

City of Guelph Mayoral Candidates*

*Responses from additional Ward 2 candidates were not received, including: John Legere, Nicholas A. Ross, and Andrew Donovan



Jason Blokhuis



Karen Farbridge



Joseph St. Denis



Cam Guthrie

SECTION 1: AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

1. What measures would you support and promote to ensure that individuals and families living in poverty have a safe and affordable place to live?

Jane Londerville (2014) of the Wellington Guelph Housing Committee has recommended that the City consider a. making an annual budget allocation for affordable housing fund; b. reducing fees and development charges for non-profit housing developers; c. adding a social housing component to development

I believe Guelph is poised to make a real and lasting difference in reducing poverty but it will need leadership that believes there is a role for municipal government. I trust in their process of engagement and their expertise of the County of Wellington in their update of the Housing and Homelessness Plan, the

Any measures which increase the speed at which affordable housing can be created will be considered and any reasonable solution utilized so long as it won't bankrupt any other essential services. I am a proponent of a universal "right to shelter" and believe our species is at a point where we can work together to ensure a basic standard of shelter for all citizens. This obviously

1. I believe there are creative ways to partner with developers on this issue. 2. Continuing to waive fees or development charges. 3. I have already publicly discussed allocating money (as the county does) to a reserve fund for

<p>charges; d. offering incentives such as additional density permission for developers who include affordable housing units in their plans; e. mandating affordable housing in large scale developments. I would support the implementation of all five of these recommendations, but with a cautionary note on the fourth (see below). We need more affordable housing units, but we want to avoid creating pockets of concentrated poverty. So we need to work with developers to ensure affordable housing units are widely available, and we need to work closely with local charities and social service providers to establish more community service hubs like the Shelldale Centre.</p>	<p>Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination and other community leaders developing the collective call for affordable housing for Guelph Wellbeing. I am committed to work with these leaders on implementation.</p>	<p>must be combined with an effort to create fulfilling jobs for the people who need this affordable housing.</p>	<p>affordable housing. 4. I support the homelessness strategy and have supported as a city councillor moving a strategy forward. However, it needs to be addressed more urgently at city hall. 5. I will encourage job growth and economic opportunities within the city. 6. I will make sure community partners that are addressing the needs of those in poverty are recognized and applauded regularly which will bring the issue of poverty into the public more often.</p>
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2. Do you agree to make annual contributions to an affordable housing reserve fund and strategically partner with key stakeholders to utilize the fund as needed? Please explain.

<p>Yes. Continuing from the caveat I noted in the previous questions, we need more affordable housing units, but we want to avoid creating pockets of concentrated poverty. So we need to work with developers to ensure affordable</p>	<p>Yes. The Affordable Housing Reserve Fund is in competition for surplus funds at the year end with several other reserve funds. The Housing Strategy under development by the City of Guelph includes the development of a</p>	<p>Yes. Affordable housing is a very important issue to me as I have many family members who have struggled and needed affordable places to live at times in their lives, and know many other families with members in the</p>	<p>Yes. As mentioned above the county has done an excellent job at this. They seem to be more "shovel-ready" when opportunities come. The city needs to do the same. Making sure we're always forward thinking as this</p>
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housing units are widely available, and we need to work closely with local charities and social service providers to establish more community service hubs like the Shelldale Centre.	policy to guide the contributions to and use of the Affordable Housing Reserve. I believe this is essential to bring clarity to Council's policy approach to supporting affordable housing projects and securing a more reliable source of funding.	same position. This is a no-brainer to me.	issue can't be solved with one building or one more roof. Many roofs are required and that means we need strong relationships with multiple partners. I will set the right tone with those partners to ensure needs are being addressed
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3. Would you support waiving development charges and other municipal fees for affordable housing geared towards low-income renters? Please explain.

Yes. Please see my comments in response to Questions 1 & 2.	Yes. Please see above answer.	Yes. Low-income renters are often families with children, and children need shelter from the storm and a foundation upon which they can build themselves into someone who will not grow into a person who needs low-income housing. Also see above statement.	Yes. I have already done this as your councillor. I will continue to make this standard practice within the city. Making sure all developments move through the system quickly is also important.
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SECTION 2: INCOME INEQUALITY

1. What role can the municipality play in reducing income inequality and income insecurity?

These issues are primarily the responsibility of the provincial government, and local governments should actively lobby for resources and programs to address income inequality and income security. The liberal	I believe local government can raise awareness of the impact on inequality in our community. Protecting services and ensuring they are accessible to people on low incomes (e.g. Affordable Bus Pass) can also help to	Making services and resources (access to transit, recreation centres, etc.) more easily available to low-income households is one way. Income insecurity is best addressed with job creation, which I believe is fostered when	As mayor, I want to attract employment opportunities to our city where some will have good quality, or living wage jobs. This past term I supported the affordable bus pass and the city should continue to offer rebates or
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<p>position is that a just society is one in which the greatest benefits redound to the least advantaged, largely because social supports for the least advantaged tend to benefit all. That said, there are public service programs that are entirely within municipal control that can be enhanced in a way that will help enhance employment and housing options for all, including the least advantaged. Affordable public transit is a key example. I think that if public transit services (Guelph Transit and Grand River Transit) were integrated so that one could take a GT bus from Guelph to Kitchener for about \$5, employment and housing opportunities would be enhanced for all.</p>	<p>reduce income inequality.</p>	<p>the city has a strong infrastructure and resources available for businesses and citizens alike.</p>	<p>subsidies for people and families that use recreation or other facilities.</p>
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2. Would you support and promote a living wage for the City of Guelph (paying all municipal staff a living wage and promoting the living wage among employers)? Please explain.

<p>Yes. I believe the City has an obligation to ensure that the people it employs make a living wage. It is important not to confuse the concept of a 'living wage' with the concept of a 'fair wage.' Living wage policies are intended to help</p>	<p>Yes. I commend the leadership of the Neighbourhood Support Coalition in establishing a living wage policy. I would support the City of Guelph establishing a living wage policy.</p>	<p>Yes. Just another no-brainer for me. Lack of respect for labour is one of the largest blights of our species, and a living wage is a base level of respect. We have to respect labour and remember that we are all in this together.</p>	<p>No. The city employs many individuals, for example - summer students, where a living wage to them may not be what is offered. I'm cautious of government, at any</p>
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prevent lower skilled workers from falling into poverty, while fair wage policies are intended to ensure that contractors pay their workers the prevailing union rates of pay, whether their workers are unionized or not. According to the Ontario Federation of Labour, while there is some variation across the province, fair wage schedules are usually within 10% of the going union rate for all work classifications, including clerical work (Schnek, 2001). According to the Ontario Federation of Labour, “a significant number of non-construction classifications, particularly those wherein women constitute a majority” still remain outside the scope of fair wage policies (Schnek, 2001). So it would seem there is still more work to be done to ensure living wages for all city workers. The living wage for Guelph Wellington has been calculated at \$15.95 per hour by the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination (Ellery & Muruvi, 2013). I am opposed to privatization and to public-private partnerships (PPPs). I am strongly in favour of keeping public services public, so I would reject outsourcing, particularly for public services like garbage collection and

level, believing that they know what is best to dictate to a business what they should pay. When more economic opportunities are created in the city, competition increases for those that are in demand to fulfill those jobs. Compensation should reflect the competition with the individual benefiting. This is a complex issue and I of course would never want someone getting "under-paid" for their work, however, I do not think we should be involved in someone's private business.

<p>waste management, water and wastewater services, and transit. ‘Outsourcing’ of these services is basically privatization by another name, producing profits for a handful of shareholders living elsewhere at the expense of local service users and workers. Private companies are not obliged to provide living wages for their workers, so I am opposed to the kind of unrestricted outsourcing that is now commonplace in municipal and other public corporations (food services and janitorial services within public facilities, for example). Where these services have already been outsourced, living wage guarantees should be required when new contracts are tendered and awarded.</p>			
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SECTION 3: FOOD INSECURITY

1. What municipal food related policies and programs would you support to ensure that people living on low-income have access to healthy and affordable food?

<p>I would work with planning and public health departements to assess and address geographic barriers to accessing to fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate foods for all</p>	<p>Food insecurity was identified as one of the three priority themes by Guelph Wellbeing. There is significant work occurring in the community to address food insecurity. I will</p>	<p>I don’t have any specifics to answer this questions right now but am open-minded to anything which ensures access to healthy and affordable food and shelter.</p>	<p>I have advocated several times over the past four years as councillor for community gardens. I am a strong supporter of the garden fresh boxes in our local</p>
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<p>community members by supporting, among other initiatives, community food distribution programs such as good food boxes, mobile markets and neighbourhood markets. I support neighbourhood markets (such as the successful Wednesday initiative in St. George's Square). I think other parts of the City should be similarly serviced. Community centres and recreation centres already exist in most parts of the city, and these could be used as local food hubs.</p>	<p>ensure the resources of our local government are aligned with the vision and goals of the community.</p>		<p>neighbourhood community groups and I will support those other non-profit sectors that help with food insecurity. Having access to it is important so making sure all areas of the city are given opportunities for help is important.</p>
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2. Would you commit financial and resource support for improved coordination of emergency food delivery by supporting the Seed Community Food Hub? Please explain.

<p>Yes. I think it is a laudable initiative.</p>	<p>Yes. Please see above answer.</p>	<p>Yes. I am not actually familiar with the Seed Community Food Hub, but am sure its goals are benevolent and sure there are those out there who lack the physical capability of going out to acquire their own food.</p>	<p>Yes. I would explore this further to see if this would be the best fit for those in need.</p>
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3. Would you support additional funding for local food-based initiatives that increase access to healthy food for those that cannot afford it?

<p>Yes. We need to stop cumulative disadvantage by ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to access healthy foods.</p>	<p>Yes. Please see above answer.</p>	<p>Yes. Granted, I am not the poster-boy for healthy eating, but we are certainly better off when our children are fed healthy meals, and</p>	<p>Yes. I would absolutely be willing to explore this further.</p>
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		many of the people who cannot afford it are rearing children, so this must always be considered.	
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SECTION 4: HEALTH INEQUITIES

1. What programs and policies would you support to increase health and well-being among low-income communities?

<p>Safe and secure housing and employment opportunities are key to health and well-being. Without housing and employment opportunities, the problem of cumulative disadvantage becomes more pronounced (Barry, 2006). People who are forced to live in poor housing with environmental toxins are more likely to suffer from poor physical health. People who cannot access meaningful job opportunities are more likely to suffer from poor mental health. The liberal position is that government has a duty to help equalize opportunities for those who are facing socially-obstructed obstacles and other impediments. As I have indicated, there are mechanisms within the scope of municipal authority that can be used to enhance access</p>	<p>The conversations we have started through Guelph Wellbeing along with many others in the community have shown we can save the system money while bringing better outcomes to individuals, families and the community if we transform our approach to service delivery and base policies on data and evidence not ideology.</p>	<p>I believe making massive improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure would be beneficial, as those are the cheapest and healthiest ways to travel. Adopting city policy of making essential shops and resources built within a reasonable walking/bicycling distance of low-income communities is also necessary.</p>	<p>I support programs to increase the availability of affordable housing. increase access to healthy food and programs that encourage our residents to live safe, healthy and active lifestyles. We must address these challenges as a community, by identifying the needs and coming together to develop solutions that use our combined resources most effectively and will not only solve the immediate challenges we face, but position people for healthy and vibrant futures.</p>
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to affordable housing and employment.			
<p>2. Do you support the use of municipal funds to ensure that individuals and families living at or below the living wage would have access to subsidies for recreation and cultural events? Please explain.</p>			
<p>Yes. We need to stop cumulative disadvantage by ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to participate in publicly funded recreational and cultural events.</p>	<p>Yes. Municipal services should be as accessible as possible to all members of the community. It is a matter of fairness. It is also smart. When we support the health of individuals, we reduce costs to the whole system and build a stronger community.</p>	<p>Yes. Kids need to recreate and culture feeds the soul. Every level of government should work to give kids recreation and soul-food.</p>	<p>Yes. I believe that it's important to ensure that all individuals and families in our city have access and opportunities to participate in the many great recreational and cultural events that take place in our community.</p>