

IELECT Candidate Questionnaire

IELECT Hamilton is asking every candidate for Council to complete this online questionnaire to provide residents with information regarding your campaign platform.

Please complete the following questionnaire. IELECT Hamilton will post your unedited responses on our website. The questionnaire is structured using the six priorities identified in our research of municipalities across Canada.

Email *

hello@tammyhwang.ca

Name: *

Tammy Hwang

Running for: *



Mayor



Councillor

If councillor, which ward are you running in:

- Ward 1
- Ward 2
- Ward 3
- Ward 4
- Ward 5
- Ward 6
- Ward 7
- Ward 8
- Ward 9
- Ward 10
- Ward 11
- Ward 12
- Ward 13
- Ward 14
- Ward 15

Which ward do you currently reside in: *

- Ward 1
- Ward 2
- Ward 3
- Ward 4
- Ward 5
- Ward 6
- Ward 7
- Ward 8
- Ward 9
- Ward 10
- Ward 11
- Ward 12
- Ward 13
- Ward 14
- Ward 15
- Other:

Campaign website:

tammyhwang.ca.....

Campaign Email: *

hello@tammyhwang.ca

I - Infrastructure

A Leader who inclusively improves Hamilton's neighbourhoods, parks, playgrounds, roads, bridges, community centres, and waste water treatment facilities.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to Hamilton's current infrastructure needs? *

I am concerned about Hamilton's aging infrastructure including everything from buildings to roads to parks to sidewalks. But I'm most concerned about the following three areas:

- 1) Water System - Hamilton has fantastic drinking water but our infrastructure is old and leaking. We had 261 water main breaks in 2021 with a repair cost of approximately \$2.25 million. At this point we have no clear way of detecting leaks in our system and could be losing valuable drinking water every day. Maintaining our water infrastructure will allow for better conservation of water and ensure that we start to minimize some of the damage from water main breaks, especially in the winter months.
- 2) Roadways - Our roads move people and goods around the city, and they also protect various types of infrastructure underneath. Roadways that are built for all commuters including pedestrians, bikers, scooters, etc., play a large role in how we imagine transportation for all in the city.
- 3) Internet Infrastructure - Hamilton's internet capacity allows most of us to access social media, stream videos, and maybe make a couple of Zoom calls. But the pandemic showed us that the current infrastructure is insufficient. Internet capacity must be front and centre as our city grows, including equitable access to the Internet. It's how we'll connect with each other, educate and learn, and also build opportunities. Internet has been called the fourth basic human need behind heat, clean water, and electricity. It's how we can empower our community and support/sustain our economy.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to improve Hamilton's infrastructure? *

Many opportunities arise from LRT construction being slated to break ground in 2024. Road reconstruction along the LRT line will allow us to inspect existing underground infrastructure in those areas, and also to evaluate the condition of infrastructure branching out from the LRT central line. This will require coordination with Metrolinx.

Second, Hamilton must lobby our provincial and federal partners for funds to help offset the costs of infrastructure upgrades and maintenance. We must explore the feasibility of new financing mechanisms such as bonds, high occupancy toll lanes, and special district financing, all of which have been implemented in other municipalities. We can leverage knowledge and best practices from other municipalities, thereby strengthening our funding requests.

My third priority action is to facilitate problem solving and innovative solutions by enabling a new procurement model that allows local startup companies to work with the City of Hamilton to co-create opportunities. Many local startup companies have solutions that can help with upgrading or prolonging our infrastructure, but there has not been a clear mechanism to allow them to work with the City and our assets/resources. Other municipalities have instituted progressive and innovative procurement models to allow them to pilot and test new technologies with City infrastructure while also providing valuable data to help our companies grow and succeed.

E - Economy

A leader who strengthens the overall financial health and prosperity of Hamilton and all its diverse residents, through better and more secure jobs, a living wage, housing availability and affordability, and access to public services.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to Hamilton's current economy? *

This topic is near and dear to my heart. I'm a small business owner who pays living wages to my employees, and I've worked in economic development for the past seven years – working to attract firms to invest in Hamilton and generate great jobs here.

I am concerned about many topics in this area but if I had to boil it down to three: small business supports, ensuring living wage jobs for our community and students, and finding more shovel-ready and commercially viable lands for employers.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to improve Hamilton's economy? *

Hamilton City Council can leverage a variety of mechanisms to improve Hamilton's economy. I had listed them above as some of my concerns, and below, I have outlined some ideas on affecting change within each area.

1) Small business supports - We are coming out of a pandemic that saw many businesses close, but we also witnessed a rise in micro and home based businesses. And Hamilton has received an influx of new entrepreneurs from other cities. Creating a streamlined and supported open for business pipeline will minimize some of the confusion on where to start and get to operations faster. Small business supports may include greater access to funding, mentorship and advisory support, and/or priority service as small businesses navigate our planning, building, and economic development departments.

2) Living wage jobs - Hamilton has experienced historically low unemployment rates in the last few years. Jobs in effect outnumber people, and, yet, our students are finding it difficult to land a job post-graduation in their field of study. I want to help students find jobs, pay down student debt, and settle down in Hamilton. Supporting employers as they build their businesses so they can provide living wage jobs for their employees.

3) Create new employment space - Employers are hungry for space that allows them to develop, manufacture, and/or sell products and access markets. Hamilton has very little commercial and industrial space at present. I hope to work closely with economic development to find opportunities for companies to move into and invest in Hamilton. Attracting more companies to Hamilton will also help add corporate tax dollars into our funding mix and hopefully start to lower our dependency on residential tax revenues.

L - Leadership

A leader who treats all residents with respect and dignity, pushes for transparency and good governance, inspires others through a bold vision, and takes innovative, equitable and evidence-based decisions to better serve all Hamiltonians.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to Hamilton's current leadership at Council? *

As a community member and neighbour in the city, I'm most concerned with the lack of transparency from Council to the greater community. Second, while I appreciate that councillors advocate for their wards, there are many issues affecting the city as a whole that cannot be addressed with a ward-specific lens. My final concern is that Council needs to make decisions today that will benefit future generations. My hope is that with our new council, we can find a path forward that includes collaboration, respect, and transparency both within council and with the various communities that comprise greater Hamilton.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to improve the city' leadership? *

At the start of each new term, council determines its strategic goals. My hope is that this new council will also co-create a new, public-facing document (in addition to the code of conduct document) that outlines core accountability and transparency mandates so our community can see and hold us to them. This way, as we are working together to achieve our strategic goals, we are also holding to expectations and a level of service for Hamiltonians.

The second is to encourage councillors to partner up and deliver programs and events together, showing that we can share resources for the good of the city. The goal here is for councillors to regularly choose to work with different council members to ensure that we are exploring and understanding the needs of areas outside our own wards.

A third action I'd like to propose is a closer working relationship with city staff. They are typically working directly with community members on various issues and initiatives. City staff often have good insights into these issues and ways to make progress on them. We are all here to serve the community. Working more collaboratively with our municipal professionals will make our council more informed and nimble for innovation and change.

E - Environment

A leader who champions actions to address climate change to ensure a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment for all current and future Hamiltonians.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to improving Hamilton's current environment? *

In 2019 City Council declared a climate change emergency. The City also presented a climate change strategy earlier this year. I'm concerned with a lack of follow through on the new climate change strategy, including the lack of benchmarking and metrics to track and gauge progress and unclear protocols on reporting environmental issues. I think all of these concerns are outlined in the new climate change strategy, and I'm optimistic that they will be addressed in the coming year.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to improve Hamilton's environment? *

I have lots of ideas to propose for Hamilton's environment, I can boil them down to three key actions.

1) Support intensification and density within our current/existing urban boundaries. This action will reduce our reliance on cars as alternative modes of transportation and transit would be more sustainable, reduce costs of upgrades to existing infrastructure, reduce the infrastructure costs that accompany expansion, and maintain the greenspace and farmland that surrounds our urban areas.

2) Stormwater management - I mentioned above that Hamilton has an aging water infrastructure. Supporting, maintaining, and upgrading this infrastructure by exploring ideas like permeable parking lots, drought tolerant and pollinator friendly plants in city parks, and reducing runoff that overloads our storm management systems are some of the ways I believe we can help our environment.

3) Encouraging passive house and energy efficient development on new and retrofit buildings. New passive house designs created by Indwell and in the Ken Soble Tower are impressive and should be replicated. They help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce heating and cooling costs significantly because of their energy efficiency.

C - Community

A leader who fights for the needs of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive population and who improves community engagement so the voices of all Hamiltonians are heard.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to supporting the needs of all communities in Hamilton? *

Our residents need to see elected officials who look like them. Representation and diversity are fundamental to effective democratic governance. This is actually an important reason that I, a racialized woman who understands the immigrant experience, feel compelled to seek office.

Second, in my work for economic development with immigrants, newcomers, and international students, I saw firsthand the various barriers they face accessing resources and services. Hamilton is not unique in this, but we need to develop new ways for governments to reach all people.

My last concern is around two-way communication between council, city staff, and the wider community. All too often we're missing out on key conversations and updates because that communication pathway is unclear or diverted. City hall has been working to improve public communication and engagement, but more needs to be done.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to support Hamilton's communities? *

I believe that people have great insights into their own communities. I've been watching other communities and cities around us, and I'm particularly impressed with how the City of Kitchener has rolled out neighborhood toolkits to empower their citizens to actively participate in community building. Just over a decade ago, Hamilton invested in neighbourhood action planning, and we still enjoy some of that legacy, including in the Crown Point and McQueston neighbourhoods. I would like to learn more about the process and how we can build on it to strengthen our neighbourhoods and foster active neighbourhood associations.

Second, I have worked with many students and young professionals over the years and am a firm believer in training up our next generation of leaders. I would like to explore how we can do that on a broader scale in Hamilton. How did community leadership programs such as Neighborhood Leadership Institute (now closed) impact our communities, and what could next steps look like, perhaps in partnership with our postsecondary institutions?

Lastly, I'd like to ensure that Hamilton has public spaces where communities feel welcomed and included. Public spaces and placemaking are exactly where diverse communities can come together and find opportunities to learn from each other and support one another. I'd like to build on the current placemaking work led by our city staff and find more ways to build and collaborate together.

T - Transportation

A leader who supports safe, effective movement throughout the city for all Hamiltonians by ensuring access to equitable and affordable public transit, safe roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails.

1. What three things are you most concerned about and would like to see changed as they relate to Hamilton's current transportation needs? *

The number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities is alarming. People need to be able to move safely around the city, whether in their own vehicles, taking transit, cycling, or walking. I am also concerned with the low ridership of our bus system - as our HSR is meant to be affordable, efficient, and accessible. I would like to learn more about leveraging an alternative mix of transportation options and how they'll integrate within our community, including how bike lanes are constructed, how scooter and shared bicycles are impacting our city, and solving the first mile last mile challenge. How can we help people get from their homes to a major trunk line like LRT, and from LRT to their final destination? That first mile last mile opportunity is key to creating a public transit system that is accessible and well-used.

2. As a councillor, what three actions would you propose to improve Hamilton's transportation systems? *

As we continue to build out and execute the City of Hamilton's transportation master plan, I'm excited to learn how new technologies could move our people around the city. I believe we need to first follow through with our LRT investment and while that's under construction take a hard look at our alternative mix of transportation options. That will include opportunities in scooters, shared bicycles, mini transport buses, etc., to help our community connect to a variety of transportation options that will ultimately connect them with major trunk routes like LRT or the BLAST rapid bus network. With the recent council decision to convert Main Street to two-way, I believe there is an opportunity to create better road designs that are safer and encourage multi-model transportation (walking, cycling, bussing).

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