

Chamber of Commerce Survey

1. The City of Kingston's Strategic Plan is in its final year. Do you feel that it achieved its intended goals for this concluding term of Council?

I would grade Council's "Strategic Plan Goal Achievement": C+ (needs improvement).

A lot of time seems to have been spent on studies and discussions regarding the Strategic Plan's goals. These discussions appear to have slowed action that could deliver tangible results – e.g. more robust policy and implementation tools.

I would like to see more robust Council leadership and action and especially more tangible positive outcomes.

I have provided some economic development policy points from my platform (using some of the Strategic Plan's goals) that I would hope to realize as Mayor going forward.

- Maintaining and enhancing infrastructure:
Commence preliminary construction on the Third Crossing (subject to federal/provincial funding and dedicated public transit provisions)
- Rejuvenating brownfield:
Initiate process to develop a Kingston Waterfront Innovation District (stretching from MetalCraft Marine to the end of the Davis Tannery Property)
- Enabling economic development:
Establish an initial \$80M "loyal and local" venture capital fund to support local start-up businesses.

2. Please name the most important step the next City Council can do to support economic growth in Kingston.

I believe our most important step is to promote a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that spurs venture capital, strategic social and environmental infrastructure investments and institutional flexibility and partnerships.

This includes championing the formation of a "loyal and local" venture capital: a pool of funds that has a secondary objective to keeping innovative start-up businesses and jobs in Kingston.

For example: The \$200M Difference Capital announcement in Waterloo and Premier Wynne's 29 September 2014 announcement of \$300M Public/Private venture capital fund (also for Waterloo).

3. What steps can be taken to ensure that Kingston is perceived to be “open for business”?

The best way to project an “open for business” perception to investors and entrepreneurs outside of Kingston is to practically demonstrate that local businesses and entrepreneurs are thriving in Kingston.

To help local business thrive, the municipal government must itself become entrepreneurial in how it connects to and affects the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of our community.

Kingston’s success in being entrepreneurial across the board creates a vibrant culture of innovation - similar to that evidenced in the City of Waterloo (where I spent five years in the late 1990s and early 2000s working with the current Governor General, who was at the time the President of the Federations of Students of the University of Waterloo).

The perception and reality that Waterloo is an engine of innovation in turn leads to further reinforcing initiatives like the recent announcement of a half a billion dollar infusion of community “loyal” venture capital funding into the Waterloo economy (and which included \$100 million contribution from the Ontario and Canadian governments).

For us to create our made-in-Kingston version of this virtuous circle of innovation and prosperity, the Mayor and Councillors must not be afraid to dream big - but also shrewdly - so that these dreams are feasible and translated to real outcomes.

The measures I outlined in question 2 (“the most important step the next City Council can do to support economic growth in Kingston”) is a start in terms of entrepreneurial economic development but similar bold initiatives are required in the social, cultural and environmental areas.

For example, in my campaign Press Release on September 24th, 2014 (<http://www.brendaslo.mka.ca/pdf/24September2014antipovertyprerelease.pdf>), I make the point that in mobilizing the essential broader principles of co-operation, creativity and compassion needed to address the complex and challenging problem of deep structural poverty in our community, we will also be simultaneously developing the capacity to become Canada’s most sustainable city.

4. An effective Mayor must be a strong leader who builds consensus. What steps will you take to ensure that Council communicates effectively and works cohesively to achieve positive results for our city and its citizens?

The Mayor has a special role in building consensus. To do this well she/he must have a high degree of emotional intelligence, self-awareness and excellent group process skills. These are not qualities of character that can be quickly acquired in one or two terms on council but represent the sum life experiences of an individual. I know I possess these skills and qualities and will use them to ensure council communicates effectively and works cohesively for the betterment of our city.

Specifically, I would:

- Invest time working individually with each Councillor to understand their perspective and priorities for their district and the City at large and also to better understand them as leaders.
- Organize, within the first 3 months, a teambuilding retreat (in Kingston) that focuses on building interpersonal group processes.
- Create a Council Charter in which Councillors and the Mayor define the values that will guide City Council over the 4 years as we serve the people of Kingston. I would want to prioritize decorum, evidence-based decision making and increasing delegations to Council. We would share this with the community and present it formally at Council.
- Commit to relocating council meetings to a community space within different districts at a frequency of one meeting per quarter.

5. Do you agree with the results and recommendations found within the Mayor's Task Force on Development? What, if any changes can be made to increase the City's customer service and transparency with developers?

Yes, these recommendations are thoroughly researched and generally self-evident.

In regards to the proposed local developer education seminars, I would invite some outside entrepreneurs who are successfully incorporating "Smart Development" design into their development projects in order to share challenges, benefits and information as well as best practices on this type of development with local area developers. I would open up these information sessions to other public community groups.

6. Do you believe that land use planning reform is necessary in Kingston? If yes, what reforms will you support?

Land use planning reform is necessary when we consider the type of city we are trying to become, namely, the most sustainable in Canada.

I would propose a consolidation of the development permit system. The Planning Act allows for this to occur. The system would see the potential application of zoning bylaw, site plan control and building permits all put into one application. This would contribute to a better, more collaborative process for both City staff and prospective developers.

One special note to make is that I think we would still need to commit to public notification for changes to zoning bylaws in order to be transparent and include the community. We would ensure that the priority to seek public feedback would not be lost.

I would also like to propose that developers who are certified and those who are LEED gold or higher are given faster review priority. Developers who obtain these credentials show a level of commitment, not only to the best practices in the building process, but also support for our larger community goal of being the most sustainable city in Canada.

7. Kingston has three award-winning post-secondary institutions within its city limits, yet most of the students that are trained here, go elsewhere after graduation. What can

Kingston do to help retain the bright and skilled people that receive their education here?

If we create good quality jobs, thriving businesses and a supportive culture for entrepreneurs, our students will remain in Kingston, where their prospects are best. My election platform specifically aims to make this environment a reality and defines how to create these conditions. At the same time we must ensure students feel welcome as they take up residency here, by treating them as residents with equal opportunity for contribution – including politically.