

Deputy Mayor Cramahe

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Municipal Elections

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What distinguishes the role of deputy mayor compared to a councillor in your mind?

I see the Deputy Mayor as a step up from Councillor in terms of responsibility because you may be called on to fill in for the Mayor in their absence. I feel well prepared for this because of my current role as a Councillor.

I have stepped up to many challenges during this term of Council

A proposal to create an asphalt plant in Cramahe Township is under review. What is your position on the proposal, explaining what concrete actions, if any, you would take going forward?

The asphalt facility proposed for Cramahe Township is possibly one of the hottest topics in our municipality. I have previously declared a conflict with this issue because my daughter in law works for Human Resources in the Fidelity Civil Engineering division (building roads). There are mixed opinions on whether or not this actually constitutes a conflict.

I have recently been challenged by the community to investigate with the Integrity Commissioner whether or not an conflict exists. It's my intention to look further into this in the very near future. Our community values my input and wishes all voices to weigh in.

How would you characterize the relationship between residents, township staff and politicians, providing specific actions you would take to remedy concerns you may have about it?

Residents want a more responsive town hall. They do not feel that their voice is being heard.

I believe we can do better by focusing on customer service as a key priority. I know, because of my experience as a CEO and entrepreneur that "you grow what you measure". I would like to see us measure the number of calls received, our response times, any solutions delivered, and common themes of the issues we are addressing.

This information will help direct future efforts and making it a priority for staff to respond within the parameters of our municipal customer service policy.

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

The main safety concerns within our community are traffic related. We have received requests to monitor speeds as well as traffic flow.

I am hopeful that the traffic flow study of the 5 intersections around Victoria Square, which Council authorized at our August meeting, will provide some suggested solutions which our community can discuss at the public meetings that follow.

This is an area in our community where all residents eventual pass through and I believe community engagement is essential before any final decisions are made.

How would you address issues related to mental health and addiction of individuals living rough, giving specific steps or actions by council?

Living rough is largely a hidden issue in Cramahe Township because people are often couch surfing or living in a backyard trailer with an extension cord running from a house.

Mental health and addiction is a difficult issue to tackle because it's so complex. This is one of the key areas where I believe that municipalities need a New Funding Deal with the Province. Our property tax is being asked to support things that are not meant to be funded through property tax. We need to Provincial government to come to the table in a meaningful way.

Cramahe is fortunate to have recently received funding through the Community Health Centres Northumberland for our Rural Outreach Clinic in Colborne. These funds will help roster patients to primary care which will include access to mental health supports. While we are grateful for the grant, we must advocate for ongoing support as these needs will be ongoing.

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?

As the Cramahe Council representative and current Chair of the Intermunicipal Task Force on Housing Solutions, I have worked the past three years with elected representatives from the other 7 municipalities in Northumberland County to pull together innovative ideas and voices. We hosted a workshop for planners, building officials and CAOs to identify friction points and possibilities. We introduced motions that support a more diverse housing stock, advocate for zoning bylaw changes and encourage land donations by municipalities that will support affordable options.

In January 2026, Colborne lost 22 units to fire which also included a loss of life. It is a genuine tragedy.

We are waiting for the proposed replacement of maple Lodge as well as the final proposal for 123 King Street from Northumberland County. My hope is that Cramahe will have 60-100 newly built affordable units by the end of the next term of Council.

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

Introducing "as of right" language into our zoning bylaw can enable staff to act without council's approval thus helping to reduce red tape, speeding up the process and ultimately reducing the cost of building. The second easy fix would be adjusting our current ARU bylaw to meet the intensity suggested in Bill 23 of 3 units per property.

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

I am NOT in favour of Strong Mayor powers or the Appointed Regional Chairs. I see both of these moves as an erosion of democracy.

What specific steps would you take to support local business?

Agriculture is the main economic driver for Cramahe Township. We need to ensure that we are listening to our farmers as they face a changing climate and economic attacks from our neighbour to the south. Both of these issues will have an impact on all sectors of our economy but food security is national security. We must take this seriously.

The recent funding to install the waste water pipe to the industrial park is a potential game changer for Cramahe. It represents an opportunity to attract investment that will create new jobs. It needs to be at the forefront of our future planning.

The retail sector in downtown Colborne has benefitted from the recent streetscape improvements and attracted several new businesses. More community involvement can enhance these public spaces. I believe there is room for organization among the businesses to promote the retail sector. Support and direction from the municipality can help set this on a good path. The absence of a BIA and the loss of the Chamber of Commerce has left a void.

What are your plans to support recreational facilities and parks?

I believe in an active community. Cramahe is fortunate to have several main parks within our municipality as well as the Keeler Centre. Greenspace, cycling and hiking trails are also important to Cramahe residents. We must continue to maintain these assets.

I often make the distinction between needs and wants. Investment in recreation facilities will never take precedence over emergency services and roads in my view.

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

Municipalities in Ontario raised their property tax rate between 19-24% over the last 4 years. These increases are province-wide and were implemented by all of the 444 municipalities. I believe they reflect the services downloaded to municipalities without adequate funding for things that were previously Provincial responsibilities. Cramahe's increase over the last 4 years was at the lower end of this scale it's simply unsustainable.

Housing, healthcare and social services are 3 key areas where I think the Provincial government needs to come to the table in a more meaningful way. It's time for a serious funding overhaul. We are asking too much of our property tax and it's the only real way municipalities have to generate revenue.

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

OPP budgets have ballooned across Ontario while Cramahe has not experienced that same impact on our budget. In Cramahe, our OPP costs have remained relatively flat and the cost/household has actually decreased.

I believe a cost of living increase is a reasonable expectation.

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

- 1) I intend to cultivate democracy through a Student Banner Project with our youth by asking students to provide artwork for our public spaces based on a civic question.
- 2) I hope to establish Business Recognition Awards which brings people together to celebrate and honour excellence among our business community.
- 3) I would like to see a Municipal Newsletter where residents can be better informed about what is going on in each department within the municipality.
- 4) We need Measurable Outcomes attached to the goals in our Strategic Plan.

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

During my first term on Council, I've invested the time in learning how to do the job; I've built relationships with people who can help move the dial forward for Cramahe; I'm familiar with the key issues; I continue to treat the role with the seriousness that it deserves. Whether I'm researching, voting on policy, or making suggestions at committee, I never lose sight of who it is that I work for. My goal is always to ensure that my voice reflects the concerns of my community. With the background knowledge, I'm ready to hit the ground running.

As a lifelong resident whose children and grandchildren all live in Northumberland County, I regularly experience first hand the benefits of living in this amazing part of the world. Whether it's trip to the farmers market, a trail hike or bike ride, a swim at Little Lake or all of these things in a single day, we have so much to be grateful for in Cramahe Township.

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