



Positive Pathways Community Service

Regional Municipal Election Questions for Candidates – October 2022

Positive Pathways Community Services continues to play an active role in advocating on behalf of the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations in our community.

Our agency goal is simple. We want to build on our strong working relationship with the City of Windsor, to increase your understanding of our work, discuss ideas/concerns, and identify ways we can work in greater collaboration with the Municipality.

PPCS and the City of Windsor have experienced a good working relationship to advance key issues and concerns for the betterment of the city and our surrounding communities however, there is still much work to be done. Communities across the country have significant challenges to contend with. These challenges also provide significant opportunities for innovation and a creative approach to solutions.

Such issues include:

Ensuring all the diverse constituents of our community feel safe and engaged.

- Addressing mental health and substance use supports in our community.
- Addressing financial security and economic equity gaps in our regions.

We asked: If elected, what will you do to ensure that these important issues are addressed?

Below is the response status based on candidates that had emails.

Windsor Mayoral Candidates

- Matthew Giancola
“At the recent mayor's debate, I was the only candidate to mention expanding the number of safe consumption sites across Windsor. I want better accessibility to these sites. I also want more available rehabilitation opportunities, and I want to challenge the stigma against substance users and people with sexually transmitted infections. For example, at the debate I raised the issue of prescription medications and health care failures that lead to some addictions. Socio-economic and mental health factors contribute to addictions as well.

I have also raised awareness on how our prison system offers shelter, clothing, food, recreational programs, education, healthcare and more to inmates but our governments

fail to provide these opportunities for our homeless population. During my campaign I raised awareness on mental health issues that lead to homelessness and substance use, including autism. With an autism rate of 1 in 50 children, there is a higher risk that these children and other children with learning disorders will grow to become homeless in the future.

We need to set up more targeted city services to address and prevent these issues, and I will do that if elected mayor. More shelters and food banks are also needed.”

- Benjamin Danyluk: No Response
- Aaron Day: No Response
- Drew Dilkens: No response
- Chris Holt: No response
- Ernie Lamont: No response
- Louis Vaupotic: No email

Windsor Ward 1

- Darcie Renaud: No Response
- Fred Francis: No Response

Windsor Ward 2

- Myriam Faraj
“The measures to be taken to ensure that all the diverse constituents of our community feel safe and engaged will have to be determined by the assemblies.

However, I strongly believe that, as this direct democracy project relies on engagement and frequent outreach campaigns, this would not only help promote the representation and the engagement of marginalized residents, but it would also support a feeling of connection between the residents, which increases the feeling of safety and support within the community.

The ethics of care are often described as " an approach to personal, social, moral, and political life that starts from the reality that all human beings need and receive care and give care to others. The care relationships among humans are part of what mark us as human beings. We are always interdependent beings." and defined as “a species of activity that includes everything we do to maintain, contain, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment”. Meanwhile, the commons usually refers to the resources, whether they be cultural or are held in common and that, as such, it cannot be withheld or denied to anyone. Commoning is exercising that right.

I strongly believe that by realizing that we hold things in common, and that we can collectively care for these, we will achieve more safety and increase our engagement because the relation we have with people and places to them will be more intimate and we will feel a greater sense of agency on them.

Again, specific measures would have to be determined by the assembly.

But again, I strongly believe that the increased contact and sharing of experiences between residents will invite the formation of spontaneous solidarity and support groups throughout the ward. The project I propose, if taken up by the constituents, would foster a cultural shift centred around ethics of care and sharing. It's a project that seeks to empower the constituents and create connections.

As a resident, I would propose we put together a strong peer-support/mutual aid network. The idea being that in ward 2, we have quite a few people who recovered from various mental issues and addictions and who would like to support others on their journey. If a solid training curriculum is put in place and overviewed by a social worker so that the peer-support givers be taught about the best way to support their neighbors who are struggling with mental health issues and addictions. I strongly believe that increasing an everyday/everywhere friendly presence and a non-institutionalized support is a good starting point to fight isolation and stigmatization, thus support recovery.

As you've guessed it: the assembly would decide on the best way to address financial security and economic gaps collectively.

As a resident, I would advocate for supporting a circular economy, a solidarity economy and mutual aid networks.

Circular economy focuses on the reuse of goods, may it be through repairs, lending or leasing, or recycling. Projects in this direction can mean training for clothing alterations, electronics or mechanical repairs, etc. so that people who do not have specific skills can gain some skills in domains that help everyone in their neighborhood be more economically resilient.

Solidarity economy focuses on worker-managed business, mainly in the form of work cooperatives. Not only have cooperatives been shown to be more resilient than privately owned businesses, they also provide good quality employment and empowerment for the workers who are not subjected to the decisions of a sole owner. For instance, supporting the creation of cooperative bike shops, home repairs cooperatives, food-coops, repair centres, thrift shops, etc. would allow the creation of a few jobs that would provide a valuable service to the community while empowering the workers. It would also prevent the local wealth from leaching out of the community to distant corporate head-offices.

When it comes to housing, I believe cooperative housing is one of the solution to have quality and affordable dwellings.

What I want to stress here, is that the project proposed is an ethico-political project. At its heart lie the values of caring, sharing, cooperation, self-management and autonomy. It is inclusive by nature, and hopefully it'll create a sense of belonging and purpose. I know what I presented isn't a set of specific measures and that it might seem

underwhelming at first glance. I'm a single individual and I do not pretend to know it all. When it comes to addictions and mental health, the issues are global and complex. I don't believe there's a single "quick fix" for these. However, I do believe that many heads are better than one, and that collectively we can move mountains if we put our heads together, share our ideas, listen with care and work together to better our world."

- Chris Soda

"I am running in Ward 2 for the position of councillor. We all know these 3 points you have included in your email have not been resolved adequately by the current City Council & administration, so although you may have a "good working relationship" with the City of Windsor, the bottom line is all members of our community do not feel safe, mental health supports & substance abuse supports have not decreased mental health & substance abuse problems, and financial security/income equity have never been more tenuous.

It won't get done by doing the same thing over and over: word salads, photo ops, virtue signals, fashionable phrases, and the like have gotten us exactly this: innumerable missed opportunities to make a positive difference while the solutions have done nothing to resolve the problems.

When I am elected to City Council in Ward 2, Michael, this BS stops pronto. I don't plan to keep a seat warm for 4 years and do what all the others have done- mentioned in the previous paragraph- and then have the nerve to vote myself a 5000.00/year raise, increase taxes, and pretend I am doing what I was elected to do."

- Sam Romano (No response)
- Fabio Constante (No response)

Windsor Ward 3

- Helmi Charif

"If we are to maintain a sense of inclusivity and safety in our community, we must understand and educate ourselves on the various cultures, communities, and lifestyles in the City of Windsor. No community or individual should be marginalized because of their race, religion, or sexuality. Education on the availability of different mental health and substance abuse support organizations is crucial. People can't get help if they don't know what's out there. We have to work with these organizations and institutions to make sure they have the resources they need to reach out to the vulnerable members of our society that have been affected by these issues. Addressing chronic homelessness in Ward 3 and the City of Windsor as a whole is the first step in bridging the gaps in economic equity and financial security. It's not just the homeless who suffer from weak financial security but the average Windsorite as well. There are a plethora of problems threatening the financial security of thousands of families, the largest of which is

affordable housing. With the collaboration of all levels of government and organization, we can invest in building more affordable and available housing for the average person in Windsor. Homelessness has risen by 27% in the last 4 years alone. The economic gap continues to widen and push more people into poverty every year. We can no longer ignore these issues. I will fight for policies that help people in their time of need and begin to heal the cavity of financial inequality in the City of Windsor.”

- Renaldo Agostino (no response)
- Katherine Cameron (no response)
- Angela Fitzpatrick (no email)
- Nick Kolasky (no response)
- Kennedy Mangera (no response)
- James McCarte (no response)
- Cynthia Van Vrouwerff (no response)
- Brian Yeomans (no response)

Windsor Ward 4

- Matt Marchand
“My first platform deals with Strategies on Homelessness, Mental Health, and Opioids. The document provides a comprehensive approach in dealing with these issues in Ward 4, noting that the City has taken some steps, such as the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and the Housing and Homelessness Master Plan, but that there is more that we can do—especially in the short and immediate term. I’d actually love it if you and your colleagues could look over the platform, and if there’s anything in there that we missed on a city council level, we welcome ideas and collaboration.

The second platform deals with Crime Prevention and Safety Strategies, looking at ways we can increase safety through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and Crime Prevention Walks, but also free up police officer time on top of reducing crime. This way, officers can respond to calls faster. We also looked into hot spot policing.

In terms of financial security and economic equity gaps in our region, when I was the President & CEO of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, I was one of the first Chambers in Ontario to support the Living Wage program. I will be talking about child poverty in an upcoming platform release and the need to offer low- and no-cost family activities in the city. I was also involved with Pathway to Potential and ProsperUs at the Chamber as well. As part of the previously mentioned platform, Strategies on Homelessness, Mental Health, and Opioids, I put forth two pilot projects we could take on immediately—Transitional Storage Lockers and Wheels of Change. Transitional Storage Lockers provides people experiencing homelessness somewhere to store their belongings so they don’t have to cart all their things around with them at all times. This has been implemented successfully around the world. Wheels of Change is a program in

San Diego that provides employment opportunities to people experiencing homelessness (ex. a van will pick up those looking to work and take them to a site to work, pick up garbage, etc. and pay them a living wage). It's a great way to help transition people experiencing homelessness into meaningful work. This has been successful, with 56 cities visiting San Diego to model similar programs.

As a former CEO, it's important to get specific about the execution of plans and set aggressive targets to achieve them, and our campaign reflects that style of leadership. That way, everyone knows what's expected, who does what by when, cost estimates/savings, benefit estimates, and what are the metrics. Performance of the proposed solutions can be reviewed and adjusted so the goals can be achieved."

- Jake Rondot
"Encouraging and enhancing diverse perspectives, as well as helping to heal our communities from the many bias-based wrongs of our past, has been a personal interest and passion of mine. I have actively pushed for diversity on the boards and committees I've served, and have been a member of change-focused committees such as the University of Windsor Advisory Group on the Naming of University Assets (mandated to review the names of all University assets to ensure they align with the current values of the institution)."
- John Abati (no response)
- Edy Hadad (no response)
- Gregory Heil (no response)
- Mark McKenie (no response)
- Kristen Siapas (no response)
- Patrick Sutherland (no response)

Windsor Ward 5

- Ken Acton (no response)
- Alex Didone (no response)
- Caitlyn Demarais (no response)
- Ed Sleiman (no response)
- Currie Soulliere (no response)
- Richard St. Denis (no response)

Windsor Ward 6

- Ashley Lafreniere
"If elected, I want to approve the safe injection site which will also help to improve public safety and substance abuse issues within the community. I also want to increase funding for the support of low-income families, specifically for food banks and shelters.

There is a movement in Windsor that would like to acknowledge the role in the LGBTQ community in our history and they have my full support as well. I also want to improve

access to community groups by allowing them to use city spaces which would be a good way to teach usable skills to people that need them at a low cost (ideally free).”

- Jeremy Renaud
 - “Meet with Pozitive Pathways Board and its Executive Director to identify specific issues and opportunities for engagement
 - Identify areas for inclusion and/or develop a task force that aligns with other current (or new) initiatives throughout the downtown core, Windsor West and beyond.
 - Be a champion for Pozitive Pathways
 - Identify current awareness initiatives, programs, events, and projects that are being hosted by Pozitive Pathways in the community
 - Explore opportunities for new engagement in Ward 6 and/or recommend ways to partner with BIAs (both in and outside of Ward 6) to raise awareness, education, and supports that the organization provides for this community
 - Introduce Positive Pathways to new partners and community likeminded individuals who can enable the mission and vision or the organization.
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- Beth St. Denis

“It is extremely important that all members of our community have access to services like these. It ensures citizens feel safe, supported and have a platform for dialog and engagement.

I feel it's imperative for City Council to work closely with organizations such as yours, to ensure residents are getting the support that they need. Navigating these types of services must be challenging and I'm sure members of your organization are grateful to have such a supportive partner in Pozitive Pathways.

If elected to council, building partnerships with community groups such as yours will be a top priority. I have not been personally or directly impacted by HIV or HCV. It is organizations like yours that can help people like myself become more aware of what citizens under these circumstances go through on a daily basis.

I feel that City Council needs to work with our provincial and federal counterparts to help Windsor develop funding to help organizations like yours flourish. Too often, provincial and federal governments are not allocating enough funds to help municipalities deal with the challenges we face in regard to health and mental wellness. We need more focus on finding solutions to substance abuse and more education on

mental health issues that affect so many in our city. These are steps in the right direction to ensure that we are helping some of the most vulnerable people in our community.”

- Joanne Gignac (no response)
- Dylon Graves (no response)
- Brian McCurdy (no response)

Windsor Ward 7

- Sydney Brouillard-Coyle

“As a proud non-binary, transgender, queer, and asexual person who is also a youth/young adult (22 years old), this is an area of great passion for me. One section of my platform is specifically focused around Diversity and Equity, and my commitments include advocating for the City of Windsor to hire diversity/equity consultants to audit all City of Windsor policies, procedures, as well as the website. I will also be pushing for mandatory diversity training for all City of Windsor employees and first responders, and to provide funding for any social service organization (long-term care homes, mental health/addiction service agencies, housing support/emergency shelters, etc.) who would be interested in booking diversity training for their staff, as these organizations often are non-profit and may experience financial barriers that might otherwise limit their access to such training opportunities.

Additionally, I would like to provide additional funding for any of the aforementioned organizations to utilize what they learned in the training to create programming/specialized services specifically for members of minoritized groups (such as a section for transgender people in an emergency shelter, a Rainbow Wing in a long-term care home for 2SLGBTQIA+ seniors, and arts-based social group for people of colour, etc). All of the aforementioned training and consultations will be done from the lens of intersectionality, incorporating perspectives of Indigenous people, Black people, People of Colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, Disabled people, Women, and Newcomers/Refugees. It will be done in consultation with the excellent social service organizations servicing these communities, utilizing the model “nothing about us without us”. Similarly, this is why there needs to be a transformation of Windsor’s Diversity Committee to recognize the realities of intersectionality, with much clearer guidelines around which communities must be represented at the table. Windsor has a lot more that it needs to do to support diversity and equity - and I promise to be a strong advocate for this important work.

I recognize that COVID-19 has exacerbated many existing challenges, including mental health, addiction, poverty, and homelessness. All of these are addressed in the “social services” section of my platform, which includes my commitment to create more safe injection/consumption sites (one per ward by 2030); provide financial support for the

Mobile Outreach and Support Team (addictions and homelessness) and Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (mental health crisis situations); adding a fourth option to 911 for mental health crisis response with the goal of the MCRRT being expanded to operate 24/7/365 with multiple units consisting of a social worker and peer mentor (and gradual phasing out of police involvement); and creating a social services hub in Ward 7 to increase access in a vastly underserved area.

I intend to support all goals outlined in the “Home Together: Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Master Plan”, which includes sustaining and expanding social and affordable housing supply, sustaining and expanding housing that is linked with supports, ending homelessness, addressing Indigenous housing and homelessness needs, reducing and preventing youth homelessness, and fostering successful tenancies through community collaboration. I believe that these goals address a lot of very real challenges around homelessness and housing affordability, and we need a strong advocate at the table.”

- Jeewen Gill

I have always been active in building a fair, equitable, and inclusive community for all residents. I have volunteered for many social services agencies in the area to support members of our most vulnerable communities. In order to engage all members of the community, I have hosted public in-person and virtual meetings to hear directly from residents. Every weekend I host Coffee with the Councillor at the local Tim Hortons where residents can come in and speak to me one on one about any issues they may have. I will continue to build on engaging the residents so that we can build a safe and inclusive community for everyone while always applying a diversity and equity lens to our decision-making process. Diversity is our strength and we must celebrate it!

Mental health is an issue that impacts many people in their lives in one way or another. We must advocate for our provincial and federal governments for additional funding for mental health and substance abuse. Using that funding we need to implement a culturally sensitive program to support those in need. As a city and community, we can implement more awareness campaigns letting people know they are not alone and that there is support available.

There are many factors involved in addressing financial security and economic equity gaps in our region, we must approach this with a multi-faceted approach including more investments and advocacy around affordable housing, through creating jobs, and overall, by taking a holistic approach to supporting vulnerable populations. We must have more long-term wrap-around supports available to individuals who need them to help them thrive. I am committed to fighting to close the economic equity gap by working together with all levels of government, social services agencies, and community groups.

- Greg Lemay (no response)
- Angelo Marignani (no response)
- Sophia Sevo (no response)

Windsor Ward 8

- Gary Kaschak
“My track record as a 4 year City Councillor has been to support all diverse constituents in our Community to feel safe & engaged.

As well, I believe I have been a leader in supporting mental health & substance use supports. Me being the clinching vote of this City Council in a 6-5 tally to bring forward a Safe Consumption & Treatment site is proof of that.

Addressing financial security and economic gaps is certainly attainable and something I will continue to support and work forward on Michael. Help is always required from upper levels on Government on a subject like this but I will continue to do all that I can from a Municipal level standpoint if re-elected.”
- Gemma Grey Hall (no response)

Windsor Ward 9

- Dan Mokrzycki
“I will ensure that all points are addressed by council when I get voted in. A lot of these items seem to get lost in the mix during council meetings and that cannot happen. Everyone needs to be included in all decisions that are made by council, especially for those constituents that are subject to abuse and harassment.

Safe injection sites will also be good to have in all wards, if we can ensure the users are using these sites and these sites only. We need to try and get users away from children’s park and family areas to prevent possible injuries to our kids.”
- Harinder Cheema (no response)
- Kieran McKenzie (no email)

Windsor Ward 10

- Wally Chafchak
“Listen, consult, and make decisions in strategic Partnership with residents, business and labour that raises Windsor to the next level and not get bogged down in petty politics.”
- Paul Borrelli (no response)
- Mark Masonvich (no response)
- Jim Morrison (no response)