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On heels of federal election, Mayor and Council identify key issues they hope to see addressed

By Rob Paul

On Sunday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called a federal election with the vote slated for Monday, September 20.

In Dufferin-Caledon, the MP candidates announced to this point are incumbent Kyle Seeback (Conservative Party), Lisa Post (Liberal), Jenni Le Forester (Green Party), and Brian Frazer (People's Party of Canada).

As the campaigning gets underway over the next five weeks, Mayor Allan Thompson and Town Council have identified several key election issues that would impact Caledon that they hope to see addressed at the Federal level.

?Federal government plays an important role in the day-to-day role of our municipalities,? said Thompson. ?The key items we would like to see addressed are affordable housing?advance policies and programs that expedite a full range of affordable and diverse housing options; broadband?facilitate the expansion of affordable, reliable high-speed internet to all areas through allocation of broadband investments and make it more feasible for service providers to serve rural areas; infrastructure? invest in climate resilient infrastructure, active transportation and public transit systems such as a Caledon GO Rail Transit Line; climate change?provide legislative and monetary support for municipal action on climate change adaptation and mitigation; COVID-19?support comprehensive post-covid economic recovery.?

Thompson thinks the Federal Government has done a good job focusing on some of the issues that he and Council have prioritized in recent years and hopes that there will continue to be decisions made on funding that will positively impact Caledon.

?There has been progress on several issues such as broadband internet, but we continue to push for the funding to be allocated as quickly as possible to see connections made,? he said. ?We have also seen increased infrastructure spending to municipalities through the federal gas tax, which is appreciated, a commitment to affordable childcare, and a robust climate change plan.?

For government at the municipal level to be at its best, it needs to work in unison with the federal level and receive support to improve growing communities, says Thompson. Over the coming weeks, Thompson and Council will consider the ramifications on Caledon of each party winning the election.

?Legislative and funding actions taken by the Federal Government can have a significant impact on municipal governments,? he said. ?As the federal election campaign unfolds, and the respective parties release their platforms, we will continue to review proposed policies considering the evolving needs of Caledon.?

As COVID-19 continues to make its impact felt on Canada, Thompson thinks it's as important as ever for each level of government to be on the same page and work together, especially in terms of economic recovery.

?The federal government is an important funding partner, as is the province,? he said. ?It is important that all three levels of government work together on local solutions. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, the Town of Caledon has been working with all orders of government to ensure public health and safety as well as social and economic response and recovery. As our focus shifts towards post-pandemic recovery and growth, Caledon will continue to pursue a collaborative approach to government relations.?