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Future-Proofing Guelph: Council Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Rebecca Adam

Ward: 6

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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?**

My top priority is getting our budget in order. We need to stop spending on things we cannot afford and identify operational waste and inefficiencies. Housing is a priority, and I look forward to conversations about how the City can support getting more homes built. But I believe we need to get our financial house in order so we can make responsible decisions about all of our priorities.

- 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?**

Council needs to understand where the bottlenecks are by listening to the experts involved. City staff have an important role, but we should also be asking developers directly: What is holding projects up? How can we move them forward faster? What do you need from Council? From there, Council can make informed decisions about which barriers are within our control to change.

- 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. I support clear, publicly reported timelines so everyone understands what to expect and where delays are occurring. If the City consistently misses those timelines, Council should identify why, address the bottlenecks and hold the process accountable for improvement.

- 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 start by listening. Developers and non-profit housing providers have different needs, and Council needs to understand the barriers they are facing rather than assume we know the answers. In my first year, I would hold regular roundtable discussions with both groups to identify the biggest barriers and what is within the City's control to improve.

- 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.**

Success would mean measurable improvement by the end of the term. I would look at the number of housing approvals, the number of homes actually built, and whether the gap between the two is getting smaller.

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?**

The City cannot control tariffs, but we can make sure Guelph's business community has a voice with the Province and federal government and is connected to available supports.

- 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 there are inefficiencies and waste that we need to identify and address. We also need to be more disciplined about large projects and stop automatically voting yes when we cannot demonstrate that they are affordable and provide enough value to residents. My goal would be to keep property tax increases as manageable as possible while protecting essential services.

- 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?**

Clear communication has been a commitment of mine from the beginning of this campaign. Residents and businesses want to know what is happening, but they want it communicated clearly, quickly and in plain language. I will explain major spending decisions, if we uncover waste or inefficiencies, and what we are doing about them.

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 I support something like this, I would want to know where the money is coming from and that it is actually there. I would not be comfortable saying yes based on a promise that the funding will come later. If that funding falls short, I would want a clear plan for how we handle the gap without putting the cost onto 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 the Province and federal government to help fund the infrastructure needed to unlock housing that is ready to move forward. I would also build strong relationships with our provincial and federal representatives so Guelph has an ongoing conversation with them, not just a call when we need funding.

- 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?**

Wellington County leads the homelessness and housing support system for Guelph, while the Province provides much of the funding and direction. The City has an important supporting role through funding, partnerships, land, approvals and advocacy.

- 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 would support expedited approvals where appropriate. I believe transitional housing should be located throughout the city, including in neighbourhoods, so people living there can feel connected to a community. That includes Ward 6.

- 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 believe municipalities need more predictable funding and a fairer division of costs between levels of government. In return, Guelph should be able to show that we are spending responsibly, finding efficiencies and being transparent about where the money goes.