

Staff Report 2022-0076

Meeting Date: March 22, 2022

Subject: Town of Caledon Priorities for the 2022 Provincial Election

Submitted By: Devan Lobo, Senior Business Analyst, Corporate Strategy and Innovation, Office of the CAO

RECOMMENDATION

That the Town of Caledon Priorities for the 2022 Provincial Election outlined in Staff Report 2022-0076, be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The next provincial election is scheduled to be held on or before June 2, 2022.
- This report provides key advocacy priorities to advance through the provincial election as well as tactics aimed to raise awareness of Town of Caledon priorities leading up to the election.
- Staff recommend advocating on priorities that support growth, modernization and resilience: affordable housing, broadband, climate change, finance, infrastructure, and local planning equity.
- Positioning Caledon as a provincial partner, and highlighting opportunities to work with the next provincial government is important for advancing Town priorities.
- By endorsing a set of priorities, the Town of Caledon can speak as a collective voice when advocating for potential policy changes with candidates in the Dufferin-Caledon riding.
- The Town of Caledon Priorities document for the Provincial Election is to educate local candidates on the types of issues they can advocate for, if elected.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this report is to propose key advocacy priorities to advance through the provincial election as well as tactics aimed to raise awareness of Town of Caledon priorities leading up to the election.

Government relations and engagement is as critical as ever as we navigate the COVID19 pandemic recovery and Caledon prepares for substantial population growth. The opportunities and challenges ahead are complex requiring various levels of government cooperation and collaboration. Legislative and funding actions taken by the Provincial Government can have significant impact on municipal governments in general, and the Town of Caledon specifically. These actions can assist or hinder the execution of Town priorities. Staff believe that it is important to educate and inform those seeking public office about the challenges being faced by Caledon residents and businesses.

The next provincial election is scheduled for June 2, 2022. As candidates for all parties are selected, and begin to campaign within the Dufferin-Caledon riding, the Town, along with local residents and businesses, have an opportunity to communicate their priorities to the candidates. By endorsing a set of priorities, the Town of Caledon can speak with

one voice to these candidates to increase candidate knowledge and ultimately the priorities of the next Ontario government to support the needs of Caledon.

Staff are seeking direction from Council on which priorities to advance through the Provincial Election.

Town of Caledon Priorities

From an advocacy perspective, it is important for the Town's "asks" of future governments to be consistent and closely aligned with Council endorsed priorities.

To this end, staff recommend Caledon advocate for Council Work Plan priority issues that are critical to Caledon's growth, modernization and resilience. The following are the proposed key provincial election priorities:

- Caledon-Vaughan GO Rail Line - The Town of Caledon is seeking continued support to complete the necessary business case for the Caledon-Vaughan GO Rail line and include this passenger rail service in the next Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan Update with an in-service date of before 2041.
- Affordable housing – Work with municipalities to advance policies and programs that expedite a full range of affordable rental, independent living and multi-storey housing options
- Broadband – Accelerate the allocation of broadband funding and address broadband gaps ensuring affordable broadband rates for residents
- Climate change - Enact policies and legislation and deliver funding programs that support municipal action on climate change adaptation and mitigation and enable a low carbon transition.
- Finance – Commit to a provincial-municipal fiscal framework that is stable, sustainable and affordable for property taxpayers
- Infrastructure – Invest in public infrastructure such as roads, transit, active transportation and energy infrastructure that is low-carbon, climate adaptive, accommodates growth and supports healthy and safe communities
- Local planning equity – Provide local municipalities equity in control of local planning matters with respect to growth, settlement areas and boundary expansions, transit areas and employment lands.

Region of Peel Priorities

On March 3, 2022, the Region of Peel Government Relations Committee recommended Regional Council approved advocacy themes and related council endorsed advocacy positions as part of their provincial election strategy. The themes include: Economic Recovery, Partner with Municipalities and Community for Life, with positions relating to:

- Pandemic response
- Invest in child care as an economic catalyst
- Focus on affordable housing solutions
- Support Peel's community growth
- Enhancing the transportation network

- Safeguard quality of life for seniors
- Prioritize investment in mental health

The Town priorities around issues of affordable housing, broadband and infrastructure, are complementary to what has been outlined in the Peel documents. More information on these priorities can be found at: <http://www.peelregion.ca/council/advocacy/>

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

In relation to the upcoming provincial election, AMO is advocating for a number of local priorities. These include a provincial-municipal fiscal framework, economic recovery and future prosperity, climate change, infrastructure investments, broadband connectivity, health and human services, mental health and addictions and affordable housing. Further discussions have revolved around our municipal success being foundational to the success of Ontario.

Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO)

AMCTO is advocating for building a strong and resilient municipal sector from an administrative and operational perspective. The priorities include stable, predictable funding and investment, continuous improvement through strengthened municipal-provincial partnership and investment in skills and training for the next generation of municipal professionals.

Status of Provincial Party Platform Alignment

At the time this report was finalized, the policy platforms for all major provincial parties have not been released. Staff will monitor and analyze these platforms when released to determine alignment with Town of Caledon priorities.

Next Steps

If approved, staff will implement the following tactics leading up to the June 2022 provincial election:

- Develop a communication document to circulate Priorities to all candidates in the Dufferin-Caledon riding as they are nominated by their parties.
- Provide the Priorities document on the Town's advocacy webpage.
- Use social media tools available to the Town to advance advocacy priorities content.
- Circulate Priorities document to other impacted stakeholders including Provincial Party Leaders and Provincial Party Headquarters, the Region of Peel, and cities of Mississauga and Brampton.
- Host an all candidates meeting to brief Dufferin-Caledon candidates on the Town's priorities.
- Staff will work with Regional staff to coordinate efforts regarding government relations on the 2022 Provincial Election where applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Sustainable Growth:

- Continue the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan including transit, infrastructure, cycling, traffic management, traffic calming, livable and walkable communities
- Advance proactive infrastructure development solutions for growth management
- Pursue intensification in concert with accessibility and public transit, Bolton GO Station and other transit hubs

Connected Community:

- Enhance high-speed internet connectivity
- Promote an age-friendly community through the formation of youth and senior retention plans

Good Governance:

- Balance financial planning for both operating and capital budgets
 - Capital budget - balance aging infrastructure with growth-related infrastructure needs

ATTACHMENTS

None.