

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 *

Alex4Ward13@gmail.com

Name: *

Alex Wilson

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.alexforward13.com

Campaign Email: *

Alex4Ward13@gmail.com

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. Growing infrastructure deficit:

Hamilton's core infrastructure funding gap sits at \$190 million and residents are experiencing the impacts today. This gap in funding is the result of decades of underfunding and asset mismanagement. What's worse this underinvestment has unequally impacted residents living in the lower city and existing neighborhoods. Repeatedly Councilors have funded costly new infrastructure for sprawling development onto farmland while ignoring repairs and maintenance needed in Hamilton's existing neighbourhoods.

2. Lack of Complete Friendly Streets:

In the wake of so many accidents and fatalities on our roads, it's clear our City needs to do more to protect pedestrians and cyclists and encourage the enjoyment of our streets. Currently our streets prioritize cars and speed over safety, effective stormwater management, or community health.

3. Polluting wastewater and stormwater infrastructure:

From illegal cross connections, to combined sewer overflows our City continues to pollute our waterways with sewage. Sewergate needs to lead to real change in our approach to storm and wastewater management and monitoring

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

1. Addressing Infrastructure deficit:

Our City needs to start thinking long term. We can begin to take action on our infrastructure deficit by:

1A. Stopping Sprawl: Sprawl costs us all and study after study has shown building out onto farmland never pays for itself. I am committed to upholding a firm urban boundary.

1B. Prioritizing "best community value" in procurement and bidding over lowest bid. This analysis needs to take into consideration climate resilience and the lifecycle costs of different bids.

2. Redesign unsafe streets:

Prioritizing safety, community engagement, low impact development, green infrastructure, street trees, public art and other opportunities to increase the livability of our neighbourhoods in these redesigns

3. Begin planning for the long term:

Plan for the replacement of our combined sewer system and consider new funding opportunities from a fair stormwater fee and other progressive revenue options.

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. Living Wage:

Despite a living wage for Hamilton workers being a long identified economic development priority for the City, little progress has been made on achieving a living wage. Hamilton City Council has failed to follow their own identified priorities and lead with a living wage for city employees.

2. Our lack of long-term vision for economic development:

We chase risky gambles trying to lure outside companies in, such as opening our farmland up for sprawling development, our failed bid for Amazon and trying to bring international sporting events to town, but we don't plan for the future and invest in local solutions. Given the ongoing transition to a green economy our City risks being left behind as we chase false solutions.

3. The rising cost of waste management:

The rising cost of waste collection was identified as a major budget pressure in 2021. The Solid Waste Management Master Plan is up for renewal under the next term of council and our waste collection contract during the 2026-2030 term. It's the next council's responsibility to set the course for waste management in our city.

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

1. Living Wage:

The City of Hamilton needs to lead and introduce a living wage for all city workers. A motion to provide a living wage for some city workers failed on a tie vote this past term of council with the Ward 13 councillor absent. We are so close to moving forward on this issue!

2. Made in Hamilton/Local Solutions:

We have so much work to do in our city. From repairing and retrofitting our housing stock, to restoring our ecosystems, to resource recovery much of this work required by the climate emergency is also inherently local work. Community members have already brought forward joint submissions like the Just Recovery Plan, the Made in Hamilton Greenbelt Plan, and the Restore Hamilton Plan that would create good green jobs, support neighbours in our communities, and diversify our local economy. We need to take advantage of local talent and support the development of good green jobs in local industries. We can take the first step by implementing the recommendations of the plans listed above.

3. Zero Waste City and A Circular Economy:

The City of Hamilton should match the ambition of other cities around the world and become a Zero Waste City and set a target of at least 90% waste diversion by 2040. This also marks an incredible economic development opportunity. For example, in Austin, Texas, since setting the above zero waste goal the recycling and reuse sector has created thousands of jobs and a \$1 billion boost to Austin's economy.

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 transparency:

People feel like decisions are made in back rooms away from the sight of residents, and this lack of transparency has had real costs in terms of damage to our local environment, trust between Council and the public, and lost lives in the case of the Red Hill parkway scandal. This is unacceptable.

2. Lack of community engagement:

Many residents, both in Dundas and across the City, don't feel as though their councillors are truly working for them. Many also don't feel as though their councillor is interested in engaging with their local community to find both problems and solutions to address them. This must change – we know that residents often have the greatest insight not just into the problems that are facing us but in how we can solve them as a community.

3. Lack of accountability:

Too often we have seen councillors fail to be accountable for their actions, both regarding their personal conduct and regarding the outcome of their votes. We need to ensure that everyone at Council is accountable for their votes, and that they cease to over-rely on in-camera meetings to help hide their actions.

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

1. Make openness and transparency a priority:

Ensure that the public is able to access all meetings, and dramatically reduce the number of in-camera meetings which serve to help conceal the actions of council.

2. Vote tracking:

Make it easier for residents to see how their councillor voted on any given motion, and make sure that minutes from council meetings are easily accessible to all residents.

3. Resident Engagement and Public Town Halls:

Councillors must engage regularly with their residents to ensure that they have an avenue in which to raise concerns and to highlight community-based, community-driven solutions for the problems facing us all.

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. Delay, Denial, and Inaction have become the norm at City Hall especially where the climate emergency is concerned:

Weeks after the City of Hamilton declared a climate emergency Ward 13 residents gathered in a community meeting to discuss what our cities climate plan should include. 3 years later our City has developed a plan that still fails to meet the science on climate change. While our community is ready to lead, our city has failed time and again to meet this crisis head on. Councilors either do not understand or do not care that their lack of action is having devastating impacts on our community.

2. Sewergate and our ailing waterways:

Our water is sick. Not only that but our waterways fail to meet the room for nature guidelines with many of our watersheds receiving poor grades in the Hamilton Conservation Authority watershed report cards. While sewergate was an extreme example of the harm, sewage and other pollutants enter our waterways everyday and we lack a strategic plan to care for our water or right historic wrongs and repair relationships with water across our watersheds.

3. Sprawl is still locked in:

While the recent decision to hold a firm urban boundary has saved new farmland from being paved over it did nothing to save the farmland and natural areas in Hamilton's Airport Employment Growth district currently slated for paving. The City of Hamilton is currently planning on over 500 hectares of farmland and important natural areas around our airport. The Garner Marsh, the headwaters on the Ancaster Creek is just one high profile example of the hundreds of important sites currently set to be destroyed. Meanwhile the UN has declared this the decade of ecosystem restoration with the global loss of ecosystems being halted and reversed to a net gain by 2025. Not only is our current planning inconsistent with this target, we have no strategic planning regarding ecosystem restoration at the city level.

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

1. Restore Hamilton Plan:

While our City Council has failed to lead residents and community organizations have come together to bring forward solutions based on science and built from public input. I am proud to have worked on the Restore Hamilton Plan, a collaborative Made in Hamilton action plan which includes:

1A. Meeting the Targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework: The City of Hamilton should achieve the Global Biodiversity Framework's targets for 2030 at a local scale, including committing to protecting 30% of our lands and waters by 2030.

1B. Permanently Protect Our Farmland and Natural Areas: The City of Hamilton should endorse the Made in Hamilton Greenbelt Plan and advocate and take steps to ensure that our farmland and natural areas are permanently protected by inclusion in the Greenbelt Plan.

1C. Growing An Equitable Hamilton Nature Network: The City of Hamilton should support and recognize the importance of protecting and growing our Hamilton Nature Network to combat inequitable impacts of climate change while providing benefit to local communities.

1D. Investing in Natural Solutions: The City of Hamilton should commit at least \$10 million per year to purchase and restore natural lands and waters.

2. Hamilton Water Strategy:

As a co-founder of Save Our Streams Hamilton, I've seen first hand how engaged residents can take meaningful actions to protect our waterways. Rather than fighting our city to defend our water we should be collaborating with our city to heal our waterways. The City of Hamilton should work with the HCA to develop and fund restoration action plans for each of Hamilton's waterways and prioritize community engagement in plan implementation. This is an opportunity to involve service organizations, community groups, students, artists, and everyone in our community in water protection work.

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. Rising hate crimes and inequality:

Hamilton has long had a dire problem with hate crimes, frequently topping the charts for the most police-reported hate crimes in the country. In particular, our Black, Muslim, 2SLGBTQ+, and Jewish communities report high rates of identity-motivated violence including assaults, vandalism, and harassment. We also have unacceptably high poverty rates, and inequality that is so significant that some communities in our city have life expectancies that are a full 10 years longer than those living in parts of our lower city.

2. Failing to support our aging population:

Many parts of our city have high populations of seniors; Dundas and Ancaster in particular have higher populations of older adults, but older adults can be found throughout our city. Many older adults live in poverty, are inadequately housed, or are unable to access transportation in order to access necessary services.

3. Failing to meet the needs of our underhoused and unhoused neighbours:

Hamilton has been in a housing crisis for a long time: we need to address it via its root causes of inequality and housing prices that are far out of step with what many can afford to pay. We must also address the state of our shelter system and our inadequate rapid housing initiative, and treat our neighbours as full members of our community rather than as problems to be solved.

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

1. Equity Supported Spaces:

In response to the asks that have been made by members of equity-seeking groups in our City, the City should create safe(r) City-supported and funded spaces for communities which have been targeted by identity-motivated discrimination and violence.

2. Ensure that older adults are able to age-in-place:

The City should investigate the possibility of City-supported co-housing initiatives, City-supported home retrofit programs which can simultaneously remove accessibility barriers and increase the energy efficiency of homes (and extend these programs to tenants), and ensure that transit is available and accessible to all residents of Hamilton, regardless of where they live.

3. Re-invigorate the Dundas Downtown Node planning process:

Move forward with this planning process with the goal of activating public space, including developing a town square for residents to gather, connect, and exchange ideas. The health and restoration of Spencer Creek should be an essential component of this planning as should the completion of the Spencer Creek trail.

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. Public transit Service and Reliability issues:

Current routes do not service the entire city in a meaningful and equitable way. Area rating is a part of how we got here, but past council's failure to fund the 10 year transit plan consistently has also held back long overdue transit investments.

2. Active transit:

With some bike lanes finally in Ward 13 connectivity, protection, and cycling access are the next challenges. Current cycling routes do not connect to other existing cycling infrastructure, where cycling trails do cross roads (Old Ancaster and the Rail Trail) there are documented safety concerns and a history of collisions. Further, the lack of SOBI stations in town means that to use any cycling infrastructure most residents must own their own bike.

3. Pedestrian safety:

Everyone should feel safe getting around our city. We have no shortage of recent examples that show us right now our roads are unsafe and dominated by car traffic. We can do a much better job at sharing our roads and prioritizing safe streets for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

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

1. Modernize local Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) routes:

This will not only provide a more efficient local bus network to support Light Rail Transit (LRT) but it will improve service on existing routes and connectivity to new areas. In Ward 13 priorities for expansion include, transit connections to conservation areas and the Aldershot GO station as well as increasing on demand transit service for rural residents.

2. Phased Plan for Fare Free Public Transit: this will involve working with upper levels of government for funding; it will reduce barriers, reduce traffic (and wear and tear on our streets), mitigate our climate impact, and help to address our growing infrastructure deficit. By increasing existing fare subsidy programs we can start by providing fare free transit to primary and secondary school students, residents aged 60+, and low income residents.

Equalize funding for transit across the City: this will end transit area rating and ensure that transit reaches and serves all residents

3. Expand the Hamilton Bike Share program:

With a goal of at least one docking station per urban neighborhood in the city, this would mean at least 20 new docking stations in Urban Ward 13.

4. Safe Complete Streets:

The city should prioritize resident safety on our streets including complete and friendly street planning for all neighbourhoods, school based traffic audits for safe school commutes, and city-wide sidewalk snow clearing

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Google Forms