

Deputy Mayor Cobourg

Candidates for Deputy Mayor Cobourg



Municipal Elections

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

First Name *

Adam

Last Name *

Bureau

Campaign address *

39 King Street West, Apt B

Website and social media *

adamb5657@gmail.com

Describe in detail the role of deputy mayor as you see it? Explain how it is different than a councillor's role?

I see the role of Deputy Mayor as both a member of Council and an additional leadership position with greater responsibilities to the municipality as a whole.

Like every Councillor, the Deputy Mayor has a responsibility to listen to residents, study reports, ask difficult questions, participate in debate, make informed decisions and vote in the best interests of the community. The Deputy Mayor does not have greater voting power around the Council table simply because of the title.

Where I see the role being different is in the additional responsibility that comes with it.

The Deputy Mayor must be prepared to step into the Mayor's role when required, including chairing meetings and representing the municipality at official functions. That requires a strong understanding of municipal procedure, legislation and the issues facing the community.

In Cobourg, another significant difference is that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor also represent Cobourg on Northumberland County Council. That is extremely important because many services affecting Cobourg residents—including social services, housing, paramedic services and other regional responsibilities—are delivered at the County level.

I believe the Deputy Mayor therefore needs to be a strong voice for Cobourg at both levels of government. Decisions made at County Council can have significant impacts on our residents, businesses and municipal services, and Cobourg needs to be at the table when those decisions are made.

I also see the Deputy Mayor as someone who should help build relationships around the Council table. Leadership does not mean always getting your own way. It means listening, bringing people together, respecting different opinions and helping Council find a path forward when members disagree.

The Deputy Mayor should also be accessible to residents and support the Mayor when appropriate, while maintaining the independence to disagree when they believe a different decision is in Cobourg's best interests.

Most importantly, I do not see the Deputy Mayor as a second Mayor. The Deputy Mayor remains one member of a democratically elected Council.

The difference is the additional responsibility to be prepared to lead when called upon, represent Cobourg strongly at Northumberland County, and help Council work together effectively.

For me, the title isn't about having more power. It's about accepting more responsibility.

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

Community safety is one of the most important issues facing Cobourg, and I believe we need both immediate action and long-term solutions.

First, I would continue advocating for visible, proactive policing in the areas experiencing the greatest problems. Cobourg Police already has initiatives such as Safer Streets Cobourg, increased patrol visibility, bail-compliance enforcement, the Community Camera Registry and the Trespass Authority Agent Program. I want to see the results of these programs measured and successful initiatives continued.

At the same time, as Deputy Mayor I would respect the separation between Council and police operations. Council does not direct the Chief where officers should patrol or who should be investigated. My responsibility would be to advocate for community safety, ensure appropriate resources are available and demand accountability for results.

Second, I would champion a Cobourg Community Safety and Well-Being Task Force. I want residents, businesses, police, fire, Northumberland County, mental-health and addiction professionals, housing and social-service providers, and people with lived experience working at the same table. The goal would be measurable actions—not another committee that simply talks about the problems.

Third, I would push other levels of government for action on the issues municipalities cannot solve alone. Cobourg cannot build the mental-health facilities, addiction-treatment capacity, supportive housing or correctional facilities Ontario needs by itself. I would continue advocating to the County, Province and federal government for resources and legislative changes where required.

Fourth, I want to expand community-based crime prevention. Cobourg Police has already piloted Neighbourhood Watch in two neighbourhoods. I would support evaluating the results and, if successful, encouraging its expansion into other interested neighbourhoods. Community safety works best when residents, businesses and police work together.

Finally, we need to recognize that enforcement and compassion are not opposites. People should be able to use our parks, beaches, downtown and neighbourhoods without feeling unsafe, while people experiencing homelessness, addiction or mental-health crises should have somewhere appropriate to turn for help.

My goal is a Cobourg where we enforce our laws, support our police and first responders, protect our neighbourhoods and businesses, and connect vulnerable people with the services they need.

Community safety is not achieved by one organization. It takes the Town, Police Service, County, Province, community organizations and residents working together—and as Deputy Mayor, I would work to bring those partners to the same table.

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

Mental health, addiction and homelessness are some of the most difficult issues facing our community. I do not believe we can police our way out of them, but I also do not believe compassion requires us to accept unsafe behaviour in our parks, downtown or neighbourhoods.

My approach would combine treatment, housing, accountability and public safety.

First, I would champion a Cobourg Community Safety and Well-Being Task Force specifically focused on homelessness, mental health, addiction and community safety. I would bring the Town, Northumberland County, police, fire, paramedics, health and mental-health providers, addiction services, businesses, residents and people with lived experience to the same table. It would have measurable objectives and report publicly on progress.

Second, I would use Cobourg's voice at Northumberland County to push for a stronger coordinated outreach and case-management approach. Homelessness services and affordable housing are County responsibilities. Rather than having someone in crisis repeatedly interacting with police, paramedics, hospitals, outreach workers and shelters separately, I want agencies working together on an individualized plan aimed at getting that person stabilized and, ultimately, housed.

Third, I would advocate directly to the Province for significantly greater access to mental-health care, detox, addiction treatment, rehabilitation and supportive housing. Municipalities cannot create the health-care system themselves, but Council can advocate strongly, meet with Ministers and our MPP, submit funding requests and work collectively with other municipalities.

Fourth, Council must continue protecting our public spaces. Cobourg's parks, beaches, sidewalks and downtown belong to everyone. I support appropriate enforcement of municipal bylaws and laws dealing with dangerous or illegal behaviour while simultaneously offering people pathways to services and treatment.

Finally, I want measurable results. I would ask for regular reporting on issues such as homelessness, successful housing placements, repeat calls for emergency services, outreach contacts, access to treatment and impacts on public spaces. If an approach isn't working, we should be willing to change it.

This is not about choosing between the person sleeping outside and the resident or business owner who wants to feel safe. We have responsibilities to both.

My goal is to move Cobourg away from continually managing the crisis and toward a coordinated system that gets people the help they need while restoring safety and confidence in our community.

How effective do you think the Emergency Care Bylaw is in addressing the needs of unsheltered people who need a temporary home? What, if anything, would you change?

I believe Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Bylaw has an important role, but we need to be clear about what it can and cannot accomplish.

The bylaw can establish minimum standards for emergency shelters operating within Cobourg. It allows the Town to address issues such as health and safety, operating plans, occupancy, security, property maintenance, a code of conduct and accountability to the surrounding community.

Those protections are important both for people staying in an emergency shelter and for the neighbourhood surrounding it.

However, a municipal licensing bylaw does not solve homelessness.

Emergency shelter should be exactly that—emergency and temporary accommodation. The real measure of success is whether we are helping people move from living rough, into emergency accommodation, and ultimately into stable and appropriate housing.

If elected Deputy Mayor, I would support reviewing the bylaw regularly to determine what is working, what is not working and whether changes are needed based on actual results. I would want input from residents, shelter users, neighbouring businesses and residents, emergency services, Town staff, Northumberland County and service providers.

I would also advocate at Northumberland County for a stronger pathway from the street to shelter, from shelter to transitional housing, and ultimately to permanent housing with appropriate mental-health, addiction and other supports where required.

I would not weaken reasonable health and safety standards simply to create more shelter spaces. A temporary bed needs to be safe and dignified.

At the same time, we must ensure that our regulations do not unintentionally create unnecessary barriers to providing emergency accommodation. Any proposed changes should be reviewed carefully for effectiveness, legality and human-rights obligations.

Ultimately, my goal would not be to measure success by how many emergency shelter beds we have. Success should be measured by how many people no longer need them.

Emergency shelter is an important safety net, but it should be a pathway toward stability—not the final destination.

How would you address the creation of affordable housing, giving one or more 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 biggest challenges facing our community. My goal would be to see at least 100 new affordable housing units created in Cobourg over the next four-year term, through a combination of County projects, partnerships with non-profit and private-sector builders, and additional residential units.

I want to be clear that I cannot simply promise that the Town will build 100 units. Northumberland County is responsible for affordable and subsidized housing, so as Deputy Mayor I would use my seat on both Cobourg Council and Northumberland County Council to bring the two levels of municipal government together.

I would introduce several specific initiatives.

First, I would propose that Cobourg develop a Municipal Affordable Housing Action Plan with measurable four-year targets. I want Council to identify municipally owned properties that may be appropriate for affordable or attainable housing and determine whether partnerships with Northumberland County, non-profit organizations or other housing providers could turn those properties into homes.

Second, I would protect and strategically use Cobourg's Affordable Housing Reserve. Council has already committed \$500,000 to that reserve for 2026. I would want those funds leveraged wherever possible with County, provincial, federal, non-profit or private investment rather than simply having Cobourg taxpayers carry the entire cost.

Third, I would encourage additional residential units. Basement apartments, secondary suites, apartments over garages and other appropriate units can add housing throughout our existing community. Northumberland County currently offers eligible projects an affordable-housing grant of up to \$20,000 per unit, so I would work to make sure Cobourg homeowners know these opportunities exist.

Fourth, I would advocate at Northumberland County to move affordable housing projects forward in Cobourg. The planned development at 473 Ontario Street alone is intended to create 62 affordable units. I would work with the County to identify the next opportunities rather than waiting until one project is completed before planning another.

But affordability cannot simply mean building more expensive homes and hoping prices eventually come down. We need rental housing, rent-geared-to-income housing, attainable ownership opportunities, seniors' housing and supportive housing.

At the end of four years, I want residents to be able to measure our results.

My target would be at least 100 new affordable units created in Cobourg, with additional projects approved or underway for the following term.

Housing is not something one level of government can solve alone. My job as Deputy Mayor would be to bring the Town, County, other governments and housing partners together and turn available land, funding and programs into actual homes.

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

The More Homes Built Faster Act is provincial legislation, so my role locally would be to make sure Cobourg responds responsibly to the housing targets and requirements set by the province while protecting the character of our community.

First, I would support more housing options within our existing neighbourhoods. Provincial legislation allows additional residential units in many circumstances. I would support homeowners who want to legally create basement apartments, secondary units or appropriate additional residential units, while ensuring they meet building, fire, servicing and safety requirements. This can create more attainable rental housing for seniors, young people and families without requiring large new developments.

Second, I would focus on making sure growth is supported by the infrastructure and services it requires. Building more homes also means planning for roads, water and wastewater capacity, parks, recreation, transit and emergency services. I would advocate for Cobourg to pursue provincial and federal infrastructure funding so the entire cost of growth is not simply placed on existing taxpayers.

I support building more housing, but I don't believe "build faster" should mean abandoning good planning. Cobourg needs a range of housing—rental, attainable, seniors' housing and family homes—but growth should respect our Official Plan, our established neighbourhoods, our heritage and the infrastructure capacity of our community.

We can welcome new neighbours and build the housing people need while still protecting what makes Cobourg, Cobourg.

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

I am adamantly opposed to Strong Mayor Powers.

I believe municipal government works best when decisions are made around the council table, with every elected member having a meaningful voice and being accountable to the residents who elected them.

Strong Mayor Powers fundamentally change that balance. They give the mayor significant additional authority, including powers relating to the municipal budget, the appointment of the CAO, the organizational structure of the municipality, certain senior staffing decisions, committees, and—in circumstances connected to provincial priorities—the ability to veto certain council decisions. (Ontario)

I did not run for municipal office because I believe one person should make the major decisions for our community. I believe in democracy, collaboration and healthy debate.

Council members are elected by the same residents and each brings different experiences, ideas and perspectives to the table. Sometimes we will disagree. That is part of democracy. Those disagreements should be worked through openly, respectfully and transparently.

As Deputy Mayor, I would advocate for decisions to continue to involve the entire Council wherever the legislation allows. I would also support calling on the Province of Ontario to reconsider Strong Mayor Powers and restore a more traditional council-based decision-making model.

Cobourg does not belong to the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor or any individual Councillor. It belongs to the people who live here.

My view is simple: seven people were elected to represent Cobourg, and seven voices should matter.

What specific steps would you take to support local business?

Supporting local businesses would be one of my priorities as Deputy Mayor. As a small business owner myself, I understand that businesses need more than words of support—they need a municipality that listens, removes unnecessary barriers where it can, and creates an environment where businesses can succeed.

I would focus on several specific steps.

First, I would strengthen communication between Council, the DBIA, the Chamber of Commerce, tourism operators and businesses throughout Cobourg. I want business owners at the table when municipal decisions directly affect them.

Second, I would review municipal fees, licensing requirements and processes that affect businesses. That does not mean eliminating necessary rules or giving special treatment. It means regularly asking whether our processes are reasonable, understandable and achieving their intended purpose.

Third, I would continue advocating for a safe and welcoming downtown. Businesses cannot thrive if customers, employees or business owners do not feel comfortable in our commercial areas. That requires cooperation between the Town, Police Service, County and community organizations while recognizing that homelessness, addiction and mental health cannot be solved by policing alone.

Fourth, I would support stronger tourism, events and destination marketing that brings people into Cobourg and encourages them to stay, shop, eat and explore our community.

Finally, I would support responsible economic development that attracts new investment while helping our existing businesses grow.

I have spent approximately 20 years operating a business in downtown Cobourg. I know how important every customer walking through the door can be. My goal is straightforward: make Cobourg a community where people want to open a business, invest, visit—and keep coming back.

What are your plans to support recreational facilities and parks?

Our parks, recreational facilities and public spaces are a major part of what makes Cobourg such a great community, and my priority is to take care of what we already have while planning responsibly for the future.

First, I want to focus on maintaining and renewing our existing infrastructure. Before committing taxpayers to major new facilities, we need a clear understanding of the condition of our arenas, parks, playgrounds, sports fields, trails, harbour, pier and other municipal assets. Preventative maintenance today can help avoid much larger costs tomorrow.

Second, I want to continue improving accessibility and opportunities for people of all ages. Our parks and facilities should serve children, families, seniors, people with disabilities, organized sports and residents simply looking for an affordable way to stay active.

Third, I would support partnerships with community organizations, service clubs and other levels of government to pursue grants and outside funding for major recreational and infrastructure projects. Cobourg taxpayers should not have to carry every major capital investment alone.

I also believe we need to protect and invest in our waterfront. Restoring the pier and maintaining our harbour, beach and waterfront parks are important not only for residents but also for tourism and our local economy.

Finally, our parks must be clean, safe and welcoming. That means proper maintenance, appropriate enforcement of our bylaws and working with our community partners when social issues affect public spaces.

My approach is simple: take care of what we have, make it accessible and safe, plan for what we will need, and invest responsibly so future generations can enjoy these facilities and parks as much as we do today.

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 should generally be around the rate of inflation, with a goal of keeping the annual increase in the 2% to 3% range whenever financially possible.

However, I would not promise an arbitrary number before seeing the budget. Council has a responsibility to maintain essential services, public safety and infrastructure, and there may be years when circumstances make a higher increase necessary. If that happens, Council should clearly explain why.

To achieve that target, I would support a detailed line-by-line review of the operating budget rather than simply making across-the-board cuts.

Specific areas I would examine include:

- Consultants and contracted services — determining what work can reasonably be completed internally and requiring a clear business case for outside consultants.
- Administration and discretionary spending — reviewing conferences, travel, memberships, communications, professional services and other non-essential expenditures.
- Vacant positions and staffing — reviewing vacancies before automatically filling them and determining whether positions are still required or whether responsibilities can be reorganized.
- Procurement and purchasing — looking for opportunities for competitive purchasing, shared services and longer-term contracts where they produce measurable savings.
- Facilities and municipal assets — examining operating costs, energy consumption, maintenance and utilization to ensure taxpayers are receiving value from the buildings and properties they own.
- Capital projects — separating what we need from what we want. Essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water systems and municipal facilities must be maintained, but projects that are not urgent may need to be phased over several years.

I would also continue building appropriate infrastructure reserves. Using reserves simply to artificially lower taxes today can create a much larger problem for taxpayers tomorrow.

At the same time, we need to grow our assessment base through responsible residential and commercial development. More taxpayers sharing the cost of municipal services helps reduce the pressure on existing taxpayers.

My approach would be affordability without sacrificing responsibility. Every budget line should be defensible, every dollar should have a purpose, and residents should be able to see what they are receiving for the taxes they pay.

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

I don't believe it is responsible to choose an arbitrary percentage for the Cobourg Police Service budget before seeing the Board's proposed budget, actual expenditures, legislative requirements and policing needs for that year.

My goal would be to see police budget increases become more predictable and sustainable rather than having large corrections caused by costs being deferred or underestimated in previous years.

There is also an important distinction in this question. Under Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act, Council establishes the overall budget for the Police Service Board, but Council does not have the authority to approve or disapprove individual line items within that budget.

Therefore, as Deputy Mayor, I could not simply direct the Police Service to cut overtime, eliminate a position or reduce a particular program in order to reach a predetermined percentage.

What I can do is require strong financial accountability before voting on the overall police budget.

I would expect the Police Service Board to provide Council with a clear explanation of the major cost drivers, year-to-date actual expenditures, previous-year actuals, staffing pressures, overtime trends, collective agreement obligations, capital requirements, revenues and any significant variances.

I would also ask the Board to demonstrate what it has done to control costs and identify efficiencies while still meeting its obligations under provincial policing legislation.

Ultimately, the percentage I would support would be based on evidence. Council has a responsibility to taxpayers, but we also have a responsibility to properly fund policing and public safety.

I will not promise an artificially low police budget increase simply because it sounds good during an election campaign. Nor would I support spending without proper financial scrutiny.

My approach is accountability, transparency and sustainable funding: understand the numbers, challenge the overall request where appropriate, respect the legal independence of the Police Service Board, and ensure Cobourg has the policing resources necessary to keep our community safe.

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 new initiative I would like to champion is the creation of a Cobourg Community Safety and Well-Being Task Force, focused specifically on homelessness, addiction, mental health, housing and the impacts these issues are having throughout our community.

This would bring together residents, downtown businesses, police and first responders, Northumberland County, health and mental-health professionals, housing and addiction-service providers, people with lived experience, and other community organizations.

The purpose would not be to create another committee that simply talks about the problems. It would be given clear objectives: identify gaps and duplication in services, improve coordination between agencies, examine impacts on neighbourhoods and businesses, develop practical recommendations, and publicly measure our progress.

I believe we have spent too much time allowing these issues to divide our community into opposing sides. Public safety and compassion are not mutually exclusive. A resident who wants their park to be safe, a business owner dealing with theft or property damage, a family desperately trying to find treatment for someone they love, and a person experiencing homelessness or addiction all deserve to be heard.

I would also use the task force to strengthen Cobourg's voice with Northumberland County and the provincial and federal governments. Many of the solutions—including supportive housing, mental-health care, addiction treatment and social services—cannot be delivered by the Town alone.

My goal over the four-year term would be to move beyond simply reacting to individual crises and establish a coordinated, measurable community approach that improves safety, access to help and quality of life for everyone.

A stronger Cobourg should mean a community that is safe, compassionate and welcoming for everyone who calls it home.

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

What I uniquely bring to the council table is a combination of experience that comes from both inside and outside municipal government.

I have served the residents of Cobourg on Council for eight years, chaired the Cobourg Police Service Board, worked with the DBIA, and operated my own small business in downtown Cobourg for approximately 20 years. That means I have experienced municipal decisions from several different perspectives—as an elected official responsible for making them, as a board chair dealing with complex public-safety issues, and as a small business owner living with the everyday consequences of those decisions.

But I think what qualifies me most is where I came from.

I didn't follow the traditional path into politics. I left school at 16 and went back later in life to finish my high-school education. I built a business, raised a family and eventually put my name on a ballot because I believed an ordinary person with real-world experience could contribute to their community.

Eight years later, I still consider myself that same person. I will ask questions when I don't understand something, do the homework, listen to people who know more about a subject than I do, and make the best decision I can for Cobourg.

And my guilty pleasure? Golf. When I can escape the phone, council reports, police-board work and the pawn shop for a few hours, there aren't many places I'd rather be than on a golf course. Although, depending on how I'm playing that day, "pleasure" might be a generous description.

I don't pretend to have every answer. What I bring is experience, accessibility, determination and eight years of knowing just how much work this job requires—and I still want to do it.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms