

Trent Hills

Trent Hills Council Candidate



Municipal Elections

2026 YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR VOICE. YOUR VOTE.
INFORMED TODAY. STRONGER TOMORROW. • N897 FM

First Name *

Emilio

Last Name *

Ojeda

Campaign address *

Po Box 282 Warkworth ON K0K3K0

Website and social media *

<https://www.emojeda-ward4.ca/> <https://www.facebook.com/councilorEmOjeda> <https://www.instagram.com/em.ojeda.ward4/>

What specific, concrete steps are you prepared to take to support your position on the Alto High Speed Rail project as it relates to Trent Hills?

I do not support the ALTO High-Speed Rail project crossing Trent Hills. The potential impacts on our farmland, natural environment, private properties and rural communities are too significant.

If elected, I will advocate for alternative routes and existing transportation corridors that could reduce these impacts. I will also demand meaningful consultation and clear answers about property acquisition, farm access, road crossings, emergency services, noise, drainage and environmental impacts.

I support better transportation and modernization, but not at the unnecessary expense of our community.

Progress and preservation can (and should) go hand in hand.

Where do you stand on the proposed new bridge in Campbellford and what practical actions will you take to support your position? Explain.

I support the need for a second Trent River crossing in Campbellford to improve emergency access, traffic resilience and long-term transportation reliability.

My position is support with accountability. I would demand transparency on costs, financing and timelines, while protecting affected residents and the Trent River.

This investment should also improve pedestrian and cycling connections, accessibility and traffic circulation, not simply provide another route for vehicles.

Campbellford needs a second crossing, but it must be built responsibly, transparently and with long-term community benefit in mind.

What role should the municipality play in the proposal to build a new hospital?

I believe Trent Hills should be a strong advocate and active partner in the redevelopment of Campbellford Memorial Hospital and the proposed Campus of Care. While the municipality does not build or operate hospitals, Council can support planning, infrastructure, servicing, transportation and partnerships.

We also need to prepare for the workforce the project will require. Through my work with Northumberland County, I bring experience in workforce development, settlement services, employer engagement and attracting internationally trained professionals.

The new hospital is more than a building; it is an opportunity to strengthen health care, create jobs, attract professionals and support the long-term growth of Trent Hills.

My focus would be simple: advocate strongly, plan ahead, prepare our workforce and help remove barriers to moving this important project forward.

Name one or more specific actions you would take to address voter's concerns related to community safety?

For me, community safety goes beyond policing. It includes safe roads, reliable emergency communications, pedestrian safety, well-maintained public spaces and access to appropriate community supports.

I would strengthen communication between residents, Council, the OPP, Fire Services and community organizations to address concerns such as speeding, property crime, dangerous intersections and rural safety.

I also consider poor rural (or none) cellphone coverage a public-safety issue. Residents must be able to reach 911 in an emergency, and I would advocate for better coverage in our dead zones.

My approach is practical: listen, identify the problem, bring the right partners together, take action and report back.

How would you address the creation of affordable housing, giving three specific items you would introduce during your term on council? How many units would you want to see created by the end of your term?

Affordable Housing is one of my 10 Strategic Priorities. We need housing that allows young people to stay, families to put down roots, seniors to remain in their community, and local workers to live near their jobs.

I would focus on three practical actions: bring key housing partners together to develop real projects, use municipal tools and available land to encourage affordable housing, and support a wider range of housing options, including rentals, seniors housing, smaller homes and attainable homeownership.

Success is not simply about building more units. It is about asking: Can the people who make Trent Hills a community afford to call Trent Hills home?

How would you implement the More Homes Built Faster Act locally. giving two examples?

I believe the More Homes Built Faster Act should help increase housing supply without sacrificing good planning, farmland, the environment or the character of our communities.

For me, "built faster" should mean removing unnecessary barriers—not lowering standards. I would support appropriate infill and secondary units, while building partnerships for affordable, attainable and mixed-income housing.

Most importantly, we must ask who we are building for: young families, seniors and the people who work in our communities.

Let's build homes, but also neighbourhoods with character, green space, affordability and a genuine sense of community. Not soulless subdivisions!

What are your views on Strong Mayor powers and their use?

I believe Strong Mayor powers should be exercised transparently, responsibly and with respect for the entire Council.

My approach would emphasize collaboration, transparency and accountability. These powers should not replace discussion, compromise or the meaningful participation of elected Councillors, particularly on decisions involving taxpayers' money.

Strong leadership is not about concentrating authority; it is about working together, listening and making decisions openly in the best interests of the community.

What specific steps would you take to support local business?

Supporting Local Business is one of my 10 Strategic Priorities. Local businesses create jobs, strengthen our economy, support community activities and give Campbellford, Hastings, Warkworth and our rural communities their unique character.

I bring experience in community development, tourism, workforce development and entrepreneurship, including my role as a Director of RTO8 and my work with Northumberland County supporting newcomer entrepreneurs and connecting them with resources such as the Ontario Agri-Food Venture Centre.

If elected, I would focus on making municipal processes easier to navigate, encouraging downtown revitalization, connecting entrepreneurs with available supports, promoting tourism, and strengthening opportunities for agriculture, local food and farm-based businesses.

Supporting business also means addressing housing, workforce shortages, connectivity and infrastructure. Most importantly, Council needs to listen directly to business owners and ask: What do you need to succeed, and what barriers can we help remove?

Municipal government does not create successful businesses—entrepreneurs do. Our responsibility is to create the conditions in which they can succeed.

What are your plans to support recreational facilities and parks?

Recreation, Parks and Community Spaces is one of my 10 Strategic Priorities. Strong communities need places where people can meet, play, exercise and connect.

I would support well-maintained, accessible parks and recreational facilities, while ensuring new developments include trees, green spaces, trails and gathering places—not “soulless subdivisions.”

Recreation also supports tourism, local businesses and economic development, and I would pursue partnerships and outside funding whenever possible.

We don't just build houses; we build communities!

What is a reasonable municipal tax rate or increase? How would you achieve this, giving specific budget areas or line items?

Taxes and Municipal Services is another of my 10 Strategic Priorities. My goal is to keep tax increases as close to inflation as reasonably possible while protecting essential services.

I would focus on reviewing spending line by line, improving long-term capital planning, and pursuing grants, partnerships and responsible growth to reduce pressure on taxpayers.

I would protect essential services such as roads, winter maintenance, fire and emergency services, while ensuring residents clearly understand where their tax dollars go.

Fiscal responsibility means respecting every tax dollar, investing wisely and delivering good value for taxpayers.

What is a reasonable increase to the OPP budget? Give specific services or line items you would adjust to reach this goal?

I would not set an arbitrary percentage reduction because Trent Hills does not fully control the OPP billing formula. For 2026, the municipality's adjusted OPP billing increased from approximately \$2.553 million to \$2.834 million, about an 11% increase.

My goal would be to keep future increases as close to inflation as reasonably possible, while protecting frontline policing and emergency response.

I would focus on scrutinizing overtime, paid-duty and enhancement costs, maximizing provincial grants for targeted programs, and using partnerships with mental-health, addictions, housing, social-service and by-law services where they can appropriately reduce demands on police.

I would also use the OPP Detachment Board to demand clearer reporting and accountability on costs and results, particularly around speeding, dangerous driving, property crime, vandalism and rural safety.

Community safety and fiscal responsibility should not be competing objectives. We need both.

Name four new initiatives you plan to implement over your term to improve the quality of life for everyone in the municipality?

As a community builder, I would introduce four practical initiatives to improve quality of life across Trent Hills:

- 1.- Connected Trent Hills – Better Cellphone & Internet Service: Make unreliable cellphone coverage a priority, identify dead zones, and advocate with providers and government partners for better rural connectivity. Reliable cellphone service is also a public-safety issue, especially when residents need to reach 911.
- 2.- Trent Hills Community Action Table: Hold regular conversations in Warkworth, Campbellford, Hastings and rural areas, giving residents a stronger voice and ensuring Council follows up.
- 3.- Complete Communities Initiative: Ensure growth includes parks, trees, trails, sidewalks and gathering spaces. We need neighbourhoods, not soulless subdivisions.
- 4.- Age-Friendly & Youth-Friendly Trent Hills – Bring seniors, youth, families and community organizations together to improve accessibility, recreation, transportation, housing and opportunities for participation.

Not every solution requires significant new spending. Sometimes Council's most important role is to bring people together, build partnerships and turn good ideas into action.

How are you uniquely qualified to be elected to council that no one else can provide, but also giving at least one guilty pleasure?

Every candidate brings different experiences to the table. What makes me different is the combination of experiences I bring.

I am a community builder, public servant, entrepreneur, educator and former elected School Board Trustee. I have experience in government and governance, small business, economic development, tourism, settlement services and the non-profit sector. Through my work with Northumberland County and as a Director of RT08, I also understand how housing, workforce development, health care, tourism and economic development are interconnected.

Most importantly, I am a community builder. I believe leadership starts with listening, finding common ground, bringing the right people together and turning ideas into action.

And my guilty pleasure? That depends on the day: watermelon sorbet from the Village Pantry, a wonderful pastry from The Pastry Shop in Warkworth, or a chocolate milkshake from The Ice Cream Café in Campbellford. Supporting local businesses sometimes requires personal sacrifice, and I'm prepared to do my part!

Trent Hills became the village we needed to raise our kids, and that combination of professional experience, elected experience and genuine connection to this community is what I would bring to Council.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms