

INVITATION 4 TO CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR AND WARD COUNCILOR IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

Conflicts of Interest

Pecuniary Conflicts of Interest

Ontario's [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#) endorses four principles in relation to the duties of members of municipal councils:

1. The importance of integrity, independence and accountability in local government decision-making.
2. The importance of certainty in reconciling the public duties and pecuniary interests of members.
3. Members are expected to perform their duties of office with integrity and impartiality in a manner that will bear the closest scrutiny.
4. There is a benefit to municipalities when members have a broad range of knowledge and continue to be active in their own communities, whether in business, in the practice of a profession, in community associations, and otherwise.

Members who benefit a municipality through their involvements in a community (Principle 4) may have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter before council that creates a conflict with their public duties (Principle 2). Case law has established that the conflict of interest may be real or apparent. The *Act* requires that members disclose any conflict of interest and its general nature in writing, not take part in any discussion or vote in respect of the matter, and not influence the voting on the matter. The *Act* further requires that a municipality keeps a registry of members' declarations of conflicts of interest and makes the registry available for public inspection.

The County's [Council Code of Conduct](#) incorporates the requirements of the *Act* and other provincial and federal statutes. The County's website provides links to [Annual Registries](#) of members' disclosures of pecuniary conflicts of interest (2020-2022) and copies of the written disclosures are available for public inspection upon request to the County Clerk. Many of these disclosures related to matters before Council, the Committee of the Whole, or the Planning Committee – where the Mayor and every Ward Councilor sits as a member.

Against this background,

1. Please identify and describe the general nature of any conflict of pecuniary interest – real or apparent, direct or indirect – that you would foresee needing to declare, given the sort of conflicts that have been disclosed by your predecessors in 2020-2022.

Additional Conflicts of Interest

Since 2016, the Ombudsman of Ontario has handled more than 14,000 complaints about municipalities. The Ombudsman is proposing various measures in support of the provincial government's plan to hold municipal councils more accountable, including requiring municipal codes of conduct to address conflicts of interest outside the scope of the current *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, specifically:

1. Non-pecuniary conflicts of interest.
2. Pecuniary conflicts of interest of a family member who is not a parent, spouse or child.

For example, see [Kingston's Council Code of Conduct](#) (especially sections 11. Improper Use of Influence and 12. Conflicts of Interest).

Against this background,

2. Please indicate your agreement with the following:

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
A. The County should adopt a Council Code of Conduct that addresses non-pecuniary conflicts of interests.					
B. The County should adopt a Council Code of Conduct that addresses the pecuniary conflicts of interests of a family member who is not a parent, spouse or child.					

3. Please elaborate on your answer to Statement A above.

4. Please elaborate on your answer to Statement B above.

I should disclose that I spoke to Council in support of Statement A on November 23, 2021. Of course, I will continue to publish candidates' unredacted responses and refrain from editorial commentary in any summary I publish of candidates' responses on this matter.

Questions from Voters

5. In the voter's own words, please identify the most difficult-to-answer question that you've been asked in your campaign.

6. Please explain why this question was the most difficult-to-answer.

I promised other voters that I'd share some of their questions with you, beginning with Invitation 4:

7. On October 21, 2020, Council voted unanimously to deny a rezoning application from Picton Terminals to bring in container and cruise ships. If presented with a similar vote today, who would you vote (deny or approve)? Why?

Please email your responses by 8 pm on Monday, September 19, 2022.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with the voters of the County.