

PEC Chamber of Commerce Candidate's Questionnaire

The PEC Chamber of Commerce's Policy and Governmental Affairs Committee recently surveyed their members, asking them what their top priorities are for the next council. From those priorities we have created the following questions. As is our tradition, we have also asked the Prince Edward Federation of Agriculture to provide questions as well. If possible, we would like these questions to be answered and submitted by noon on Tuesday, September 25th. Please be aware that these answers may become available to the public.

Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce Questions

Please fill out your name and ward.

Brent Kleinsteuber, Wellington Ward 3

How will you tackle the Workforce Development and labour shortage issues in Prince Edward County?

We need to encourage light industry to set up in the County. If we are to encourage more long term permanent residents to live here work needs to be available.

Affordable Housing is at a crisis point, what action will you take to address it to ensure current residents can afford to continue living here and new, young residents are enticed to move here?

We need to find ways of encouraging developers to gear their properties towards affordable attainable housing. Whether through the affordable housing network or provincial funding.

Short Term Accommodations licensing and registration - do you agree with the direction the County is currently taking? What is your plan for dealing with Short Term Accommodations in PEC?

I agree that it was necessary to put in place regulations. However I feel the bylaw is being pushed through very quickly and needs to be thoroughly thought out.

Development Charges and Process Restructure – there is a severe staff shortage in the Planning Department and the planning process is considered by many to be onerous and costly. How do you propose to address it?

A review of our departments and current processes needs to take place. We need to find ways of creating a well smooth working operation.

Would you support the waiver or reduction of development charges and building permit fees for affordable housing development to encourage such development?

Yes, I believe we need to build community and would be in favour of reducing or slashing development charges and building permit fees.

What are your thoughts on Downtown Revitalization within Picton, Bloomfield, Wellington and Consecon as well as the parking issues faced by these towns?

We need to continue keeping our downtowns clean and preserve our historic charm. Parking will continue to be a difficult issue to address as our main streets were designed for horse and buggy and large volume parking was not a consideration at the time.

Roads and infrastructure (state of roads, drainage, water and sewage). Does the County have the means to deal with the true quality issues for roads in the County? What is your plan for addressing these major infrastructure projects?

Currently we do not have the means to address our infrastructure needs. We need to continue to work with the provincial government to fund these projects.

Farm land property taxes have increased by over 25% for the second year resulting in the farm tax class share of County expenses rising to 2.2% of County revenue from 1.6% in 2016. Are you willing to support reducing farm tax ratio to ensure the percentage of municipal tax revenue contributed by the farm property tax remains at the level of 2018?

I am in favour of finding ways to reduce the tax ratio of both farmers and residents. I believe we are pushing people away by charging so much to so few. A larger tax base through housing developments will hopefully alleviate some of the burden.

There is an urgent need to relax the current half load restrictions which are a barrier to farmers who need to market beans and corn to fill contracts where the farmers do not control the scheduled delivery dates. These deliveries should be included with other essential services such as the transport of milk, potable water and prepared animal feeds as they are required to meet the market demands for animal and human consumption. The timely sale of these commodities are essential for farm viability and maintaining worker employment in the winter. Are you in favour of removing the seasonal axle load restrictions that can impede the movement of farmers' crops to markets as required?

Moving forward council needs to ensure that our roads are able to withstand high volume and heavy transport. I am hopeful that we can allow farmers to transport larger quantities of goods in the near future.

There is a need for adequate emergency services in rural areas and improved response times. A Farm 911 Sign initiative has been created in The Quinte area. How does this municipality handle civic addresses on vacant properties? Is there a program in place for farmers to request a civic address for vacant farm land and what is the fee?

Do you support the OFA position that all new farm buildings should be exempt from development charges as is currently the case in most Counties including Prince Edward County?

Yes, our farming population has been in decline for sometime now. Finding ways to encourage growth in agriculture is important to Prince Edward County.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!



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