

1. 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?

I believe that we need to implement and enforce measures for rent control. Local governments need to convince developers to create more spaces allotted to affordable housing. If they're constructing apartment buildings, for example, then they should devote 10 to 20% of the units for rent control programs. Likewise for developers, there should be reasonable limitations and expectations to help people purchasing first time properties. I feel a policy supporting rent-to-own options would permit low and medium income families to obtain a mortgage more readily because they have successfully achieved a down payment. This action would benefit population diversity and growth by assisting young adults, seniors, immigrants and other vulnerable sectors to remain economically active members of our town. I would welcome a study on the potential of subsidizing rents for low income families in our immediate area. As well, it is important to find an incentive for those who have purchased houses as investment properties to usher in more affordable rents. Municipalities need to bridge the gap between landowners and tenants. During recent canvassing with potential constituents in my ward, a common concern for all was the lack of affordable dwellings in our community. For many, renting a basement apartment for \$3,000 a month is excessive and untenable.

2. 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 prioritized to reduce carbon emissions within the built environment?

There are many compelling initiatives, such as the expansion of cycling lanes, enlarging and enforcing strict pedestrian zones and the use of electrically powered public transportation vehicles, that are making tangible differences in reducing carbon emissions year after year. However, those practices are best suited for large cities such as Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton where commercial and public infrastructure is denser and more readily accessible. Acknowledging the infrastructure limitations of our rural community of 44,000 inhabitants, any measures targeting carbon emissions reductions by limiting the use of combustion engine vehicles would not be immediately logical or feasible in New Tecumseth. However, as our town grows, there is the potential to implement by-laws that would lead to better results in the future.

In the meantime, I would encourage our local government to prioritize programs for small businesses and our surrounding farms to incentivize the greater use of renewable energy sources such solar, geothermal and wind power technologies to reduce carbon emissions. I support the modernization of our town's master plan to include infrastructure that relies on renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels. For example, there is the potential of placing wind turbines on municipally owned vacant land. As well, we could incorporate the use of solar panels on municipal building rooftops to minimize operational costs. Additionally, New Tecumseth could introduce policies that would require local industry to become compliant in a given period when it comes to the application of new technologies to further reduce their carbon footprints. From an individual resident's perspective, the town has already taken steps to raise awareness and promote better use of the recycling and composting initiatives throughout the community, allowing us to collectively reduce landfill volume and be more effective in our overall carbon plan.

3. 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?

In my opinion, design excellence from conception to execution depends on understanding the existing and future needs of the community by actually canvassing said community for input and feedback. It is key, not only to know, how those public spaces are currently being used, but to consider how that use might change over time. For example, as mentioned above, our community's geographic characteristic is rural, but it would be a mistake to assume that our needs in public spaces are limited because the majority of our residents commute to other locations in the GTA for work. Our local government needs to ensure that planning and zoning policies take into consideration sophisticated strategies as are found in larger cities because our role as a “bedroom” community has evolved over the past twenty years. I believe public works projects should take into account updated demographic data as our community has gone through a sizable population increase in the last seven years. A wide variety of new residents are coming from the GTA and have had access and experience with bigger municipalities managing much larger budgets. (e.g. Newmarket, Brampton, Mississauga, and Vaughan)

As a candidate for council, and not knowing the full extent of any existing policies in place to ensure proper maintenance of public spaces, I would suggest implementing some “pay per use” initiatives, such as nominal Green P parking fees, coin operated restrooms, automatic fees for lost books, and more visible enforcement of by-laws regarding residents' conduct and responsibilities. Lastly, I would recommend the local government in New Tecumseth to launch periodic campaigns via social media and radio specifically directed at newcomers to welcome and provide them with information and links to resources for our municipality .