



## **Municipal Election 2018 (Survey Results): Township of South-West Oxford**

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 Township of South-West Oxford 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 Township of South-West Oxford did not submit a completed survey:

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Position</b>
David Mayberry (acclaimed)	Mayor
Paul Buchner (acclaimed)	Councillor
Valerie Durston (acclaimed)	Councillor
George Way (acclaimed)	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?**

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Response</b>
Jim Pickard	Councillor (acclaimed)	Yes
Peter Ypma	Councillor	Yes
Craig Gillis	Councillor	Unsure
Debbie Kasman	Councillor	Yes
Geoffrey Innes	Councillor	Yes
Kelly Cowell	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?**

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Response A</b>	<b>Response B</b>
Jim Pickard	Councillor	Unsure	Don't know
Peter Ypma	Councillor	Unsure	I will support measures brought to our township Council for consideration that make for secure housing in our region, recognizing at the same time that our taxpayers cannot be burdened beyond their means.
Craig Gillis	Councillor	No	



## Municipal Election 2018: Candidate Survey Responses to Social Issues

Debbie Kasman	Councillor	Yes	If elected to Ward 2 Councillor for South-West Oxford, I will work in cooperation with Council, other municipalities, Oxford County, the Social Planning Council Oxford, the United Way Oxford, CMHA Housing and other agencies in Oxford County for safe, decent and affordable housing. Everyone in Oxford County deserves a safe, decent and affordable place to live from the homeless to seniors to at risk youth.
Kelly Cowell	Councillor	No	There are a lot of questions to ask around this topic. I would start by researching and look for solutions.

## 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
Jim Pickard	Councillor	Yes	Don't know
Peter Ypma	Councillor	No	As a rural community, public transportation is often too expensive to implement as a general policy across the township since the distances needed to be covered are much greater than in urban areas, considering the potential ridership. I would rather look at this issue on a more local, case by case manner and try to secure funding for transportation needs from whatever sources are available - our own township, other levels of government, community partners, etc.
Craig Gillis	Councillor	No	
Debbie Kasman	Councillor	Yes	If elected to Ward 2 Councillor for South-West Oxford, I will work in cooperation with Council, other municipalities, Oxford County, the Social Planning Council Oxford, the United Way Oxford and other agencies in Oxford County to support Oxford's Transportation Master Plan. It's important we work toward a collective transportation strategy that addresses population, employment growth, transportation deficiencies, rural and urban issues, and affordable access for seniors, those with disabilities, and those living in poverty.
Kelly Cowell	Councillor	No	Again, I think there is a lot to learn about public transportation. I would have to research and get a stronger understanding before making suggestions.



## Municipal Election 2018: Candidate Survey Responses to Social Issues

### Question #4: Other Comments

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

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Response</b>
Peter Ypma	Councillor	As a current Deacon in the Tillsonburg Christian Reformed Church, poverty is a key area that I recognize needs to be addressed. We also have to make sure that those we try to help have a stake in the process. Handing 'solutions' to those in need does not help them to take pride in being part of the answer to their issues. Often the social issues that create poverty seem too large to overcome for any one group (church, club, etc.), but I look forward to dealing with presentations on a township-wide basis that will address this issue from groups and individuals that have a passion for this work and bring forward realistic, attainable solutions.
Debbie Kasman	Councillor	As a retired educator, I have a great deal of experience working with young moms, at risk youth and those with disabilities. If elected to Ward 2 Councillor for South-West Oxford, I will put those skills to work.