complete applications processed within the City's published service standards. These measures distinguish between changing planning rules, approving projects and actually getting homes built. Residents should be able to easily see these results publicly and judge Council against them.

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?

My first step would be regular direct engagement with Guelph's manufacturing and agri-food employers to identify the specific municipal or senior-government barriers affecting investment and employment. The City's role should include making local expansion and investment as predictable as possible while ensuring the concerns of Guelph employers are clearly communicated to Queen's Park and Ottawa. I would work with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and economic-development staff to develop specific asks based on what local employers are experiencing rather than making broad requests for assistance. Where provincial or federal programs exist, the City should help businesses

understand and access them. Guelph should also consistently advocate for infrastructure and economic policies that allow existing employers to continue investing here.

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?

Affordability has to become a much larger consideration in every budget decision. Guelph has experienced significant compounded tax increases during the current Council term, and I do not believe that trajectory is sustainable for residents or businesses. My approach would be to protect core services such as roads, snow clearing, parks and recreation and neighbourhood safety while requiring greater scrutiny of discretionary spending, duplication and projects that can be deferred. I would also review service delivery and outside-board costs rather than assuming every existing expenditure must automatically continue or increase. The objective is not arbitrary cuts; it is establishing priorities and making the difficult choices necessary to bring annual increases to a more sustainable level.

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?

For significant new spending, residents should be able to understand what the City is purchasing, why it is needed, what success looks like and what happens if the expected results are not achieved. I would support requiring major projects and new programs to have clearly defined key performance indicators before approval, followed by public reporting against those measures. Council should periodically review major expenditures to determine whether they are producing the promised results. Budget information should also be presented in plain language so residents can understand where their tax dollars are going. Every tax dollar came from someone who worked for it, and Council has a responsibility to demonstrate the value residents are receiving.

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 would be a credible, identified funding source for the infrastructure costs that would otherwise have been funded through development charges. I would not support shifting an open-ended financial liability onto existing property taxpayers in the hope that future growth eventually covers it. Any agreement should include regular reporting on actual development, revenue and infrastructure costs against the assumptions used when the decision was made. If those assumptions do not materialize, there should be predetermined opportunities to modify or end the arrangement before the financial exposure grows. Growth should contribute toward the infrastructure required to support growth.

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 advocate for predictable, growth-linked funding for the water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure required to unlock housing that is otherwise ready to proceed. Our requests should identify specific projects, the number of homes they would unlock and the municipal contribution available. That gives senior governments a measurable proposal rather than a general request for additional funding. Building relationships also requires consistent engagement between funding announcements, including with local MPPs, MPs and relevant ministries. Guelph should be able to demonstrate exactly what additional provincial or federal investment will deliver.

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 City, Wellington County and the Province have different responsibilities, and residents deserve clarity about those roles. Wellington County is the service system manager for housing and homelessness services in Guelph-Wellington, while health care, including much of the mental-health and addictions system, is primarily a provincial responsibility. The City's responsibilities include municipal services, public spaces, bylaw enforcement, emergency services, planning and approvals, and working with its government partners. The City should advocate strongly for adequate treatment, supportive housing and social-service resources while ensuring parks, neighbourhoods and public spaces remain safe and accessible. Municipal government cannot independently replace provincial health care or the County's housing-service responsibilities, but it does have an important coordinating and advocacy role.

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 am open to supportive and transitional housing in every ward, including Ward 4, provided individual projects are appropriately located, properly operated and evaluated on their specific circumstances. I would support expedited municipal approvals for qualifying projects where appropriate. Expedited approval should not eliminate reasonable planning, safety or operational requirements. Supportive housing works best when the necessary services and accountability are part of the model rather than simply providing a physical building. I would apply the same standards to a proposal in Ward 4 that I would expect Council to apply elsewhere in Guelph.

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?

I support a clearer and more sustainable division of financial responsibility between municipalities and senior governments, particularly where municipalities are paying for pressures created by responsibilities or policy decisions outside their control. Municipalities need predictable infrastructure funding and a funding model that recognizes the cost of growth without continually shifting those costs onto existing property taxpayers. In return, Guelph should provide transparent financial reporting, measurable outcomes and clear evidence showing how additional funding is being used. Where funding is provided to unlock infrastructure or housing, we should report publicly on whether the promised homes, infrastructure or services were actually delivered. A better fiscal relationship should come with accountability on both sides.