

Municipal Election Questions

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* Indicates required question

Economic Development

Our BIA believes that strong local economies depend on supportive municipal policies that encourage investment, reduce unnecessary barriers for businesses, and recognize the economic impact of our downtown and BIAs in building thriving communities.



How would you support local intensification and building developments in the BIA * to include second-floor or upper-level business locations where appropriate?

I am not aware of any current blockage for businesses to operate on upper levels, where there exists many examples of businesses operating on any floor.

But, in consideration I find two primary concerns: parking, and accessibility.

Currently, parking in many DBIA areas is in high demand or are difficult to navigate/pay, dissuading use. In intensification of businesses, an increased demand is placed on available parking infrastructure and payment programs. A revisit of paid parking goals and implementation is long overdue (for reasons beyond intensification too!) Currently, our parking scheme only serves to keep people away from downtown, is unevenly applied across DBIA membership areas (there is only a "parking tax" in some areas). It is something I have had to personally apologize to tourists for, as I operate a breakfast restaurant and frequently encounter tourists who can not seem to pay for parking.

Accessibility is an increasing concern downtown, where sidewalks have become uneven, where removed infrastructure is replaced with asphalt fill. Many existing buildings have not yet fully adopted AODA standards for high visibility mobility impediments (bright yellow on steps or edges), or doorway accessibility assistive devices (door openers). Businesses on higher floors will lack accessible elevators. I would propose that an expensive solution would be that new businesses would be required to install accessibility standard equipment, and could be helped by grants paid out by the City, financed by an accessibility levy applied against AODA non-compliant building owners. But a simpler and more robust solution is to build buildings that meet these requirements from the start, as a means of intensifying business locations.



What is your approach to reducing red tape such as permits, approvals, or funding access for local businesses? *

When I bought Dreams of Beans 3.5 years ago, I had to apply for a business permit. The ordeal was a nightmare.

We place the burden of knowledge, implementation, followup, and certification on the business operator. It's not enough to be a great baker, for example, you also have to be an expert in building code, and it is a huge disservice to a demographic of capable workers who can't afford an expensive and incomprehensible municipal bureaucracy.

Instead, I would favour (and even gleefully spearhead the adoption of!) a program that places a case manager on applications by new business applicants, helping them navigate Public Health, Fire Prevention, and Building Department requirements -- a singular point of contact to help capable workers get into business.

In my own example, it was decided by the Building Department inspector that my premises required a grease trap installed, where none had been previously required, introducing a new \$2200 expense that I had not planned for. For any startup, that is a huge expense. I was only capable of overcoming such by sacrificing in other areas.

What role should municipalities play in balancing social service delivery with the economic health of business districts? *

The healthiest economies are those with the most participants. By delivering robust social services, the municipality is engaging in economic stimulus. These need not be balanced, but are inherently intertwined.

Both the named department Social Services and other social services in general are effectuated by people with jobs, who need to eat and live, both alleviate poverty and give access to resources for people who would otherwise go without, all of which means that people have more money to spend, generating economic impacts.

The municipality is uniquely charged with the delivery of provincial programs, and would do its entire constituency a disservice by attempting to minimize, defund, cut social service programs.



How will you ensure that Council considers the economic impacts on local businesses before policies, by-laws, or projects are finalized? *

Past councils have relied heavily on outsider consultant reports. Where the expertise to understand or predict impacts can not be found within our own population, some consultation may be necessary.

Unfortunately, consultants' findings can be presented to direct a decision in any political direction. We may need outside help in considering blindspot factors, but to rely wholly on a consultant for direction is a cop-out on the responsibility of council to represent their constituents.

In my travels, I've met a lot of smart people who really do understand their business and how policies will affect them, I think we could do a lot to better listen and implement direction from our own wisdom.

Which means we need to spend more time listening, not less. A reversal on council decision to limit special delegations is a good first step.

Do you support the multi-use sport and event centre? *

Peterborough is long overdue for a sports and event centre that is capable of hosting modern community needs.

That said, as the project is currently considered, we can not afford it. We are simultaneously raising police budget, municipal taxes, within the context of pandemic-induced inflation, and telling homeowners that they have to pay for ice rinks that they'll never enjoy!

I support the multi-use sport and event centre _when we can afford it_.

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