

Port Hope

Port Hope Council Candidates



Municipal Elections

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First Name *

Vicki

Last Name *

Mink

Campaign address *

Port Hope Ward 1

Website and social media *

www.votevickimink.ca

Give one or more specific things related to the New Nuclear Power Generator proposed for Wesleyville you will want to see happen before the end of your term on council?

Council's role is not to determine whether the project proceeds or to control its timeline. Decisions about nuclear generation are primarily the responsibility of provincial and federal governments, regulators, and the project proponents.

As a councillor, my responsibility is to work collaboratively with Council, municipal staff, community partners, and residents to ensure Port Hope's interests are represented throughout the process. Council decisions must always be made within the broader context of municipal responsibilities, including our budget, strategic priorities, legislated obligations, infrastructure needs, and the diverse perspectives of our community.

If re-elected, I will continue to advocate for a strong community voice, ensure residents have opportunities to be informed and heard, and carefully consider how any potential impacts or benefits align with Port Hope's long-term interests. My commitment is not to promise outcomes that are outside municipal authority, but to ensure Council remains engaged, informed, and focused on protecting the interests of our community.

How would you characterize the Port Hope Area Initiative clean up, giving any steps necessary to address concerns you may raise?

The Port Hope Area Initiative is one of the most significant projects in our community's history. While important work has been completed to address historic contamination, it is also clear that many residents have concerns about the project's direction and long-term impacts.

Council does not administer the cleanup. Council's role has some limited ability to listen to residents, ask questions, advocate for the community, and ensure municipal interests are represented. Given the significance of this issue, community voices must be central to decisions moving forward.

In speaking with residents, I hear support for remediating identified contamination hotspots. However, many residents question whether the cleanup needs to continue to the extent originally envisioned. Concerns about property values, property marketability, and the overall process are raised frequently, often more than concerns related to personal health.

Moving forward, I believe there needs to be an open and transparent discussion about the future direction of the cleanup. Decisions should be based on sound science, meaningful community consultation, and clear communication so residents understand both the benefits and implications of any future work.

This approach aligns with my broader belief that major decisions affecting Port Hope should be made with residents, not simply for them.

How would you balance the requests of developers with the heritage aspects of existing neighbourhoods and preservation of significant buildings?

Port Hope's challenge is not choosing between growth and heritage. It is managing change while protecting the qualities that make our community distinctive.

Heritage is a fundamental part of Port Hope's identity and contributes significantly to our quality of life, tourism appeal, and economic vitality. At the same time, we need growth, investment, and new housing opportunities to support the community's future.

Development proposals should be evaluated through the appropriate planning and heritage frameworks, with Council taking the time to understand all perspectives and the potential long-term impacts of its decisions. Meaningful public consultation is also essential, particularly when proposals affect established neighbourhoods or significant heritage assets.

I do not want Port Hope to become an unreasonable place to invest and develop, but I also do not believe growth should come at the expense of the character and heritage that make people choose Port Hope in the first place. The goal should be thoughtful development that respects our past while preparing for our future.

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 the most important challenges facing Port Hope, but Council's role is to set priorities, approve policies, and provide oversight. Staff are the housing and planning professionals who should advise Council on realistic targets based on municipal capacity and the development pipeline.

Three actions I would support are:

1. Continue expanding opportunities for additional residential units and ensure property owners understand how to take advantage of those opportunities.
2. Reduce unnecessary barriers and delays in the housing approval process so that well-designed housing projects can move forward more efficiently. Port Hope should not develop a reputation as an unreasonable place to build housing.
3. Encourage the creation of housing in existing built areas, including opportunities to restore and convert historic downtown buildings for residential use while ensuring appropriate fire, flood, and safety requirements are met.

We also need to address the opposition that can arise around new housing developments. Meaningful public consultation is important, but opposition alone should not prevent needed housing from moving forward.

As for the number of units, I would not support setting an arbitrary target. Instead, I would expect staff to establish realistic housing goals and key performance indicators, report regularly on progress, and ensure Council is focused on removing barriers to achieving those outcomes.

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

The role of Council is not to personally implement provincial legislation. Council's responsibility is to set priorities, approve policies and resources, and provide direction, while municipal staff evaluate legislative requirements and bring forward practical options for implementation.

Consistent with my approach to housing, I would support implementing the intent of the More Homes Built Faster Act in ways that align with Port Hope's needs and strategic priorities.

Two examples include:

1. Supporting additional residential units and gentle density by continuing to remove barriers that prevent homeowners from creating secondary suites or other permitted housing options.
2. Improving the efficiency and predictability of planning and development approvals by identifying unnecessary delays, establishing clear performance measures, and ensuring applicants receive timely responses and guidance throughout the process.

More broadly, I would ask staff to identify any additional actions required under provincial legislation, provide Council with options, and incorporate those actions into the Municipality's strategic planning and housing objectives. Council's role is to ensure staff have the resources, direction, and accountability needed to achieve meaningful results.

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

I do not support Strong Mayor powers.

While I understand the Province's objective of accelerating decision-making, I believe municipal government works best when decisions are made collectively by Council. Strong Mayor powers place significant authority in the hands of one individual and can create unnecessary tension within Council and the community.

The role of Mayor is already demanding, requiring leadership on complex issues, difficult decisions, and matters that can be highly emotional for residents. Strong Mayor powers can place the Mayor in the difficult position of becoming the primary focus of public criticism for decisions that would traditionally be debated and shared by the full Council.

More broadly, I believe there is often a misconception that individual councillors or a mayor can simply decide to make something happen. In reality, municipalities operate within provincial legislation, budget constraints, strategic priorities, and established governance processes. Council's role is to work collectively to set direction and make policy decisions, while implementation is primarily the responsibility of municipal administration.

For those reasons, I prefer a collaborative governance model where elected officials work together to make decisions that reflect the interests of the entire community.

What specific steps would you take to support local business?

Council's role is to set priorities, establish policies, and ensure municipal resources are aligned with economic development goals. The day-to-day work of attracting and supporting businesses is best led by Economic Development staff, who should be empowered to succeed.

My priorities would be to:

1. Empower Economic Development staff with the tools, resources, and authority needed to actively pursue investment and business growth opportunities.
2. Promote Port Hope as a destination to start, locate, and grow a business, taking advantage of our strategic location along the Highway 401 corridor and Lake Ontario.
3. Support both small businesses and larger employers, including attracting anchor businesses that provide stable, full-time employment opportunities and help broaden the municipal tax base.
4. Strengthen partnerships with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Northumberland Manufacturers Association, Heritage Business Improvement Area, and Northumberland Federation of Agriculture to identify opportunities and address challenges.
5. Foster a municipal "can-do" culture, where staff work with businesses to find solutions and alternatives rather than simply identifying obstacles.

More broadly, I believe Port Hope should take a proactive rather than passive approach to economic development. By creating a business-friendly environment, improving municipal responsiveness, and supporting investment, we can help local businesses succeed while creating new employment opportunities for residents.

What are your plans to support recreational facilities and parks?

Port Hope is already fortunate to have a strong network of parks, trails, recreation facilities, and natural spaces. Given the infrastructure and financial pressures facing the municipality, my priority is to maximize and maintain what we already have before automatically adding new facilities.

I would focus on ensuring existing parks and recreation assets are well-maintained, accessible, and easy for residents to enjoy. Relatively practical improvements can often have a significant impact on the user experience, including better placement of benches, lighting, garbage receptacles, and accessibility features.

As with other municipal assets, recreation facilities must be managed responsibly to ensure they remain sustainable and affordable for future generations. My goal would be to make the most of the facilities we have today while carefully evaluating future investments based on community need, long-term operating costs, and overall value to residents.

The most attention should be given to improving the East Beach and Centre Pier.

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

I am not prepared to promise a specific tax increase before sitting at the Council table and reviewing the budget in detail. I do not believe it is responsible to identify individual cuts or spending reductions without understanding their full implications for residents and municipal services.

That said, I consistently hear from residents that taxes are too high, and I believe protecting affordability must remain a priority. As a general principle, I would like to see annual tax increases remain below 3%, provided that doing so does not compromise essential infrastructure and core municipal services.

My approach would be guided by several priorities:

- Focus on essential infrastructure and services first, including roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, and other core municipal responsibilities.
- Carefully evaluate new initiatives and ongoing operating costs to ensure they deliver clear value to residents.
- Improve operational efficiency by identifying process improvements and eliminating unnecessary duplication or inefficiencies.
- existing municipal assets effectively before committing to significant expansions that create additional long-term operating costs.
- the tax base through commercial and light-industrial growth, reducing reliance on residential taxpayers to fund municipal services.

Ultimately, responsible budgeting requires balancing affordability with the need to address infrastructure challenges and maintain the services residents depend on. Each budget should be evaluated on its own merits, with decisions based on facts, priorities, and the long-term financial health of the municipality.

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

I do not believe it would be responsible to commit to a specific percentage increase, or identify particular cuts or additions, without first reviewing the Police Service budget in detail and understanding the operational implications for 2027 and beyond.

Unlike many municipal departments, policing has unique operational, legislative, and public-safety responsibilities. Port Hope also has two policing arrangements, with the Port Hope Police Service and OPP services operating under different governance and funding models. Any discussion about funding should consider the full picture, including service levels, community expectations, contractual obligations, and available revenue sources.

My approach would be collaborative. I would want Council to have a comprehensive discussion with the Police Services Board, police leadership, and municipal staff to understand current needs, future pressures, and opportunities for efficiencies before making budget decisions.

As with the municipal budget, my priority would be to balance affordability for taxpayers with the need to provide effective public services. Budget decisions should be evidence-based, transparent, and aligned with the community's policing needs rather than driven by arbitrary targets.

For that reason, I am not prepared to propose a specific budget increase or identify specific line-item adjustments without first receiving a fulsome presentation and analysis from those responsible for delivering the service.

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

My focus is not on creating new initiatives simply for the sake of creating something new. Council adopted a new Strategic Plan in 2025, and I believe the next Council should focus on delivering that plan, improving existing services, and being responsible with taxpayers' money before introducing significant new programs.

Residents consistently tell me they are concerned about affordability, and every new initiative comes with costs, staffing requirements, and competing priorities. My preference is to focus on improving what we already have and ensuring core services are delivered well.

That said, there are several opportunities I would support:

- 1. Transportation and Traffic Working Group that brings together rural and urban residents, police, bylaw, roads staff, and other stakeholders to identify practical solutions to transportation and traffic concerns across the municipality. This could align with the Vision Zero framework already adopted by Council.
- 2. Improved municipal customer service, including continued implementation of a more centralized and responsive approach that makes it easier for residents and businesses to access information and municipal services.
- 3. Process improvement and operational efficiency initiatives that reduce delays, improve communication, and make municipal services easier to navigate.
- 4. Expanded economic development efforts focused on attracting employment, supporting local businesses, and broadening the tax base to help protect affordability for residents.

Ultimately, my priority is not launching the greatest number of new initiatives. It is ensuring the Municipality delivers on its existing commitments, maintains essential services, manages growth responsibly, and improves the quality of life for residents in a financially sustainable way.

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 bring a unique combination of municipal experience, professional leadership, education, and community involvement.

Over the past eight years on Port Hope Council, including one year as Deputy Mayor, I have helped navigate complex issues such as the Walton Street Reconstruction, Port Hope Area Initiative, heritage preservation, infrastructure planning, accessibility, tree protection, and municipal service delivery. I have also served as Council Chair of Works & Engineering and Corporate Services, Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, a member of the Port Hope Public Library Board, and a representative on the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors (as chair and vice chair), Conservation Ontario, and the Conservation Authority Transition committee.

What sets me apart is the breadth of experience behind my municipal service. My educational background includes History, Architectural Technology, Tourism and Hospitality Administration, and Business Administration. Professionally, I worked in leadership roles focused on process improvement and change management. Together, those experiences allow me to understand planning and development proposals, appreciate the importance of heritage and tourism, evaluate organizational effectiveness, and approach complex issues from multiple perspectives.

I have also travelled extensively throughout Ontario and around the world, which has provided valuable insight into how other communities balance growth, infrastructure, heritage preservation, tourism, and quality of life. Combined with my genuine interest in connecting with people, these experiences help me bring a broad, practical, and well-rounded perspective to Council decisions.

Most importantly, I have learned that good decisions come from listening, asking questions, doing the research, and understanding an issue before reaching a conclusion.

As for a guilty pleasure, I always look forward to the annual PoliAg Tour organized by the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture. I enjoy spending the day touring farms, learning about different aspects of agriculture, and connecting with residents, municipal staff, and community leaders. It may not be everyone's idea of fun, but I genuinely enjoy it.

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