Questions for 2026 Municipal Council Candidates

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Ward 1 Candidate

1. What is your vision for Port Hope at the end of the next four-year Council term?

My vision is for Port Hope to be a community where people continue to want to live, businesses want to invest, and visitors want to return.

Over the next four years, I want to see responsible growth that strengthens our tax base, creates opportunities for local businesses and provides the infrastructure and services needed to support our community.

I want a vibrant downtown, thriving rural businesses and agriculture, and an environment where entrepreneurs and all types of businesses can succeed. At the same time, we need to protect the heritage, natural environment and community character that make Port Hope unique.

Growth and preservation should not be competing priorities. With good planning, innovation and responsible decision-making, we can achieve both.

2. What do you believe are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing Port Hope's economy?

One of our greatest opportunities is growth. Growth can also be our greatest challenge. Port Hope has tremendous potential because of our location, heritage, waterfront, rural landscape, downtown and strong sense of community.

The potential for New Nuclear with OPG is going to be the biggest challenge. The proactive planning required for something of this magnitude is immense. We must work to ensure that Port Hope's best interst is always at the forefront.

Tourism is another significant opportunity. Our heritage buildings, festivals, arts and culture, downtown businesses and natural environment can attract visitors and encourage them to stay longer and spend more locally.

Our challenges include housing affordability, infrastructure capacity, development pressures, rising costs for businesses and ensuring that economic growth benefits the entire municipality.

We also need to be competitive when businesses are deciding where to invest. Municipal government cannot solve every economic challenge, but we can make Port Hope a place where doing business is straightforward, predictable and welcoming.

3. What role should the Municipality play in supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment?

The Municipality should be a partner, not an obstacle.

Our existing businesses have already invested in Port Hope and contribute significantly to our community. We should be listening to them, understanding their challenges and making municipal processes as efficient and predictable as possible.

At the same time, we should actively promote Port Hope as a place to invest. That means having a clear vision for economic development, identifying opportunities for investment and making sure prospective businesses can navigate the municipal process without unnecessary delays or uncertainty.

I also believe we need to recognize the importance of small businesses, entrepreneurs, farmers, home-based businesses and downtown retailers. Economic development is not just about attracting one large employer. It is also about helping the businesses we already have grow and succeed.

4. How should Port Hope accommodate growth while preserving the qualities that make the community distinctive?

We need responsible growth, not growth at any cost.

Port Hope's heritage and natural environment are economic assets as well as things worth protecting. Our downtown, heritage buildings, rural landscapes, Ganaraska River and waterfront all contribute to what makes Port Hope special.

We should use good planning to direct growth where infrastructure can support it, encourage appropriate intensification and ensure new development fits within the character of the community.

I also believe in restoration and adaptive reuse where appropriate. We should not treat heritage as simply preventing change. We can protect important buildings and landscapes while finding new uses for them and allowing our community to evolve.

The goal should be to add to Port Hope without losing what brought people here in the first place.

5. What municipal services, infrastructure or policies are most important to a healthy business environment?

Reliable infrastructure is fundamental. Roads, water and wastewater systems, sidewalks, parking, transportation networks, broadband and reliable municipal services all affect a business's ability to operate.

For downtown businesses in particular, accessibility, parking, streetscape maintenance, events and a vibrant public realm are important.

We also need efficient planning and building services. Time is money for businesses, and unnecessary delays or uncertainty can make investment more difficult.

Finally, communication matters. Businesses should know what the Municipality is planning, why decisions are being made and how changes may affect them. Good communication and predictable processes can make a significant difference to the business climate.

6. How would you ensure that the needs of businesses across the entire municipality, including the downtown, rural area and home-based businesses, are considered in Council decisions?

We need to listen before we make decisions.

The business community is not one single group. The needs of a downtown retailer can be very different from those of a rural agricultural operation, a contractor, a manufacturer or someone running a business from their home.

I would support regular engagement with businesses across the municipality and making sure those perspectives are brought into Council discussions early, rather than after decisions have effectively been made.

As a small business owner myself, I understand the importance of looking at municipal decisions through the practical lens of someone who has to open the doors, pay the bills, employ people and serve customers.

Council should consider the economic impact of its decisions, regardless of where a business operates.

7. What changes, if any, would you support to make Port Hope's planning, building and development processes more efficient and predictable?

I support reviewing our processes with the goal of making them clearer, faster and more predictable while maintaining appropriate standards.

Applicants should understand what is required of them, what the timelines are and where their application stands. Where possible, we should reduce duplication between departments and improve communication between municipal staff, applicants and Council.

I would also support regularly reviewing municipal policies and procedures to determine whether they are still achieving their intended purpose or creating unnecessary barriers.

Being pro-business does not mean lowering standards. It means having clear rules, applying them consistently and making decisions in a timely manner.

If we want people to invest in Port Hope, we need to give them confidence that they can navigate our system and know what to expect.