

Municipal Election 2018 (Survey Results): Town of Ingersoll

Poverty negatively impacts our ability to create a healthy, vibrant community. The fact that some people in Oxford County cannot afford basic needs, including nutritious and sufficient food is a real concern. In Oxford County, based on the 2015 after tax Low Income Measure, 10.8% of the population (11, 835 people) live in low income.

On September 10, 2018, all Town of Ingersoll Candidates were contacted via email with a follow-up call and provided an introduction to, and a link to the following survey. The survey questions provide an opportunity for voters to start a discussion with candidates about poverty reduction. Our hope is that this survey serves as a starting point to an ongoing conversation about poverty in Oxford County.

Participation in the survey was voluntary. Responses provided by the candidates that completed the survey are posted and have not been changed in any way. Social Planning Council Oxford would like to thank those candidates who have completed the survey.

The following candidates from the Town of Ingersoll did not submit a completed survey:

Candidate	Position
Paul Holborough	Mayor
Broderick Carey	Deputy Mayor
Fred Freeman	Deputy Mayor
John Bell	Councillor
Michael Bowman	Councillor
Rick Eus	Councillor
Kirk Franklin	Councillor
Dick Huntley	Councillor
Cathy Mott	Councillor
Brian Petrie	Councillor
Maria Sikal	Councillor
Kristi Van Kooten Bossence	Councillor



Municipal Election 2018: Candidate Survey Responses to Social Issues

Question #1: Poverty Reduction Strategy

In 2017, Oxford County declared:

“Poverty reduction in Oxford County is achievable and will strengthen well-being for all. It’s the right thing to do. Through leadership, innovation, and the transformation of relationships, in working to eliminate poverty. Oxford County will deliver improved health and well-being for all residents and enhance community prosperity.”

As a result a draft [Zero Poverty Plan](#) was presented to council in June 2018.

Do you support the funding and implementation of the Oxford County Zero Poverty Plan?

Candidate	Position	Response
Ted Comiskey	Mayor	Yes
Tim Lobzun	Mayor	Yes
Eric Berridge	Councillor	Yes
Tammy Jeffrey-Larder	Councillor	Unsure
Gordon Lesser	Councillor	Yes
Becci Verbrugge	Councillor	Yes

Question #2: Housing

a) Is safe, decent and secure affordable housing a priority in your platform?

b) How will you help families and individuals secure and maintain safe, decent and affordable housing?

Candidate	Position	Response A	Response B
Ted Comiskey	Mayor	Yes	Communication is one of the main focuses the County must develop. What is, what will and what can be available to ensure decent and affordable housing. Throwing money into program will not solve the issue if we do not fully understand the need. How do we prevent that need before it happens? This is an issue that is not going away. Just saying we are doing our part does not stop the increasing flow of required safe homes



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Tim Lobzun	Mayor	Yes	We need to make it cost efficient to build tax it less and encourage the construction of it through better planning and recognizing opportunity
Eric Berridge	Councillor	Yes	By working with developers to ensure housing is built that families in Ingersoll can afford. By seeking out developers who will be more likely to build this housing.
Tammy Jeffrey-Larder	Councillor	Yes	We need to work together to find opportunities to support our community. The strategic plan needs to be updated so we have a focused approach on all the important needs of our community
Gordon Lesser	Councillor	Yes	Through either the town helping to reduce our costs to a developer or offering assistance and support for county and provincial incentives to developers. I have also discussed this with other councillors and keep an eye on what other municipalities are doing to see if there is an innovative idea that we can use. The other avenue is to keep this front and center provincially. Hopefully with enough pressure there will be new or better incentives for developers.
Becci Verbrugge	Councillor	Yes	I first would like to review all positives and negatives of the Zero Poverty Plan and then work from there. Finding the right funding, locations and developers are key to making things a success.

Questions #3: Transportation

a) Is affordable public transportation a priority in your platform?

b) How will you create or enhance public transportation that is affordable for everyone, especially people living in poverty?

Candidate	Position	Response A	Response B
Ted Comiskey	Mayor	Yes	I will say. I do not know. But we need to find out.
Tim Lobzun	Mayor	Yes	Ingersoll has paratransit and taxi but is not large enough to support a full transit system however I have been and will continue to work creating an Active transportation network where folks can ride glide or scooter to where they need to go I also support SWOTA in their regional transportation network plan



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Eric Berridge	Councillor	Unsure	I'm not sure public transportation in Ingersoll is a realistic endeavor. I would like to see transportation to Woodstock happen, even if only a twice a day route. For example leaving Ingersoll at 9:00 am and 1:00 pm, and returning 1:00pm and 5:00 pm. This could happen with an existing Woodstock line, where twice a day it is extended to Ingersoll. It is possible that a pilot project of 3 to 6 months could determine if it is cost effective-enough people using it.
Tammy Jeffrey-Larder	Councillor	Unsure	This is something that is important to many seniors and needs to be addressed. A committee could be put together to do some research on what is available and at what cost.
Gordon Lesser	Councillor	Yes	I have answered yes to public transport because it is something that in Ingersoll we could certainly use. The big difficulty I see right now is number of users. Our population does not right now have the numbers to support a traditional bus service. So we need to find an alternate method that the province will also support. To go it alone is a large financial burden that is to big for most small communities to handle. So I will keep talking to the appropriate ministers to try to find a solution.
Becci Verbrugge	Councillor	Unsure	I believe there is a need for affordable public transportation in our town. Looking into bylaws, funding and best possible scenarios for our town is where to start

Question #4: Other Comments

Any other comments or areas in your platform that will address poverty or other social issues in Oxford County?

Candidate	Position	Response
Ted Comiskey	Mayor	Everything we do to address poverty must be done with the greatest respect. We all do not have the physical or mental abilities to find comfort within our society on our own. Knowing respectful support is available is the first step in finding that comfort zone.



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Tim Lobzun	Mayor	As Mayor I would work to instill a culture with in departments where each department questions themselves on how they can address the needs of the population How can we make access easier can we do it more efficient can we try a new idea From Treasury to Parks and Rec they all can impact positively in these issues
Eric Berridge	Councillor	I would like to see more social services in Ingersoll, and less people having to go to Woodstock. I would like a storefront social services worker on Thames Street to help those with mental illness, anxiety and addiction issues. I believe people would use these services more if they were right in town.
Tammy Jeffrey-Larder	Councillor	Respondent skipped this question
Gordon Lesser	Councillor	I feel that a county wide forum on housing with the developers to find out what they need to build more throughout the county would be a good start. We can come up with all the plans we want but if noone wants to build affordable housing it gets us nowhere. the other area to look at is youth especially teenagers. Youth centers are helpful but if they are easily to get to especially if you are in a rural area we as a community lose. This will require a commitment from all the municipalities in Oxford not just the three larger urban centers.
Becci Verbrugge	Councillor	Respondent skipped this question