

Caledon Votes 2026: Council candidates weigh in on growth issues in their Wards

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This week, the Caledon Citizen asked what each candidate: "Caledon is a growing community. What would you identify as the single most important/prevalent growth-related issue or challenge in your respective Ward and what would you do to address it?"

Here is how they answered:

WARD 1

Kate Hepworth ? "Development site plans rarely if ever address the peripheral issues that can impact the surrounding residents or villages and hamlets. Deeper dives on these issues need to be explored. Can the area support more development? Does the removal of vital trees and vegetation create further flooding issues? Do existing roads provide adequate movement? If unable to park at the home, where do visitors park? A single issue? there is no single issue, there are a multitude and they must all be truly recognized if the site plan even makes it past an EA."

Keri Parfitt ? "The single biggest challenge for Ward 1 is the pace of growth and what that growth means for our rural communities, roads and water resources. We are seeing a proposal for a blasting quarry extending tens of feet below the water table, potentially supplying aggregate for Highway 413, alongside a new Site Alteration By-law that could enable large-scale movement of fill generated by development across the GTA. Both have significant implications for our groundwater and natural environment, while bringing more heavy trucks to our roads that are already under pressure. I would advocate for infrastructure-first growth, rigorous assessment of cumulative impacts on groundwater and natural areas, responsible management of fill and ensuring development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs. Growth should be thoughtfully planned, not rushed, and must work for both existing residents and future communities."

Aanya Shahi ? "The most important growth-related challenge in Ward 1 is making sure infrastructure keeps pace with development. Growth should not leave existing residents dealing with more traffic, unsafe roads or services that are stretched beyond their capacity."

I would push for development to be properly supported by the roads, emergency services and community infrastructure it requires. I would also prioritize road safety concerns, including speeding and dangerous intersections, and ensure residents have meaningful opportunities to provide input as growth decisions are made. Growth is coming, but it needs to be responsible and well planned. My priority would be making sure Ward 1 grows in a way that protects residents' quality of life and preserves what makes our community special."

Tom Sweeney ? "The most prevalent growth-related challenge that comes up in every hamlet and village in Ward 1 is the traffic and traffic related dangers. Many of the complaints I hear are related to speeding, particularly in residential zones. Despite traffic calming measures in some communities, dangerous behaviours continue on our roads. I would like to see the Council petition the OPP and, if necessary, increase funding to ramp up police enforcement and presence on our roads. Ward 1 rarely sees police on our roads and this needs to change. In addition, I question the common use of unmarked police vehicles in our community. With the huge geographic size of our Town, I believe that marked units should be used in most cases to increase visibility and further crime prevention. Black and white cruisers should be a common sight in our Town on every road."

(Jeffrey Halsall did not respond by deadline)

WARD 2

Yogi Chahal ? For me, the biggest growth challenge in Ward 2 is making sure growth is matched by the infrastructure and services residents need to live safely and comfortably. I live here, and I have watched our neighbourhoods grow rapidly. But residents are asking very basic questions: Where are the parks and recreation spaces for our families? How do we keep up with traffic and speeding as more people move in? How do we make our streets safer while construction and truck traffic increase? In parts of our community, families have been here for five or six years without seeing a single new park. That should make us stop and ask whether infrastructure is keeping pace with development. As Councillor, I would focus on identifying these gaps early, pushing for clear priorities and timelines, and working with Town and Regional staff, developers and other partners to address them. I would also keep residents informed about what is planned, what is delayed, and what is actually delivered. Growth should build a better community for the people who call Ward 2 home.?

Hunar Kahlon ? The biggest growth-related challenge in Ward 2 is making sure our infrastructure and services keep pace with development. 'Infrastructure before development' isn't just a campaign promise for me ? it's a challenge I want to address. We know significant growth is coming to Caledon, much of it driven by provincial growth requirements. The question is how we manage that growth responsibly. We need to build complete communities, not just houses. That means roads, transportation, schools, parks, recreation, emergency services and other essential infrastructure must keep pace with new development. It also requires bringing the Town, Region, Province, school boards, developers and other responsible agencies to the table and setting clear expectations from the beginning. My approach is straightforward: growth should pay for growth, infrastructure should be planned and delivered alongside development, and existing residents should not be left paying the price for growth that wasn't properly planned. There really is no other sustainable way to grow.?

Rakesh Madhok ? Residents are facing higher costs for housing, utilities, food and everyday necessities. I would support responsible budgeting, careful spending and strong accountability for every tax dollar. Growth should help address the tax burden. New development should pay its fair share of the infrastructure and services required to support that growth rather than shifting those costs onto existing residents. If elected then I will make sure the Town regularly reviews its programs, contracts, staffing and capital projects to ensure we are receiving good value and eliminating unnecessary expenditures. I would also support greater transparency around municipal finances so taxpayers can clearly understand where their money is going.?

Jagraj Sekhon ? The biggest growth-related issue I hear about in Ward 2 is the pace of development. Residents understand that Caledon will grow, but many are concerned that development is happening too quickly and that our roads, parks, schools and other services will not keep up. I believe in smart planning and responsible growth. We need to make sure that the essential infrastructure and community services are planned alongside new development, not after residents have already moved in. Growth should also respect the character of our existing neighbourhoods and what people love about living in Caledon. As Councillor, I will listen to residents, ask the tough questions regarding the timeline of new development, and work to make sure growth is properly planned as well as benefits both current and future residents.?

WARD 3

Stan Cameron ? The single most important growth-related challenge for Ward 3 is ensuring infrastructure and municipal services keep pace with development without placing an unfair financial burden on existing residents. As Caledon grows, increased traffic and pressure on roads, recreation facilities, parks, libraries and other services will affect communities across the ward. I would advocate for responsible growth planning, with the necessary infrastructure identified and funded before development places additional pressure on existing services. Caledon should also pursue its fair share of provincial and federal funding for infrastructure required by provincially driven growth, rather than expecting existing taxpayers to carry those costs. Growth must also be balanced with protecting what makes Ward 3 and Caledon unique, including agricultural lands, green space, natural areas and our rural character. Development and environmental protection should not be competing priorities. With thoughtful planning, we can accommodate growth while protecting the community we value.?

Doug Maskell ? Ward 3 will soon see the residential and industrial/commercial growth that was unanimously supported by all Councillors when we approved Caledon's official plan, Future Caledon, in 2023. Building complete and livable communities is

going to be a challenge due to the significant changes the Provincial government has made over the past four years. New legislation and amendments to existing legislation have: reduced required park space by 50%, reduced the number of parking spaces required per home and increased the population density per hectare. So, new developments will have fewer parks, less parking and higher population densities. Town Staff and Councillors will have to encourage developers and builders to go above the Provincial minimum requirements and create new developments in Caledon that have sufficient park space, adequate parking and libraries and community centres within a reasonable distance. We must aspire to a Caledon standard that exceeds the Provincial minimums.?

WARD 4

Cheryl Connors ? ?The most important growth-related challenge in Ward 4 is the financial burden being placed on Caledon taxpayers. The Province is transferring responsibility for regional roads, water and wastewater infrastructure to Caledon while requiring the Town to accommodate significant growth. Existing residents should not be left paying for infrastructure needed primarily to serve new development. Provincial and regional planning decisions have turned Caledon into a major warehousing and freight hub. Caledon taxpayers should not be forced to absorb the cost of repairing and maintaining roads damaged by the heavy truck traffic these decisions have created. I would demand full transparency about the short- and long-term costs before Caledon assumes responsibility for this infrastructure. I would also press the Province, Region and developers to pay their fair share. I will be a strong and persistent advocate for growth that does not leave Caledon taxpayers carrying an unfair financial burden.?

Heather French ? ?Road safety is the biggest challenge facing Ward 4 as Caledon grows. More people moving here has brought traffic, speeding, illegal heavy trucks, and unauthorized scooters to our local roads and trails. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their own neighborhood. To fix this urgent problem, I will partner with Town staff and the OPP to crack down on traffic violations. I will also advocate for traffic calming measures, so our quiet rural roads are not used as shortcuts. At the same time, I will launch community education programs to teach safer driving habits. We must put public safety first as our community expands. By securing safer roads, better parks, and reliable emergency services, we will keep Caledon safe and thriving for everyone.?

Paul Parete ? ?A critical growth challenge in Ward 4 is a commitment to funding and delivering local infrastructure before development happens, ensuring growth pays for growth without overburdening taxpayers. We cannot build houses without the necessary roads, traffic calming, emergency services, and recreational facilities to support our communities....building complete communities, not just houses! To address this, I will: Leverage Intergovernmental Partnerships: Build strong, collaborative relationships to secure our fair share of infrastructure funding and align regional priorities; Apply Evidence-Based Planning: Use hard data?like traffic studies and an ecosystem approach?to ensure infrastructure projects, water security, and farmland protections are prioritized before ground is broken; Fiscal Discipline: Ensure taxpayer dollars are managed transparently, keeping local property taxes predictable and affordable.?

(Pat Fortini did not respond by deadline.)

WARD 5

Diana Mollicone ? ?The Bolton Secondary Plan is slated to accommodate approximately 74,000 people by 2051, with significant intensification along the Highway 50 and Queen St intersection. Ward 5 is already Caledon's most densely developed ward. My concern isn't the intensification itself; my concern is making sure Caledon is deliberate in how that growth is phased in. I want to see development approvals consider the cumulative impact of everything being built around them, not just whether an individual site works on its own. That means looking at road capacity, water and wastewater infrastructure, community services and appropriate truck routes for deliveries. Bolton already faces significant traffic pressure from commercial vehicles due to the warehouse clusters and carrier depots around the community. Further development without addressing the infrastructure needed to support it will only make those pressures worse.?

John Muir ? ?Door knocking and meeting residents this week this has been a topic of discussion, lots of feedback in terms of ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with growth. We need the roads, recreation, emergency services, and other infrastructure in place to support a growing population while protecting the quality-of-life residents. I will advocate for responsible, well-planned growth

and work collaboratively to make sure Caledon has the infrastructure it needs as our community continues to grow.?

(Anthony Caputo did not respond by deadline.)

WARD 6

Carmela Palkowski ? ?The biggest concern in Ward 6 is making sure our infrastructure keeps pace with growth. Bolton is going to see more people and more homes, which also means more cars, more traffic and greater demand for services. We need infrastructure to keep up with growth, not fall behind it. I would push to make sure new development is properly planned around road capacity, traffic safety and the services residents need. Ward 6 needs a strong voice in these decisions so we can plan ahead instead of fixing problems after they happen. This is what is currently happening and we need to stop this pattern. We need to plan for growth, hold developers and other levels of government accountable, and make sure Bolton gets the infrastructure it needs.?

(Cosimo Napoli did not respond by deadline.)

REGIONAL COUNCIL

Harpreet Grewal ? ?After knocking on doors all summer, one of the biggest growth-related challenges I have heard in Wards 1, 2 and 3 is development outpacing the infrastructure and services needed to support it. I have seen neighbourhoods built and families move in, while years later there is still no park or recreation facility to serve them, just an empty site with overgrown grass. Growth should support complete communities by strengthening existing infrastructure and delivering the roads, parks and recreation facilities residents need. It must also respect Caledon's rural character and protect our farmland, greenspace and natural heritage. That means strongly opposing proposals such as blasting quarries near residential areas and protecting places like Swan Lake. Growth should be considered community by community, based on what each area can support, with infrastructure and amenities delivered as development happens.?

(Mauro Testani and Dave Sheen did not respond by deadline.)