

Hamilton Township

Hamilton Township Council Candidate



Municipal Elections

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How will you maintain agricultural land in the face of increased pressure on development?

Agriculture is not simply another land use in Hamilton Township. It is an important part of our economy, our rural character and our community's future. Once productive farmland is converted to residential or other non-agricultural development, we generally do not get it back.

I believe growth and the protection of agricultural land can coexist, but only if we are disciplined about where development occurs.

As a Councillor, I would support directing new residential growth toward our existing settlement areas and other locations already identified as appropriate for development, rather than allowing development pressure to gradually consume productive agricultural land.

I would be very cautious about proposals to redesignate prime agricultural land for residential development. Any application would have to be considered on its individual merits and in accordance with provincial, Northumberland County and Hamilton Township planning requirements. Protecting our agricultural land base should remain a fundamental consideration when Council makes land use decisions.

I would support maintaining strong agricultural protections in Hamilton Township's Official Plan and zoning policies.

I would support protecting agricultural land from unnecessary fragmentation and applying provincial and municipal policies governing lot creation and severances.

I would encourage growth within existing settlement areas and make better use of land already designated for development before considering the conversion of productive agricultural land.

I would support agriculture-related businesses and appropriate on-farm diversified uses that help strengthen the economic viability of farming while remaining compatible with surrounding agricultural operations.

I would listen directly to farmers and agricultural organizations when planning policies affecting agricultural operations are being considered.

I would also work with Northumberland County as it completes its current review of agricultural mapping and policies to help ensure decisions affecting Hamilton Township are based on accurate information and reflect local conditions.

Development pressure will continue, and Hamilton Township does need housing and responsible economic growth. The answer, however, should not be to simply build wherever land is available.

My approach would be responsible growth: putting development in appropriate places while protecting productive farmland for future generations.

Agricultural land should not be viewed as vacant land waiting to be developed. It is a working, productive resource, and Council has a responsibility to treat it that way.

The Hunco Farms lands was up for sale in 2024. Where would you stand if it were to come back for sale or development while you are in office?

The Hunco Farms lands are a good example of the difficult decisions Hamilton Township will face as development pressure increases.

My position starts with one important principle. I would not support changing the designation of agricultural land simply because a developer is interested in purchasing it.

In 2024, Giampaolo Developments presented a preliminary mixed-use concept involving approximately 1,600 acres of lands in the Hunco Farms area. At that time, Hamilton Township confirmed that Council had not formally received a development application.

If a future proposal involving these lands came before Council, I would expect a complete and transparent planning process. I would want clear information on the agricultural and environmental impacts, traffic, roads, water and wastewater capacity, emergency services, infrastructure costs and, importantly, who would pay for them.

Residents must also have a meaningful opportunity to participate in the process.

Hamilton Township needs housing and economic development, but development of this scale could significantly change our Township. We should first determine how much growth can be accommodated within existing settlement areas and on lands already designated for development before considering the conversion of productive agricultural land.

I would also look closely at the financial impact on existing taxpayers. Increasing the tax base does not necessarily benefit residents if the infrastructure and services required by the development cost more to provide.

If an application came forward, I would consider the actual proposal, applicable planning policies, professional evidence and public input before making a decision.

My approach would be responsible growth that is planned in appropriate locations, financially sustainable and respectful of the agricultural and rural character of Hamilton Township.

How do you propose to ensure sufficient water supply for all residents in Hamilton Township, giving specific steps you would take?

A safe and reliable water supply has to be considered before approving significant new growth. We cannot approve development first and then determine where the water will come from afterward.

Hamilton Township has completed a Water Supply Master Plan covering Baltimore/Creighton Heights, Camborne and Buttersfield and looking at water needs over the next 20 years. It found that existing systems are generally meeting current needs, but additional capacity and infrastructure improvements will be required to support future growth.

As a Councillor, I would focus on turning that plan into action, with priorities, timelines and realistic costs. This includes supporting the recommended groundwater investigations and further work needed to increase capacity for the Baltimore/Creighton Heights system.

I would also ensure that water capacity is carefully considered when significant development is proposed. Development should not jeopardize the water supply of existing residents, and growth should pay its appropriate share of the infrastructure required to support it.

Continued monitoring of groundwater, municipal wells, system capacity and water consumption is also essential. Good information allows Council to identify potential problems before they become emergencies.

We also need to protect groundwater quality and quantity and consider the many rural residents who depend on private wells when making decisions involving development, land use and activities that could affect groundwater.

The water restrictions experienced during the prolonged dry conditions in 2025 also demonstrated the importance of conservation and drought planning.

My approach is straightforward: protect the water we have, increase capacity where evidence shows it is needed, make growth pay its appropriate share, and ensure future development is supported by a safe and sustainable water supply.

Before deciding how much Hamilton Township can grow, we need to understand how much growth our water resources and infrastructure can sustainably support.

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 not just about building more houses. It is about creating housing that seniors, young families, working people and residents on modest incomes can afford.

Hamilton Township cannot solve the housing shortage by itself, but Council can help remove unnecessary barriers and work with Northumberland County, developers and community organizations to increase housing options.

During my term, I would focus on three specific initiatives.

First, I would propose an Affordable Housing Action Plan with measurable targets and annual public reporting. Northumberland County's Official Plan has a target of 25 percent of new housing units being affordable, and Hamilton Township should contribute meaningfully toward that objective.

Second, I would make it easier to create additional residential units where appropriate. Hamilton Township already permits these units, subject to applicable requirements. I would review the municipal approval process and provide residents with clear information about requirements, costs and available County financial assistance. These units can provide housing for seniors, young adults, families and renters without requiring large new developments.

Third, I would use planning and partnerships to encourage a greater mix of housing. New developments should provide opportunities for smaller homes, rental units, seniors' housing, townhouses and other housing types appropriate for Hamilton Township. I would also explore partnerships with Northumberland County, nonprofit organizations and other levels of government, including opportunities involving suitable public land if available.

My target would be at least 50 new affordable housing units completed or committed for construction in Hamilton Township by the end of the four-year term.

That is a target, not a guarantee. Council does not control construction costs, interest rates, private investment or funding from other governments. I would report progress annually and, if we were falling behind, identify the reasons and what additional action Council could take.

Affordable housing must also be supported by adequate water, septic or wastewater capacity, roads and emergency services while respecting our agricultural land and rural character.

My goal is not simply more housing. It is the right housing, in the right places, at prices more Hamilton Township residents can afford.

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

The More Homes Built Faster Act is intended to increase Ontario's housing supply. In Hamilton Township, I believe it needs to be implemented in a way that recognizes our rural character, agricultural lands, private wells and septic systems, and limited municipal water infrastructure.

Building homes faster cannot mean planning them poorly.

First, I would make additional residential units easier to understand and create where they are permitted. I would review Township procedures for unnecessary delays or barriers and provide residents with clear information explaining the requirements for creating a legal additional residential unit. These units can provide housing for seniors, young people and families without requiring large new developments.

Building, fire, water, septic and other applicable requirements would still have to be met.

Second, I would identify where additional housing can responsibly be accommodated based on water supply, septic or wastewater capacity, roads, emergency services and other infrastructure. I would support streamlining municipal approvals for appropriate development in those locations while encouraging a greater variety of housing, including smaller homes, rental units and seniors' housing.

I would not interpret the legislation as a reason to unnecessarily convert prime agricultural land. We should first make effective use of lands already designated for growth.

Council must also understand the long-term infrastructure costs associated with development and use the financial tools available to ensure growth pays its appropriate share.

My approach would be simple: remove unnecessary barriers to appropriate housing, but do not remove responsible planning. We need more housing choices, but they must be built in appropriate locations, supported by adequate infrastructure and respectful of Hamilton Township's agricultural and rural character.

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

Hamilton Township does not currently have Strong Mayor powers. If the Province extended them to our Township during my term, I would approach their use with caution.

Municipal government works best when the Mayor and Councillors debate issues openly, listen to residents, consider professional advice and make decisions collectively.

Strong Mayor powers give the head of council additional authority in areas including the municipal budget, appointment of the CAO, organizational structure and certain by-laws related to provincial priorities.

If Hamilton Township received these powers, I would support three principles in their use: transparency, restraint and accountability.

Any significant use of Strong Mayor powers should be clearly explained to Council and the public. They should not become a routine way of bypassing legitimate debate or reducing the role of elected Councillors.

There may be circumstances where these powers could help address an urgent housing or infrastructure issue. In those cases, I would consider the specific issue, the evidence and the interests of Hamilton Township residents.

I would be particularly cautious about their use in the budget process. Residents deserve to understand not only spending or tax targets, but also what those decisions mean for municipal services.

My preference is collaboration before concentration of power. A Mayor provides leadership, but Council provides representation. I believe strong municipal decisions generally come from open discussion, good information and a Council willing to work together.

What specific steps would you take to support local business?

Small businesses, farms and entrepreneurs are an important part of Hamilton Township's economy. Supporting them means making the Township a place where it is easier to start, operate and grow a business.

First, I would improve communication with our business community. I would support regular business roundtables where farmers, small businesses, home-based businesses, tourism operators and entrepreneurs could meet with Council and staff to discuss opportunities and municipal barriers.

I would also make sure businesses are connected with the programs, grants, mentoring and other assistance available through Northumberland County and the Business and Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland.

Second, I would work to make the Township easier to do business with. I would review permitting, zoning, licensing and development processes to identify unnecessary delays or duplication. This does not mean removing important planning, environmental or safety standards. It means providing clear requirements, reasonable timelines and better communication.

Third, I would promote Hamilton Township businesses. The Township already has a local Business Directory, and I would build awareness of it and look for additional opportunities to promote our farms, trades, tourism operators, restaurants, home-based businesses and professional services.

Finally, I would make economic development part of our long-term planning. Hamilton Township is developing its first comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. I would want that strategy to produce measurable actions supporting business retention, investment, jobs and our rural economy.

My approach would be to retain the businesses we have, help them grow, encourage appropriate new investment and make Hamilton Township easier to do business with.

When someone wants to start or expand a business here, I want the question to be, "How can the Township help me do this properly?" rather than, "How difficult will the process be?"

What are your plans to support recreational facilities and parks?

Parks and recreational facilities are an important part of the quality of life in Hamilton Township. They provide places for children to play, seniors to stay active, families to gather and residents to connect.

My first priority would be to take care of what we already own. I would support long-term capital planning that identifies when facilities and equipment need repair or replacement so Council can plan for those costs rather than face expensive emergencies.

I would continue implementing the Township's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, prioritizing projects based on community use, safety, accessibility, affordability and demonstrated need.

I would also focus on making better use of our existing arenas, community centres, parks, sports fields and outdoor spaces before committing taxpayers to major new facilities. Programming should continue to evolve based on what residents will actually use.

Partnerships with community organizations, service clubs, sports associations, school boards and neighbouring municipalities could also provide additional opportunities while sharing costs and resources.

Accessibility should be incorporated as facilities, playgrounds and public spaces are repaired or replaced. I would also support maintaining and improving our waterfront parks at Bewdley, Gores Landing and Harwood while protecting the Rice Lake shoreline and natural environment.

For major improvements, I would pursue available grants and other funding sources and use development charges where appropriate so growth contributes toward the recreational infrastructure it requires.

My approach would be to maintain what we have, make better use of it, improve accessibility and expand facilities or programming where there is demonstrated need and a sound financial case.

Good recreation does not necessarily mean spending more money. It means making smart investments that provide lasting value to residents throughout Hamilton Township.

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

I believe a reasonable municipal tax increase in a normal year should be kept as close to inflation as possible. My target would be in the 2 to 3 percent range.

I would not promise that taxes could never exceed that amount. Municipalities face costs outside their control, including inflation, provincial requirements, emergency services, insurance and aging infrastructure. If a larger increase is necessary, Council should clearly explain why.

Hamilton Township's original 2026 budget proposed a 7.4 percent levy increase. Council requested another review, resulting in \$78,100 in reductions. That lowered the increase to 6.7 percent before assessment growth and 5.7 percent after assessment growth.

That demonstrates why Council should carefully challenge and review the budget before approving it.

As a Councillor, I would ask staff to provide options showing what would be required to achieve different tax increases, including a 2 to 3 percent target.

I would specifically review staffing and administration, vacancies and proposed new positions, overtime, consulting and professional services, discretionary programs and studies, and vehicle and equipment replacements. This does not mean arbitrary cuts. It means determining what is necessary, what provides value and what can be delayed, reorganized or delivered more efficiently.

I would not reduce taxes by postponing necessary road, bridge, water or other infrastructure work when doing so would create larger costs in the future.

I would also pursue available provincial and federal funding and ensure development charges and other available funding sources are properly used so growth pays its appropriate share.

Reserves should also be reviewed carefully. They are essential for long-term financial stability and should not routinely be used to artificially reduce taxes, but contributions should reflect realistic future requirements.

My target would be 2 to 3 percent in a normal year, but responsible budgeting is more important than making an artificial tax promise.

If Council cannot meet that target, residents deserve to know what is driving the increase, what Council tried to reduce, what alternatives were considered and what further reductions would mean for municipal services.

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

As a candidate for Hamilton Township Council, I think it is important to be clear about municipal responsibilities.

Hamilton Township is served by the Ontario Provincial Police. The Cobourg Police Service serves the Town of Cobourg. As a Hamilton Township Councillor, I would not have authority over the Cobourg Police Service budget.

For that reason, I do not believe it would be responsible for me to suggest a reasonable percentage increase or identify Cobourg Police Service programs or positions that should be reduced. Those decisions require detailed financial and operational information and are the responsibility of Cobourg and its Police Service Board.

In fact, under Ontario legislation, a municipality that maintains a municipal police board establishes the board's overall budget but does not have authority to approve or disapprove specific individual items in the board's estimates.

What I can address is policing in Hamilton Township. I would carefully examine our OPP policing costs, ask what is driving significant increases and look for opportunities to improve community safety without compromising essential police services.

I would also support preventative approaches involving road safety, community programs and appropriate partnerships with mental health and social services where they can help address problems before they require police intervention.

My approach would be to protect public safety, demand transparency about rising policing costs and ensure Hamilton Township taxpayers receive value for the money being spent.

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

One initiative I would introduce is a Community Conversations program, with regular informal meetings held in different areas of Hamilton Township.

Residents should not have to attend a formal Council meeting to have a meaningful conversation with their elected representatives. I would hold meetings in communities throughout the Township where residents could raise concerns, ask questions and discuss priorities directly with members of Council. I would also support an annual resident survey before the budget process so Council has a clear understanding of community priorities before spending decisions are made.

A second initiative would be a Township-wide road and community safety program. Speeding and road safety are concerns I have heard repeatedly from residents. I would bring together Township staff, Northumberland County, the OPP and residents to identify problem locations using speed data, collision information and community reports. We could then prioritize measures such as speed monitoring, signage, traffic calming where appropriate and targeted enforcement, and measure whether those actions are working.

A third initiative would focus on making better use of the facilities and public spaces we already own. I would encourage partnerships with community organizations, service clubs and volunteers to provide more affordable activities and events for children, families and seniors without necessarily requiring major new facilities or large increases in municipal spending.

I would place particular emphasis on opportunities for seniors and young people, as well as activities that bring different generations together and help reduce social isolation.

My goal would be to improve quality of life through better communication, safer communities and stronger community connections while being responsible with taxpayers' money.

Not every improvement requires a major new building or expensive program. Sometimes the best improvements come from listening to residents, using existing resources better and bringing people together.

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

I would not claim that I have a qualification no other candidate can provide. Every candidate brings different life and work experiences to the table.

What I bring is a combination of municipal and provincial government, financial, management, technology, business and community experience that I believe would be valuable on Council.

I spent seven years as Manager of Computer Systems with the Town of Ajax and another seven years in management with the Ontario Cancer Foundation, working within Ontario's provincial health system. This experience gave me an understanding of how government and public sector organizations operate, how decisions move through an organization, how budgets and resources are managed, and the importance of elected officials, management and staff understanding their respective roles.

Today, I work as an Accounting Specialist in a finance department. My career has also included management, technology, project management, business and self-employment. That experience has taught me to look at both sides of a decision: what are we trying to accomplish and what will it cost?

I have also been involved with Rotary, the Royal Canadian Legion, minor sports organizations and a municipal recreation advisory committee. Those experiences taught me the importance of listening, asking questions, working with people and being prepared to make decisions.

I have lived in Hamilton Township for ten years. I am not running because I believe everything needs to change. I am running because I believe my experience can help Council deal with challenges including development, infrastructure, affordability, taxation and protecting the rural character of our Township.

Perhaps the simplest way to describe what I bring is that I am comfortable with both numbers and people. I can work through the details of a budget or technical issue, but I am equally comfortable sitting down with a resident and listening to what matters to them.

As for my guilty pleasure, it is karaoke.

Put a microphone in front of me and there is a reasonably good chance I will use it. Whether everyone else considers that a pleasure may be open to debate.

Council involves serious business, but I also believe elected representatives should remain approachable, have a sense of humour and remember that behind every budget, policy and planning decision are the people who call Hamilton Township home.

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