

2018 Municipal Elections Online Special Report

Local Councillor – Ward 1

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1. What new measures would you bring forth to insure that Halton Hills is an open for business minded community?

Several years ago Town Council identified the need to improve the industrial/commercial vs residential tax ratio by substantially increasing the number of businesses locating in Halton Hills. A new economic development strategy was developed which we must continue to refine, update and use to continue the great results we are seeing today. A new economic development website, investhaltonhills.com is providing potential business investors with all the information they may require in making a location decision, and we must continually update and refresh that website as required.

2. How can we attract employers that offer full-time, non-retail jobs to our community?

I believe businesses are looking for a municipality that is deemed to be efficiently run, financially sound, has an acceptable tax level and a great location for industrial growth. The recent arrival of companies to the Premier Gateway Industrial Park near the 401 highway and to the industrial areas in Acton show that Halton Hills is being recognized as a preferred location for business investment.

3. Please name the most important step the next Town Council can take to support economic growth in Halton Hills.

Town Council must continue to be unified and positive in their support to the economic development efforts and new initiatives of our highly competent staff, must continue the partnership with the Chamber in attracting new businesses as well as supporting existing businesses, and must continue to partner with the Mayor in his efforts as Mayor to promote Halton Hills as a world class place to do business, with the opportunity for employees to enjoy small town living at its best.

4. What would you do to control the municipal budget and if you plan any cuts where would they be?

In recent years Halton Hills senior staff from each department have really refined and simplified the budget selection process with a lot of preparatory work and they have been very successful in presenting a budget that includes the annual needs and identified projects while respecting Council's mandate to maintain a moderate tax increase. Council is then able to discuss and prioritize projects that should be included in the budget. Comparisons to other municipalities has verified that our tax rate is consistently around the average.

5. What are your views on "Places to grow" give us your opinion on what issues good and bad may arise with this type of growth and how would you approach these issues?

"Places to Grow"- a great initiative, established to responsibly plan for population growth areas, while allowing large rural areas, environmentally sensitive areas and farmland to be protected by the Greenbelt designation. The growth areas are well planned areas which, for economic, financial and logistical reasons, are located adjacent to established urban areas and their existing services. The mandated requirement for infill/ intensification within the urban boundaries reduces the need for equivalent areas of rural land, and does not require expenditures for roads and other services.

6. Some of our members are struggling to get both entry level and skilled workers. How would you attract and retain a strong and vibrant workforce in Halton Hills?

Given the identified shortage of available skilled workers within our community and elsewhere, we must promote the realization that the trades can provide excellent wages, job satisfaction and job security. Some jobs come and go, but you will always need a plumber. We must also strive to do all that is necessary to continue making Halton Hills a desired, enjoyable and preferable place to live for all residents, while continuing to attract the industries and businesses who would want to employ them.