

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.

Steven Graham Hillier Ward 7

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

I will continue to support the various programs that are in place or developing with agencies like "the Learning Center, Career Edge, VIQ, etc through our grant programs. these agencies can focus on the needs of the business community and gear there training program to those needs.

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?

Current council and staff are developing a not for profit Housing Authority comprised of all stakeholders. I think this is great start and look forward to seeing positive results. Incentives for developers including less red tape are hugely important to get these projects off the ground.

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 believe the County staff is taking the correct direction on this issue. there has been a lot of information provided to current council and I feel staff have done a good job. We have hosted many public input sessions and compiled over 1500 responses and I feel most of the concerns have been addressed in the proposed by-law.

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?

This shortfall in staffing is on-going, Our planning department is working diligently to recruit and retain staff. The private sector seem to be headhunting municipal staff. Perhaps a creative compensation package should be offered. The County has made changes to their organizational chart recently and hopefully it should expedite the process.

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

Absolutely, I'm hopeful the new housing authority will provide incentives exactly like that!

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

I think downtown revitalization is important but needs to be prioritize accordingly. there are many projects in rural PEC where dollars could be spent, namely road ditching, surface treatments, drainage, etc. After all folks need to travel these roads in order to get to town.

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?

We have a comprehensive roads needs study in place which helps to prioritize road works. We need that as well as the leg work (studies) in order to be shovel ready. These plans place us in a better position for Prov. Fed. grant monies.

Prince Edward Federation of Agriculture (PEFA) Questions

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 support the new and young farmer grant program and look forward to seeing the results. I strongly believe the OFA need to be lobbying the higher levels of government and MPAC

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?

100% yes

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?

Yes we have adopted the "Emily Project" and all farms will be able to have 911 signs, I do not believe there is a 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?

So long as they are farm buildings only, yes!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!



This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms