

Charles Cooper

District Councillor Candidate in the Town of Lake of Bays
Muskoka Region

The following answers were provided by the candidate in response to [a letter sent by the Toronto Society of Architects on September 20, 2022](#) outlining three questions related to issues of the built environment. Answers have been copied and pasted into this page for clarity and ease of access, but all answers are verbatim and no changes or edits have been made.

Q1: Housing is a fundamental human right, and yet an increasing number of residents across the Greater Toronto Area are struggling to pay rent or find an affordable place to live. What policies and actions do you believe need to be implemented to address this crisis?

A: Housing is a fundamental human right, and yet an increasing number of residents across the Greater Toronto Area are struggling to pay rent or find an affordable place to live. What policies and actions do you believe need to be implemented to address this crisis?

We don't need more policies, we need less. Lake of Bays has extremely restrictive development laws, I would even call it the Township of No, not in my backyard. Backlots are excessive in size with numerous silly rules that limit the development of single-family units let alone multi residential units. The majority of the Lake of Bays is not served by municipal water or sewer, but there are reasonable guidelines the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Parks has suggested for onsite water and sanitary treatment, including up to 10 cubic meters per day of waste, without special permits. Assuming 1 cubic meter per household, per day, that means up to 10 multi-unit residential unit can be built on the same property. Yet the Lake of Bays currently limits or prevents development of off water properties and especially multi unit buildings. The Lake of Bays has thousands upon thousands of acres of off water land that can not be developed in a reasonable fashion. So, more policy is not required, but less, let land owners build within reasonable lot coverage rules and within the rules of provincial ministries such as the MECP. I doubt the Lake of Bays, nor Muskoka, has more expertise about onsite sanitary treatment then the MECP.

Even worst Stats Canada predicts that the population of Ontario will increase almost 50% in the next twenty years. That means 50,000 more residences in Muskoka in twenty years. What plans are being developed to support this increase? Nothing.... I propose the building of the infrastructure required to support this wave of new residences, this includes buildings, roads, healthcare, emergency services, schools etc. to make this happen.

Additional population means more opportunities, more workers, more students and overall a healthier society.

Q2: The design, construction and operation of our built environment accounts for nearly 40% of energy related carbon emissions, contributing to the ongoing climate crisis affecting us today. What do you believe needs to be prioritised to reduce carbon emissions within the built environment?

A: I would like to simplify the process to knock down and rebuild any building within the Lake of Bays (or Muskoka). New buildings have the greatest chance of being Net Zero for carbon emissions. An improved electrical distribution would also allow for the tsunami of electrical transportation that is coming, including, cars, boats, atvs, e-bikes etc. Likewise, many property owners want to add renewable energy production to their buildings. These new technologies are easier integrated into new buildings then retro fits.

Q3: In towns and cities, so much of life happens in the shared public spaces—in our parks, libraries and streets. How can we ensure these civic spaces achieve design excellence in their initial conception and construction, and that they are properly maintained so they may continue to serve future generations?

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