

Executive Director
Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce
3 Market Street West, Suite 1, Brockville ON
K6V 7L2

I would like to thank the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce for providing a platform for candidates to address important topics and issues. I appreciate the questions posed by the Chamber of Commerce as I believe they entrench the importance that it takes a community to build a community and many of the questions echoes the topics that I have chosen to highlight in my campaign.

As a councillor it is my responsibility to serve the residents of Brockville and this can only be done in an open and transparent environment. Councillors must remember that they are on Council at the pleasure of the voters and need to pay attention to the priorities and issues that the residents of Brockville share. Being able to share my thoughts and contribute to these topics is an important step in sharing and highlighting not only goals and opportunities but also how I want to engage the public towards ensuring they feel part of the process.

I would encourage that voters, once reviewing my responses to the below questions, also visit my website <http://votelarryjournal.ca> so that you may read more about my top ten priorities for the City of Brockville. I also encourage individuals that want more information or have any questions to any of my responses to share their feedback and this can be done by emailing votelarryjournal@gmail.com .

Question 1 - If someone came to you with a proposal to build a new piece of public infrastructure in our city, how would you evaluate whether the project was worth implementing?

I would like to start by providing context to my answer as there I see there are two possible responses dependent upon how the proposal was presented to council.

Some initial questions may include:

- Is this proposal solicited or unsolicited;
- Is there an accompanying needs assessment completed;
- What is the funding formula – impact to the public/residents and will there be an impact on taxes.
- Is it accessible to the target audience;

- Does it meet the look and feel of Brockville;
- Is it an environmentally accepted infrastructure;
- Does the public want it, have they had a say, were they engaged; and
- Is it part of the city's business plan and an approved project?

In the first scenario the city has completed a needs assessment and analysis of the requirements of new public infrastructure and this has been presented publically and approved through the business planning/strategic planning cycle of the city's financial business cycle and is publically known that the city will be going out to solicit a request for proposal from interested proponents to support the identified need. Included in an infrastructure need is to ensure that any future infrastructure meets environmental regulations, is a "green" sustainable building structure, is in keeping with the city's architecture and is located and accessible to the public or target audience for the need it is meant to serve.

The request would require any individual or organization to address the complete scope of work, address all elements of the project, and be prepared to provide a business case with the ability to present to an open city council meeting. The evaluation of the proposal would include elements such as: is it a fulsome proposal, does it address the project scope, a cost/benefit analysis is completed, budget including where the funds will come from, project schedule and identification of risks as well as identifying stakeholders, communication plan, a reporting schedule and plan with clear deliverables at each juncture of the project and what form (written, oral) the reporting will be provided to the city. A structure will also have to be included that addresses a mechanism to address any need for change in the project such as projected budget shortfalls, delay in deliverables, or unforeseen project costs or pressures of the project and the approval process that must be followed.

Should the City receive an unsolicited proposal the same robust process would be communicated to the individual or organization. The proposal would have to identify all the elements of the solicited/request for proposal/tender process to include demonstration that the individual or organization has completed a thorough needs assessment, identifying the benefit to the City of Brockville, identified the scope of work, budget, potential impacts to the public (taxes), and this could all be provided in a well-developed business case.

Important to the unsolicited proposal is the consultation with the public. The public must be engaged and also be able to provide feedback and have opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Unlike a solicited proposal where the consultation process has already happened with the development of a strategic plan and business plan that has been presented to the public and prior opportunity has been given to provide input and feedback.

Important to either project whether solicited or unsolicited, a detailed description of the nature of the relationship between the individual/org and the city, particularly where funding from the city is required will include clear and comprehensive potential tax impact analysis, financial forecasting and clear obligations for both the city and proponent.

Given the above response, I believe as a certified Project Manager, and my financial background, I will bring strong financial management, and project management foundational principles that can be applied throughout the project lifespan from the needs assessment right through to the evaluation, and ongoing lifespan and the project. Ensuring proper accountability, and reporting will be an important element that I can ensure the city builds into its processes. I will be able to contribute towards ensuring the city has in place strong contractual agreement that is clearly understood by the proponent on their and the city's obligations

Question 2 - Brockville needs to get on track financially while at the same time needs to move strategically to improve its offer to its citizens and tourists. What experience do you bring to the table that demonstrates your leadership in fiscal responsibility as well as strategic success?

This is an excellent question and I appreciate it being asked.

Inherent in a professional who holds a senior position is the ability to ensure balance between fiscal management and the ability to move initiatives and priorities forward. In listening to the public, there is a call for our city council to have the ability to bring this balance to its decision making and to ensure that all priorities are addressed in a balanced and financially accountable and responsible manner.

The city must ensure that it puts in place short, medium and long-term financial plans and that these plans address all its operational and capital needs. The city must ensure that debt and debt payments are not increasing and reserve funds are not decreasing – we cannot deplete our reserves. The plan should be coordinated with a business plan that communicates the city's priorities and be able to demonstrate that the cost of these priorities are captured and accommodated within the financial plan.

Being financially prudent does not mean that projects and initiatives cannot move forward. The city must look and consider creative ways to fund new initiatives and support champions and organizations that will assist with raising funds for projects. Third party funding and upper level Government funding are ways to leverage and ensure that the impact to local taxpayers is minimized.

An excellent example of a successful partnership is the Rotary Splash pad.

I have significant experience in the business planning process at both the government, municipal and private sector. I have led and developed strategic plans, and have extensive financial management and project management. I also have many years working in the non-for-profit sector and this combined with my experience in the public and private sector, brings a skill set that will be beneficial as we work with external stakeholders on different initiatives and projects. These skills are fundamental components of building sustainable programming, developing new projects initiatives and evaluation and monitoring existing programs and projects.

Question 3 - How do we attract and retain Young Professionals in Brockville?

All agree - "the youth are our future" and ensuring that Brockville attracts and retains youth and young professionals needs to be a top priority for the city to ensure its long-term sustainability, growth and prosperity.

Although I have some specific ideas on how to accomplish this, which I will list below, the first step is to create a task force that can develop a framework/plan that target this demographic. Consultation and bringing the right organizations and people to the table are important first steps. The stakeholders, I view as contributors include: youth in high school and college, young professionals that have left the city to start their careers, and those that have stayed in Brockville to work. Together, the task force can develop a framework and include an action plan. Some initiatives for this task force to consider may include:

- Discuss expansion plans with St. Lawrence College. Currently there are over 1000 students that attend the college. It would be great to see additional programs specific to the Brockville Campus developed that would attract more students. Also key is that these programs promote our local economy so that recruitment and retention strategies can be built into our economic development.
- The college is already known for certain programs like firefighting, police foundations, music and theatre. Perhaps the City could become a "Centre of excellence" for one or more of these programs, which could expand and attract students from all over Canada.
- Nursing is a program that has a very high demand for around Canada. The city should encourage the expansion of the nursing program and bringing in strategic partnerships.
- Talk to universities about locating a satellite campus in Brockville. Many universities across Ontario have grown to the point that they need to expand outside of their current boundaries. Incenting these universities to look at Brockville as a location to expand and set up a satellite could be beneficial to both the University and Brockville.

- We need higher paying jobs in Brockville to attract and retain young families. As part of the strategic plan, exploring and reaching out to business for expansion opportunities in certain fields should be considered. As examples, the city can pursue opportunities for relocation of Provincial and/or Federal Government departments; high-tech jobs, and recycling opportunities (e.g., China is not accepting North American recycling, which may present an opportunity).

Exciting with the opportunity to set up a task force is learning and being presented with a model that can be Brockville centric and promote the right activities, at the right time in the right place. I have had experience developing and leading a task force and would look forward to the potential of creating such a group should I be a member of Council.

Question 4 - What are your 3 main priorities for Economic development and what key steps will you take to bring your vision to a reality.

One of the main platforms in my campaign is the need for economic development. Not only will this bring additional jobs to our community, however it will bring new tax revenue to Brockville which will help keep tax increases to a minimum.

1. Encourage residential and business development downtown. The key to this strategy is to increase the number of people living downtown by encouraging residential development. With more people downtown, current business will flourish and new business will naturally develop to meet the demand. This will assist in the revitalization of downtown and bring new tax revenue to the city. Key strategies to make this successful is to build relationships with developers and builders, ensure that building approval processes are as efficient and effective as possible and reduce development and building fees to make downtown development more attractive.
2. Develop an Economic Development Strategy that targets business and industry for Brockville. As mentioned in question 3 above, the city should reach out to businesses, organizations and Governments for expansion opportunities in areas that would be beneficial to all involved. As examples, the city can lobby/pursue opportunities for relocation of Provincial and/or Federal Government departments; high-tech jobs, satellite University Campus, recycling opportunities and I'm sure there would be many others opportunities identified in a strategic plan.
3. Continue to market and promote Brockville as a tourist destination. As mentioned on my website, in 2013 an estimated 84 billion dollars was contributed to the Canadian economy from tourism. Brockville is in a prime location to get its share of tourism dollars. Building partnerships with organizations and stakeholders to advertise and promote the many attributes of our city; our historical architecture, the train tunnel,

Aquarium, boating, scuba diving, 1000 Islands tours and more. Other opportunities and destination tourist attractions should be considered (keeping in mind our financial constraints): For example, Mr. Robert Harper touts Brockville as the founder of the Canadian Flag, with Brockville's connection to John Matheson. This may be an excellent opportunity for Brockville, highlight the house where Mr. Matheson lived while the Canadian Maple Leaf flag was conceived. Another excellent way to attract tourism to our city with little cost. To enhance tourism, the city could reassess the ability and reduce the restrictions for entrepreneurs in the downtown/waterfront area. Increasing the number of Artisans, and food vendors in a measured and controlled way would give entrepreneurs an outlet for marketing their products and provide additional opportunities and services to tourists.

Building relationship, strategic planning experience and stakeholder engagement are strengths that I can bring to the table to assist with these initiatives.

Question 5 - What actions would you take to improve public safety in Brockville?

Safety of our citizens is a key responsibility of the City. Inherent in this is to ensure the Brockville City Police have the tools, training and support necessary to ensure citizen safety. Encouraging our police force to continue with the 'community policing' concept to promote safety and provide a police presence at events and in the downtown is important. Citizens and visitors need to feel safe on our many beautiful walking paths, in the train tunnel and on the waterfront. An increased police presence will make people more comfortable from a safety perspective in these areas.

Having a safe city is also an economic development driver. Residents, businesses and industries do not want to relocate to cities that have public safety challenges. Therefore ensuring that our city is a safe place to live can assist with our Economic Development strategy.

The city needs to ensure that infrastructure is kept in good repair to increase public safety. For example, sidewalks and walking paths need to be inspected and repaired regularly. There should be an inventory of sidewalks, bike paths and crosswalks completed, continuing to develop and expand these services to improve public safety.

One key question that has been posed in respect with public safety is the installation of cameras in the city. I have slowly come around to the position that strategically placed cameras in the downtown area would be advantageous for public safety. The caveat that I have for this is that protocols be in place to ensure resident confidentiality and cameras be used for investigation purposes when crimes are committed.

I also encourage community watch groups and the use of Crime Stoppers as community safety programs.

The experience that I bring to the table on this is, I was a founding member of Crime stoppers for Brockville and was a member of the Police Services Board.

Question 6 - Currently the city doesn't have a Communication Policy – what are your thoughts to insure there is an effective external and internal communication policy in place.

The city needs to put in place a communications policy. The communication policy needs to include; format and process for communicating with the public, use of social media, process and format for providing public information, how to respond to media inquiries, identify who can speak with the public, ensure a standard medium such as the city website, ways to promote feedback from the public and requirements to respond, as well as a comprehensive internal communication process which includes the ability for staff to provide ideas and feedback.

One of my key platforms is transparency. Inherent in being transparent is the ability to communicate effectively with the public. A communication policy needs to include the principle of transparency and the process of effective public communication.

The communication policy should be accompanied by a set of values and principles. As well a procedural document be prepared. A communication strategy should be developed so city management, staff, organization and citizens all know how to implement the policy and what the expectation is for internal and external city communication.

The experience I can lend to this process is that I am familiar with working with a communication policy and have had opportunities to apply this skill set. For example, as Director of Income Assistance for the Department of Family Services in Iqaluit, I had the opportunity to participate in the development of a comprehensive communication plan.

Question 7. What projects / policies would you champion to help small businesses grow?

Many have said that the future of jobs in Brockville is the retention and expansion of small business in our city. I agree that many future jobs in Brockville will be driven by homegrown and locally owned businesses.

There are many well-managed and successful businesses in Brockville. I would like to see a mentorship program developed that allows smaller and up and coming businesses to seek information, advice and guidance from successful local businesses.

There are current supports for small business in the area and it would benefit the city and these organizations and perspective new businesses if they were better promoted. The Leeds Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre, has a wealth of information and supports for small business. The city has a program called "Small Business Support". There are other small business supports at the Employment and Education Centre, 1000 Islands Community Development Centre, St Lawrence College and Career Services. These organizations should get

together frequently to ensure that they all know what the other does, share information, complete service gap analysis and work together to build strong supports for small businesses.

Some policies that I believe the city should visit or revisit to assist supporting small businesses are as follows:

- Communication policy
- Grants and Contribution Policy
- Strategic Investment Policy
- Small business and Entrepreneurship support program Policy
- Tourism Development and contribution Policy
- Policy on the Application of the visitors tax
- Policy on Long Term Financial Planning and investment

My experience in stakeholder engagement, relationship building, work in the not-for-profit sector, Government and small business sector would assist in working towards coordination service delivery and completing a gap analysis as well as policy development.