



Questions for 2022 Municipal Council Candidates



Todd Attridge Councillor Ward 1

The Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce is the recognized voice of business in the Municipality of Port Hope. We support all businesses, not just our close to 200 members, and play a key role in advocating on their behalf regarding decisions made by levels of government that may impact them.

These questions are being asked as background research to form individual question(s) for our meet the candidate events and to keep the business community informed of your outlooks with regard to the future of the Municipality of Port Hope. Please be advised that your responses will be shared in full or in part with the community through our membership, community publications and Social Media networks.

1. What is your plan for the Municipality over the next 4 years?

We have to make serious strides in addressing new industry and affordable housing. These two issues need to be solved together because a major barrier to industry growth is the lack a workforce. 2) We need to support our downtown businesses during the Walton St. upgrades. 3) We need to revitalize John St. 4) We need a home-grown and comprehensive ecotourism and agri-tourism plan in place, 5) We need to accelerate regenerative farming initiatives and take advantage of the current Provincial and Federal grants

2. What do you believe is the biggest issue facing the business sector in the Municipality and how do you plan to address it?

It's hard to choose just one but I'll pick the Walton St. upgrades. We need to ensure our downtown businesses are accessible and supported during the disruptions. I won't pretend to have the solution but I do have some ideas. My approach would be to meet with the business owners and facilitate a discussion where we could create the best possible solution together. It will never be perfect but we can get it pretty close.

3. Explain your understanding of economic development and describe the significance to our community.

Economic development is the engine behind a community. It impacts our tax base, residential growth, investment opportunities, employment opportunities, community branding, and local environment. I believe Port Hope is better served to adopt a

"community economic development" strategy vs. a "traditional economic development" strategy. Our identity is more aligned with working together to address social, environmental, and economic priorities through grass-roots and local initiatives than looking afar and trying to attract absentee-owned industry through tax-incentives.

4. The downtown core is an integral part of the business community, however there are businesses throughout the municipality including, but not limited to, home based and agri-businesses. What do you believe the municipality can do to support the businesses throughout the entire community and not just in the downtown core?

We have to look at Port Hope as a municipality and not a town. This means all Councillors have to be well versed in the issues facing all citizens, not just their own Ward. If we're to vote on issues that impact people's livelihood then we have fully understand those issue before voting. For our agri-business, we need to make sure they have the tools they need to be successful which means access to reliable transportation routes, water, and telecom infrastructure, to name a few. Where and how we develop our rural areas will be important and require close collaboration.

5. The municipality has been restructuring and reconsidering their approach to economic development, building and planning. What do you think the best thing the municipality can do in the short, mid and long term to better support growth and development in a fair, timely and financially sound way ?

In all three terms, we need to craft an economic development plan that serves the community as a whole. This means decisions on zoning, infrastructure, industry, heritage, etc. all have to work mid-term, we need to intentionally seek out and support green industry that aligns with Port Hope's vision and values, and in the long-term, we need to develop other areas of the Municipality, like Wesleyville, to ensure we continue to grow at a manageable pace.

6. Agriculture and rural businesses are a key piece of the economic viability of this community. What do you think the Municipality should be doing to better support this sector?

I think the easiest first step is to proactively take an interest in and reach out to agriculture and rural businesses to see what support they need and not assume we know their businesses better than they do. Their struggles differ from the downtown businesses so must be dealt with differently. As opportunities open up in areas of agri-tourism or eco-tourism, we need to be sensitive to who wants to take advantage of those opportunities and respectful of who don't. Helping these businesses sever land parcels into smaller units so they can remain viable in hard times, working with the County to ensure these businesses have reliable transportation routes, and working with industry and government to ensure there is internet service, are examples of how we can help support.