

# 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 \*

lukasikward5@gmail.com

Name: \*

Lynda Lukasik

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:

www.lukasikward5.ca .....

Campaign Email: \*

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## 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? \*

1. Lack of equitable distribution of community infrastructure – The distribution of 'community infrastructure' - including everything from quality parks + open space, adequate urban forest canopy cover (and other beneficial 'green infrastructure'), community recreation centres built large enough to support the surrounding population, park splash pads/public washrooms/drinking fountains, and safe infrastructure for people using active transportation to move around our city (cyclists, pedestrians of all mobility abilities) – is currently not consistent or equitable across Hamilton neighbourhoods.

2. Shortcomings with existing infrastructure – The City of Hamilton has serious sewer woes, especially in the old city where we have antiquated 'combined sewers' that handle both sanitary and stormwater flows. In extreme weather, the combined system must discharge into our natural waterways to avoid overwhelming the sewage treatment plant, sending a mix of storm and sanitary flows into local creeks and Hamilton Harbour. While measures like 'combined sewer overflow tanks' have been put in place to mitigate this problem, climate change and the extreme weather it is bringing means that this band aid approach is becoming less effective over time. And in newer areas with separated sewers there are also issues with 'illegal cross connections' where someone has intentionally or inadvertently connected a sanitary pipe to a stormwater pipe, resulting in a scenario where all sanitary flows from the residence or building that particular pipe is servicing, end up being directly discharged into a local waterway.

3. Lack of proper maintenance and efficient use of capacity of existing infrastructure – Hamilton is struggling with a massive infrastructure deficit. This deficit is due, in large part, to poor fiscal management over many years. But it can also be argued that the deficit is the result of too many years of unsustainable urban growth management decisions leading to outward expansion (urban sprawl) into Hamilton's rural prime farmland and open spaces – a problematic practice that demands more costly infrastructure. We are literally paying a price for these bad practices and we need to determine a way out of this mess moving forward.

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

1. Ensure an EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) lens is applied to community infrastructure decision-making, along with consideration of neighbourhood density – We need practices to ensure that every neighbourhood has the community infrastructure that it needs to enable everyone to enjoy a good quality of life. Applying an EDI lens to the process of evaluating whether every neighbourhood has what it needs is essential. In addition, consideration of current and projected population density in a neighbourhood is also important in order to ensure that people living in high density neighbourhoods enjoy the same level of community services that those in lower density areas enjoy. It's important to note that higher density neighbourhoods also tend to be more diverse and often lack core community infrastructure. The Riverdale West Neighbourhood in Ward 5 immediately comes to mind for me. It is one of our city's most densely populated and most diverse neighbourhoods, yet it lacks basic community infrastructure like park space with good amenities and a community recreational facility of a size and capacity to properly support the neighbourhood. We also need to ensure that, as growth nodes in our city like Downtown Hamilton see population increases, that there are adequate community amenities available to ensure good quality of life in these growing urban neighbourhoods.

2. Continue with efforts to retrofit water/wastewater infrastructure – We need to place priority on addressing the chronic water pollution problems that the combined sewer system in the older city continues to inflict on our local creeks and Hamilton Harbour. The ideal solution is to separate the combined system, but this is a long-term solution that will require more planning - including determining how to fund such an infrastructure overhaul. In the interim, more can and must be done to ensure discharge of sanitary wastewater is minimized as much as possible. For instance, the city still has combined sewer outfalls with no controls at all and these outfalls need to be address as they frequently discharge sanitary flows to our Harbour and local creeks during rain and snowmelt events. There are many innovative methods for controlling these discharges – including measures to capture 'floatables' often found in sanitary wastewater like tampon applicators and condoms. We also need to make more use of green infrastructure to address these problem flows; green roofs, bioswales along urban streets, and more trees in urban areas can help to slow stormwater flows and prevent the combined sewer system from becoming overwhelmed.

3. Address the infrastructure deficit – We must do a better job of properly budgeting and investing to get out of Hamilton's infrastructure deficit mess! An essential part of this effort is the need to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure. Hamilton has committed to stopping the outward expansion of urban Hamilton into rural prime agricultural lands and open spaces with the firm urban boundary vote. Where infrastructure is concerned, the firm urban boundary is a very important commitment that we must uphold! Development that sprawls out into rural areas never pays for itself - it comes with significant infrastructure costs that end up being subsidized by other taxpayers. The resulting expanse of water/wastewater and roadway infrastructure must then be maintained into the future. It is much wiser to limit the urban area and maximize use of existing infrastructure through careful and appropriate infill development that can include low, medium and high densities depending on the context.

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## 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? \*

1. Need to green up our local economy – The City of Hamilton needs to play a more active role in promoting the green economy right here in our community. This requires considering local economic development using climate resilience and environmental sustainability lenses. The city has declared a climate emergency and that means that we need to approach local economic development in a manner that recognizes this reality. In addition, the reality that we live on a finite planet with finite resources also needs to be recognized when we talk about local economic development. A failure to embrace greener approaches to our local economy will lead to economic instability into the future, as we deal more and more with existential challenges like the climate crisis.

2. Precarious employment – Many Hamiltonians are precariously employed, struggling with managing multiple jobs in the 'gig economy' just to make ends meet. This is generating a host of challenges for these Hamiltonians with the cost of housing on the rise, and with increasing inflation. As a major employer, the City of Hamilton needs to ensure that it is offering good work opportunities that are not precarious, but are contributing to stable work opportunities for community members.

3. Need for worker training opportunities – Hamilton's economy is changing. Emerging economic opportunities need to be and will be greener, more climate resilient approaches to doing business in our city. Workers with both new and adapted skills sets will be required to help to make these economic transformations towards greener, more climate resilient approaches reality on the ground.

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

1. Make the City of Hamilton a 'Living Wage Employer' – The City of Hamilton must make a full commitment to providing a living wage to all of its employees, and encourage other local employers to make the same commitment. It is also important to note that Hamilton's currently recognized living wage of \$17.20 per hour needs to be revisited and increased given what we are currently facing with housing costs and inflation. Providing decent wages also needs to come with providing job security. The city must commit to creating good, steady employment opportunities whenever possible, rather than short-term contracts.

2. Promote green business & industry – Hamilton can 'capitalize' on its response to the climate emergency by turning this crisis into a green economic development opportunity. Done right, the transition to a post carbon city will bring good green jobs for many Hamiltonians. The municipality can and must play a central role in helping to facilitate the establishment of new green businesses and industries, and the transition of existing businesses and industries to greener operations. City staff have already proposed efforts to bring business/industry stakeholders together in 'incubator groups' designed to explore the potential to innovate moving forward. One good example is the already in place 'Hydrogen Hub' which is focused on working to put everything necessary in place to facilitate the generation of green hydrogen in the future. These actions will facilitate the city's transition to a post carbon community.

3. Promote + support job training/ re-training for Hamiltonians - With economic transformation comes new job opportunities along with challenges like ensuring that employees in sectors that are becoming obsolete are supported with a just transition to new employment opportunities. The city must play a role in promoting and supporting job training/re-training for just transition and as an important way to support marginalized and chronically unemployed residents in their quest to acquire new skills to help them find good paying, on-going employment. Again, the green job opportunities that will continue to emerge as we address the climate emergency offer wonderful opportunities to train/re-train and provide good work for more Hamiltonians. Hamilton must continue to work with key local stakeholders – like our college and universities, the local labour movement, and local businesses and industries – to ensure that training/retraining opportunities are made available and are focused in the right direction to facilitate the emergence of the green economy in our city.

### 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? \*

1. Lack of openness & transparency – There have been challenging moments over the last term of council where openness and transparency are concerned. Decisions made around the council table have resulted in essential information being withheld from the public when this should not have happened. The outcome in at least one instance was a failure of City Council and the City of Hamilton to provide people with the full picture required to ensure people were able to avoid risks in the community.

2. Council decorum challenges – The past term of City Council has also been a term full of challenges with problematic interactions around the council table, between certain councillors and city staff, and between certain councillors and members of the public. This has generated a toxic environment at Hamilton City Hall including within city committees and subcommittees. Staff and councillors have felt bullied and unsafe at City Hall, and many community members choosing to delegate have felt the same way – targeted and harassed.

3. Need for stronger action to ensure Equity, Diversity, Inclusion – Hamilton is a diverse community and the City of Hamilton has not done enough to support all Hamiltonians by ensuring that everyone feels welcome, safe and supported, or to swiftly respond when individual groups are targeted and harassed in hateful ways.

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

1. Make openness & transparency a priority – Community members have a right to know what is happening in the City of Hamilton. Hamilton City Council must ensure that information is shared openly with the public. There are very few circumstances where City Council can justify not sharing information. But in all other situations, openness and transparency must always be the priority goal. This approach is particularly important in scenarios where decisions to withhold information can result in community members being exposed to elevated risks without being aware of the situation. A recent specific example was the problematic decision made by Hamilton City Council, on the advice of outside legal counsel, not to disclose the magnitude of the wastewater leak from a combined sewer overflow storage tank system into Chedoke Creek. This decision was not in the public interest, especially when the details regarding the duration and magnitude of the release were already contained within a provincial document that was public.

2. Uphold rules of decorum in every setting – Councillors must be committed to upholding the rules of decorum in every setting, and they also must support each other in ensuring that this is what happens. This includes speaking out when a councillor colleague is failing to respect these requirements, and supporting councillor colleagues who are working hard to do the same. We need a City Hall culture that normalizes respectful interactions -whether between councillors, between councillors and staff or councillors and the public, between staff members, or between staff members and the public.

3. Walk the talk on Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion – The City of Hamilton has committed to applying an EDI lens to decision-making. Hamilton City Council must commit to ensuring that this is done in a meaningful way. In order to achieve this outcome, City Council must be required to undergo EDI training – including training to help City Council understand what it means to apply an EDI lens to effect outcomes that truly contribute to supporting EDI in our city.

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### 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? \*

1. Lack of urgency in response to climate emergency – Hamilton City Council declared a Climate Emergency in March of 2019 – the second Ontario municipality to do so. Despite Hamilton being one of the first municipalities to take this step, the city now lags behind many Ontario municipalities where climate planning and action is concerned. The pandemic hit and Hamilton put its climate emergency response on hold. The climate crisis is an existential threat that demands our attention – we cannot afford to delay serious action, but Hamilton has opted to do exactly this.

2. On-going air quality challenges – Hamilton continues to have challenges with air quality. Air quality in our city is impacted by transboundary pollution coming up the Ohio Valley, from transportation emissions (cars and trucks) which are more severe near major highways & expressways, and from heavy industry on our harbourfront. People near the industrial core are impacted by all 3 sources, creating a situation where these neighbourhoods are exposed to higher levels of air contaminants. Hamiltonians have no option but to breathe the air so this is an unavoidable risk, and the current reality with the airshed over the industrial core being far less healthy than the rest of the city, is an environmental justice issue.

3. Need to protect & enhance local biodiversity – Within the boundaries of the City of Hamilton are found some of the most biodiverse areas in the country! But biodiversity is at risk across the globe – and our area is no exception. Habitat loss and damage are taking their toll and the municipality needs to step up, along with other stakeholders, to enhance and protect local ecosystems. If ecosystems are thriving, humans will thrive too!

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

1. Properly fund & implement Hamilton's Climate Change Action Strategy – The City of Hamilton's Climate Change Action Strategy includes plans for both mitigating and adapting to climate impacts. Both categories of action are important because we are already seeing the impacts of the climate crisis in the form of extreme weather including flooding and extreme heat. These impacts are often the most severe for our most vulnerable community members (especially those who are unhoused or poorly housed) so we need to prioritize actions designed to help the most vulnerable to adapt. The new City Council must remain committed to properly staffing and resourcing the municipal Climate Change Action Strategy so that it can be implemented as quickly as possible.

2. Advocate for air quality improvements - The City of Hamilton has a responsibility to do whatever it can to advocate for local air quality improvements. Some municipal politicians believe that air quality issues are best left to the province, but municipal-level advocacy from elected representatives can make a big difference by giving local air quality more profile to ensure action is taken. Air pollution is a risk that cannot be avoided – we all must breathe the air. In addition, Hamiltonians are unequally impacted by air pollution with those living near the industrial core facing the greatest impacts. This is an environmental justice issue! Finally, we are at a critical point where industrial emissions are concerned with steel giant ArcelorMittal Dofasco transitioning to green steel production by 2028 and Stelco hopefully following suit. Hamilton City Council needs to support these transitions, and to ensure that companies do not inflict any harm as they continue to operate their old facilities during this transition period over the next six years.

3. Take action to enhance & protect local biodiversity – Hamilton City Council must continue to support the city's participation in the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and in the on-going implementation of that plan. The BAP is being designed to facilitate multi-stakeholder involvement in a collective effort to enhance and protect local biodiversity. This is critically important and Hamilton City Council must be front and center advocating for the City of Hamilton to lead the way on this effort. The actions that are an integral part of the BAP - measures like setting aggressive canopy cover targets for our urban forest, continuing to protect and enhance local open spaces, naturalizing patches in public parks – are all actions that will not only serve to enhance and protect local biodiversity, but they will also help all of us as humans to enjoy healthy, enhanced quality of life in the neighbourhoods we live in.

### 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? \*

1. Homelessness & lack of affordable housing – I am deeply concerned about the growing number of Hamiltonians who are homeless and the methods the City of Hamilton continues to use to clear encampments. The housing crisis we face is an incredibly complex issue, but it is clear that more must be done in the City of Hamilton to ensure everyone has access to safe, healthy, affordable housing. It is also clear that we need the healthcare system to provide more of the necessary supports for those facing challenges with addiction and mental health issues.

2. Environmental & climate injustices – Hamilton is a city where not everyone enjoys the same healthy environment or protection from the growing impacts of the climate crisis. We need to recognize and address environmental and climate inequities in our community. Geography defines someone's level of exposure to air pollution, with closer proximity to the heavy industrial core bringing greater risks – unavoidable risks – for many Hamiltonians. And, while none of us are immune to the impacts of the climate crisis, it is our most vulnerable community members who are impacted the most by climate change. Poor, elderly, isolated, and racialized Hamiltonians face greater struggles with climate impacts like extreme heat in summer and extreme cold in winter.

3. Need for meaningful public engagement - Hamilton is undergoing profound changes and it is essential that everyone in our community is supported to enable full and meaningful participation in municipal decision making. Right now, this is not what many are experiencing and additional steps need to be taken to ensure that engagement is effective and truly inclusive.

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

1. More affordable housing & supports for homeless Hamiltonians – The municipality must do more to ensure that all Hamiltonians have access to safe, healthy, affordable housing. The city must acquire more public land for social housing – especially along and near the new east-west LRT route. It is also important to note that this housing must be climate resilient- warm enough in winter and cool enough in a heat wave but using heating/cooling methods that are climate friendly (low/no greenhouse gas emissions). More supports must also be provided for non-market housing like land trusts and co-operative housing complexes. Hamilton City Council also has an essential role to play by advocating strongly and loudly for more supports to be provided by higher levels of government to ensure unhoused Hamiltonians are given the supports they need to address any health challenges, and to ultimately access safe, healthy and secure housing.

2. Action to address climate & environmental injustices – The city must ensure that more consideration is given to environmental and climate injustices and to take action to address these inequities. City Council must be leading the way on this effort. Climate adaptation planning is essential on this front. The City of Hamilton has already initiated efforts on this front (Climate Change Action Plan mitigation and adaptation components) and now must lead the way in ramping up these efforts to ensure everyone is prepared to respond when these impacts occur, but also that everyone is protected from these impacts as much as possible. This must include supporting transition to safe, healthy, permanent housing - and the obvious need to create more permanent housing - for vulnerable Hamiltonians. On the environmental justice front, City Council must actively advocate for swift action to address the unavoidable environmental risks that currently exist in some areas of Hamilton. Industrial air pollution is one example of such a risk; you have no choice but to breathe the air. Council must get louder about industrial pollution and effective resolution of problem air emissions.

3. Better, more inclusive community engagement – The City of Hamilton needs to up its game where community engagement is concerned. More can be done to encourage and support community involvement in city activities and decision-making processes. City Council must lead the way by urging city staff to employ more and better engagement methods that consider the varied needs of Hamiltonians including language and accessibility barriers, but also including challenges with availability of time for residents to engage and provide input on issues that affect them very directly. Going to where people are is important for breaking down barriers. Councillors themselves must also step up and facilitate more and more inclusive community engagement too – including multiple methods for engagement (virtual outreach on social media & via email, in-person meetings in convenient locations, hybrid meetings to facilitate more engagement, etc.).

### 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? \*

1. Need for safer streets – The City of Hamilton has a street safety problem. The risk is greatest for those walking or using a mobility device to travel along our local sidewalks and cross our roadway intersections, and for those travelling along the city's roadways on a bike. Hamilton needs to be a place where active transportation is an attractive and safe choice for everyone. Our streets need to be safer for those driving vehicles too. Transportation is also the one source of greenhouse gas emissions that continues to increase in Hamilton, so it is essential to ensure that people who choose to move in other, more climate-friendly ways, are safe doing so.

2. Need for good public transit service across urban Hamilton – The City of Hamilton has a public transit system which is not what it should be given the size of the municipality and the fact that our population continues to grow. Population growth is also happening in suburban areas that have substandard transit service or no transit service at all, essentially guaranteeing car dependence for new residents. A significant barrier to system improvement is area rating for transit - a remnant of our pre-amalgamated municipality

3. Need for innovative approaches to goods movement – Goods movement is essential for community functioning and for the local economy. But done wrong, goods movement can inflict serious negative impacts on urban, suburban, and rural areas of a community. The City of Hamilton has taken some positive steps recently to mitigate goods movement impacts on community quality of life with the revamping of the municipal truck route system. But more needs to be done to ensure that, as Hamilton continues to evolve and grow, goods movement becomes more efficient and less impactful on local quality of life (especially street safety), the environment, and the climate.

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

1. Implement/ update the 10-Year Transit Strategy - The new City Council must continue to support and approve funding for the implementation of the city's 10-Year Transit Strategy. While strategy implementation is now behind by several years, the plan will soon expire, so there is also a need to start to consider the need to review and update Hamilton's Transit Strategy. This process must also include looking at area rating and developing a plan to phase out area rating for transit. A preferred approach is to maintain the existing transit levy in place within the boundaries of the old City of Hamilton and to phase in increases to the levy in adjacent suburban areas in tandem with rolling out transit improvements in these areas.

2. Support implementation of 'Complete Streets' across Hamilton - Hamilton City Council must continue to ensure that the city's commitment to transforming all streets to complete streets is upheld. And, while the commitment is to implement the approach in tandem with roadway reconstructions, City Council must be willing to take action sooner in cases where street safety is problematic (as is currently being done for Main Street through downtown Hamilton). Hamilton City Council must also ensure that both the Pedestrian Master Plan & Cycling Master Plan are updated and actively implemented to support and achieve the broader vision of Safe Streets For All.

3. Promote innovative approaches to goods movement - The new City Council must ensure that the revamped City of Hamilton Truck Route system is fully implemented, with careful enforcement of the new route system to ensure that the intended changes – including removing heavy trucks from urban neighbourhoods - are fully realized. City Council must also do what it can to encourage exploration of innovative approaches to goods movement across the City of Hamilton, and support approaches designed to facilitate movement efficiencies balanced with realizing reductions in delivery greenhouse gas emissions and minimizing other negative impacts from goods movement including: air emissions, noise, and roadway infrastructure damage. City staff are already exploring pilots like cargo bike delivery in the core, and accommodating smaller, more climate friendly delivery vehicles in urban Hamilton. These efforts must be supported. There are also remaining impacts from heavy vehicles engaged in goods movement that have yet to be resolved – including heavy truck traffic along arterial roads like Centennial Parkway. These issues must be creatively resolved in the immediate future as more people move into these areas of the city.

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