



Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce

Our membership identified 5 questions to be distributed to our local Provincial candidates ahead of the upcoming election. These questions are outlined below and are followed by the candidate's responses.

To promote fairness, in cases where a candidate provided answers to more than one of the "additional" membership questions, only the first response is included. In cases where closing or additional statements were provided, outside of the question/response format, those statements were not included in this distribution. Upon request the Chamber will provide the original response documentation.

No response or confirmation of intent to respond was received from the parties who do not have a response included in this document and are identified here:
<https://voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/4-general-election-jun-2-2022/35-haliburton-kawartha-lakes-brock?tab=candidates>.

Two separate email invitations were sent to each candidate.

1. What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

2. The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

3. Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

4. What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

5. This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the County? Is there a strategy to incentivize the development of “primary home” and market rent accommodations?

Candidates are also asked to select one additional question (of their choosing) from those additionally provided by the membership:

1. We are being threatened by emergency room closures, 1,000 people on waitlists to see a family doctor, County ambulances spending valuable time outside of the County transferring patients to Lindsay/Peterborough for Cat scans. What are the regional health plans?

2. Is there a strategy to make it easier for property owners to fully utilize their property to help address the issue of housing in the community? For example, support for property owners with a lot of land to add staff housing or other alternatives.

3. What is your plan to improve public transportation within rural areas and between urban transportation hubs and rural areas. What is your plan to address climate change by reducing carbon emissions?

4. Covid has amplified disparity in our region. People are experiencing mental health challenges at levels that are higher than ever. How will the province help us recover from a mental health and substance use pandemic that is taking lives in our community?

5. Individuals on ODSP currently receive funding that puts the vast majority of them below the poverty line. Numerous studies support a minimum of \$2000 a month per person as a livable ODSP level. Will you support a minimum \$2000 ODSP rate - Yes or No?

6. With approximately 25 per cent of local children living in poverty, (HKPR District Health Unit, 2019), and the ‘living wage’ at \$19.42 per hour, what will

you do to reduce poverty and increase food security for families and seniors most at risk?

Laurie Scott, PC Party of Ontario

1. What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

Everyone deserves to have a place to call home. Doug Ford and our PC team are getting it done by helping more families realize the dream of home ownership everyday. At the end of the day, the biggest issue fueling the housing crisis is not enough homes. That's why our PC team introduced legislative, regulatory, and policy changes to help build new homes in Ontario.

We are fixing barriers to building new homes while protecting the environment, the Greenbelt, and agricultural lands. This approach is working. Our housing supply plan helped over 100,000 new homes start construction last year, the highest in more than 30 years. We continue to work with municipalities to reduce barriers to build different types of residential housing.

2. The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

Doug Ford and our PC team are working for workers by encouraging apprenticeships, opening up jobs in the skills trades and allowing colleges to grant 3-year degrees. We are working with our local employment organizations and Fleming college to help connect more people with good jobs and upgrade their skills. In April, we announced over \$1.6 million for three projects at Fleming College and Trent University to help get recent graduates into the labour market, and support local employers to fill skilled job vacancies.

Fleming College is also part of a \$5 million dollar SkillsAdvance Ontario project to help 150 job seekers and 300 employed workers gain the skills and work experience they need to find jobs or advance their careers in wood product manufacturing and producing in Eastern Ontario.

We also created the Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit to help workers retrain, improve their skills, or prepare for a career shift.

An incredible debt of gratitude is owed to our workers, these dedicated men and women kept store shelves stocked and supply chains strong throughout the pandemic and everyone in Ontario is grateful. They had Ontario's back and our PC team has theirs.

3. Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

Ontario's economy is getting back on its feet as the province reopens, but we need to ensure workers continue to be supported, especially in hard-hit sectors and the most vulnerable.

This is why we are implementing a long-term plan to address the housing crisis, informed by the Housing Affordability Task Force's recommendations and why we are temporarily cutting the gas tax by 5.7 cents per litre and the fuel tax by 5.3 cents per litre for six months, beginning July 1, 2022.

We also continue to support households with the Ontario Electricity Rebate for residential customers, small businesses and farms and are proposing to provide an additional \$300 in Personal Income Tax (PIT) relief, on average, to about 1.1 million taxpayers by enhancing the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit.

This year, we also introduced the Ontario Staycation Tax Credit that allows residents to get back up to 20 per cent on their eligible accommodation expenses for leisure stays in the province this year.

Our government is ensuring that the province remains open for business so the economy can grow and continue to provide income for workers and businesses.

4. What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

As a part of the 2021 Budget, our PC team is making a historic investment of \$2.8 billion for broadband infrastructure, ensuring that every region in our province has access to reliable broadband services by 2025. On top of previous investments, this increases our total investment to nearly \$4 billion.

This builds on the Cell Gap Project announced last spring with a provincial investment of \$71 million to improve cellular service in Eastern Ontario with 300 new telecommunication sites to be built and over 300 existing sites upgraded across the region over the next five years.

We will continue to stand up and be the voice for rural Ontario at Queen's Park.

5. This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the County? Is there a strategy to incentivize the development of "primary home" and market rent accommodations?

When costs go up, it has a direct impact on families, seniors, workers and the economy. That's why our PC team has a plan to help keep costs down by increasing housing supply, making it less expensive to drive, and providing targeted tax relief.

We're eliminating and refunding licence plate renewal fees for passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, motorcycles and mopeds. Temporarily cutting the gas tax by 5.7 cents per litre and the fuel tax by 5.3 cents per litre for six months, beginning July 1, 2022. Proposing to provide an additional \$300 in Personal Income Tax (PIT) relief, on average, to about 1.1 million taxpayers by enhancing the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit and lowering child care fees for parents and securing a fair deal for Ontario by signing a \$13.2 billion

agreement with the federal government in an important step towards achieving an average of \$10-a-day child care by September 2025.

6. (Selected by Candidate from provided options)

We are being threatened by emergency room closures, 1,000 people on waitlists to see a family doctor, County ambulances spending valuable time outside of the County transferring patients to Lindsay/Peterborough for Cat scans. What are the regional health plans?

After years of frozen budgets and neglect by the previous government, Ontario's health care system was stretched to a breaking point. That's why Doug Ford and the Ontario PCs have a plan to stay open and why we are investing billions to ramp up hospital beds and support and recruit more frontline health care workers.

We are getting it done by providing Ontario nurses with a retention bonus of up to \$5,000, making the wage increase permanent for more than 158,000 personal support workers and expanding the Community Commitment Program for Nurses to allow for up to 1,500 nurse graduates each year to receive full tuition reimbursement in exchange for committing to practice in an underserved community through the Learn and Stay grant.

We're also reducing registration barriers for foreign-credentialed medical professionals seeking to be registered with the health regulatory colleges.

We're getting it done in the long-term care sector with more than 31,000 new and over 28,000 upgraded beds in the works including a new building and expanded capacity in Haliburton County for Extendicare Haliburton.

We're also investing \$40 billion to fund more than 50 hospital projects that will add 3,000 new beds over the next 10 years.

This year, Haliburton Highlands Health Services received an additional \$200,000 and a 2% increase in annual operating funding over last year under our PC leadership. This means since 2016/17, HHHS's operating funding has increased approximately 34%. HHHS also received \$130,000 for critical infrastructure

upgrades this year, in addition to the \$1.3 million in funding they received for upgrades in 2020 and 2021.

In 2021, we provided \$3.25 million to expand the Community Paramedicine for Long-Term Care program in Haliburton County to help tackle hallway health care and provide additional care for local seniors and as part of our PC team's plan to stay open, and to help seniors and recovering patients stay in the homes they love, we are investing \$1 billion more over the next three years to further expand home care.

Doug Ford and our PC team have invested more in health care than any government in Ontario's history and we are the party saying yes to getting shovels in the ground. We are making long term investments in our healthcare system and continue to work with our local hospitals on their long-term plans and bring more healthcare services closer to home.

Barbara Doyle, Ontario NDP

1.What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

The NDP believes housing is a human right. Everyone deserves a safe, stable home they can afford in the community they wish to stay in. We have a variety of supports for this. First of all, we need more units, whether they are market, or non-market, apartments or multi or single unit homes, right away. Getting shovels in the ground is a priority but we must work with the local municipality to ensure that we are supporting projects already identified in the official plan. The local community is best to inform the types of housing needed immediately and can help prioritize funding and infrastructure supports. We will protect our green spaces and farmland by ending MZO's.

We also need to assist with bringing back rent controls and stopping renovictions to ensure that renters aren't being priced out of the local market, with a rent assist program for those that simply aren't earning a living wage. Single people,

working full-time and earning less than \$20 an hour are at a direct disadvantage in rental affordability. For home buyers, cooling the market and cracking down on foreign speculators will help bring housing back to a pre-pandemic level for price points but that simply won't go far enough to get new homeowners into property. The NDP has a Homes in Ontario Program that will provide a 10% stake in the homes to help buyers qualify for the down payment and reduce mortgage costs. This all goes along with our general affordability measures: raising minimum wage, supports for small businesses, \$10/day childcare, pharmacare, dental care and mental health brought under OHIP, and bringing down the price of gasoline. Working together, it all leads to stable housing markets for homes that our community can afford.

2.The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

Our Green New Democratic Deal will create one million jobs across Ontario, and transition the economy to an equitable, just and green future. By building on regional strengths, our innovation hub strategy will foster new skilled trades and economic opportunities in local areas. Regardless of where they live, Ontarians must have the opportunity to gain the skills necessary to thrive in the modern economy. That is why the NDP are making important investments in post-secondary education and workforce development to prepare for the in-demand jobs of the innovation economy.

An NDP government will work with manufacturers to develop a manufacturing and labour force strategy for the province, while also supporting small and medium-sized businesses and non-profits for government procurement and our Buy Ontario program.

An NDP government will raise the minimum wage to \$20 an hour. We will remove the minimum wage exemptions that allow students to be paid less than every other worker in the province, because minimum means minimum.

3.Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

Tourism is incredibly important to the local economy. We need to get the \$\$ flowing for recovery in this sector. Many were incredibly hard hit during COVID-19, and recovery will be slow. Most often, this is an area challenged by unstable operational funding (primarily staffing resources) and short seasons. For every \$1 invested in local arts and culture organizations, the benefit to the other local businesses has been shown to be \$11.70. Increasing funding to these sectors is proven to increase the economic benefit to the communities around them.

We would also extend the Staycation Tax Credit but this is only helpful for those that can afford the immediate cost of the vacation. Reducing costs on everyday items such as child care, health care, and education will provide more disposable income that families can use to travel across Ontario.

We will also address the price of Gasoline. The NDP will give the Ontario Energy Board a mandate to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences but will also regulate the retail price and wholesale mark-up of petroleum products across Ontario. This will ensure that gas prices are fair, affordable and protect the consumers from price gouging.

4.What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

Broadband is no longer a “wouldn’t it be great?” concept. It’s a necessity for today’s economy. Whether you are a tele-commuter, content creator, farmer or student, everyone needs high speed, reliable internet. Whether it’s for business, education or entertainment, the NDP is committed to ensuring that Broadband is made available across Ontario, with priority to rural areas like ours. This is also directly linked to supporting our agriculture industry and food supply chain networks. Real time access to markets and processing is essential in today’s agri-economy.

5.This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the County? Is there a strategy to incentivize the development of “primary home” and market rent accommodations?

This really goes back to question #1. Local municipalities know what types of housing they need to meet the needs of their local communities while also

providing room to grow. This may mean addressing current zoning to now allow for tiny homes, basement apartments, duplexes and triplexes or townhome developments. Density can be rethought, and innovation happens. Looking at how the province and local government can work together to build affordable market and non-market housing, eliminating the wait lists for subsidized housing, while at the same time providing room for growth for larger houses is not an either/or proposition. It can all be done at the same time. We can have social supports while also addressing high end needs as well. What we can't do is build only high-end subdivisions while ignoring the local housing crisis and growing waitlists.

In addition to this, we also must ensure larger investments in local hospitals, dedicated doctor recruitment programs, investing in local schools, taking the profit out of long-term care and ensuring more beds and new builds that are smaller, more home-like and better staffed. Looking at the core community supports, along with housing developments, create a community infrastructure to support more growth. This is where NDP shines!

6. (Selected by Candidate from provided options)

Individuals on ODSP currently receive funding that puts the vast majority of them below the poverty line. Numerous studies support a minimum of \$2000 a month per person as a livable ODSP level. Will you support a minimum \$2000 ODSP rate - Yes or No?

NDP has committed to an immediate 20% increase for OW and ODSP, with a 100% increase in 2023. It's been costed and we know it can and must be done. The rates will then be indexed to inflation and increased annually so that once community members are lifted out of poverty that it doesn't backslide and stagnate as it had done for the last 2 decades. This goes along with bringing back the Basic Income Pilot Project for the research to inform the creation of UBI in the future. Raising minimum wages, investing in post-secondary education and workforce development are key strategies for improvement in stability. Eliminating out of pocket costs for medications including diabetic supplies like insulin pumps and test strips, as well as dental care and mental health supports by putting them under OHIP will provide a more complete support for everyone's general health. Ensuring safe, accessible, and affordable housing completes the

core values of health and stability which are most likely to provide opportunities for healthy living and improvement.

Tom Regina, Ontario Green Party

1.What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

I have heard from business owners that vacancies they have could be filled by people willing to move here to work. The absolute lack of affordable housing is an obstacle. Older residents have told me of their fears of being forced out of their homes because they cannot afford increased taxes on property that is becoming more valuable; sell up and not have an affordable place to go and be able to live at home for as long as possible.

High-end homes and condos are out of reach for young families, older citizens and pretty much anyone earning low to middle income. At the same time, owners of multiple homes, who have the good fortune and good luck to be investing, are enjoying high, quick return with easier tax responsibility than that found in other investment vehicles.

Green policy is to build 182,000 new permanently affordable community rental homes over the next decade, including 60,000 permanent supportive homes. Greens would mandate inclusionary zoning and require a minimum of 20% affordable units in all housing projects above a certain size. Greens will create a seed fund for co-operative housing through direct funding and mortgage support. Greens will partner with the Federal Government under the National Housing Strategy to renew 260,000 community rental homes over the next decade. Greens will partner with non-profits, co-ops and community land trusts to use public land for permanently affordable rental housing and attainable homeownership options through low-cost long-term leases.

Greens will consult on and develop a down payment support program to help low and middle income first time home buyers. To help pay for these programs, Greens will implement a multiple property speculation tax on people and

corporations who own more than two houses or condominium units in Ontario. The tax will begin at 20% on the third home and increase with each additional property owned.

Greens will work with all levels of government and housing experts to develop regulations to ease the financialization of both our affordable rental stock and single family homes.

2.The county's labour shortage and non-participation of many who could be upskilled to fill roles is a major concern for business. What will you do to address this issue?

We are heading into the summer season, typically increasing the need for workers in the tourist, hospitality and construction sectors. Many of these jobs have been going to students looking for summer work. Highschool enrollment is down while the population and demand for workers is up. Many of our seasonal residents are taking advantage of short term rentals on their properties, choosing to reduce the amount of time they spend here. Highschool aged part-time workers will be on holiday when they are here for a cottage visit and find work in their urban neighbourhoods for the larger part of the summer season. Many summer homes then, are having short term occupants, not potential workers and are not available for housing workers that would be willing to be here.

An affordable housing strategy is required to allow young families and workers to find a place in our community.

Creating more, truly affordable housing will enable willing workers, professionals and entrepreneurs to find a place for themselves in our community.

3.Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

Inflation, wars and the price of oil are controlled by global events and corporations that we have no control over.

Among our theme parks are Algonquin, Balsam Lake, Silent Lake and the Haliburton Forest Wildlife preserve. Among our thrill rides are the Minden Whitewater Preserve, Sir Sam's downhill skiing and bike trails, Haliburton Forest

canopy walk and bike trails and Haliburton Nordic skiing and our system of snowmobile trails.

Tourism in our part of the province is built on experiencing the transformative effects of the natural environment. That is our key attraction and must be preserved. It has always been precious and is on the way to becoming scarce. When it no longer has this natural attraction, we will lose more than our tourism industry. Greens will stand strong for environmental justice and strengthen environmental oversight and public consultation. We must protect biodiversity in order to have a beautiful place like Haliburton for generations to come, to enjoy as we do.

That being said, Greens support increased staycation tax credit to include dining in restaurants. Greens will improve opportunities for small, local businesses and nonprofits to win public contracts through targets and by decreasing current financial and informational barriers. Greens will allow Ontario's craft spirits, brewers and wine producers to open independent, off-site stores; allow boutique wine, craft beer and artisan spirit retail outlets; improve the distribution network to work for small businesses; and allow access for hospitality to purchase from these suppliers at a wholesale price of up to 20%.

4.What is your plan to improve upon high-speed, affordable internet within the county?

The Green Party is committed to connecting people with better broadband. Greens will make broadband internet an essential service and roll out highspeed access across the province. Greens will use regulations to level the playing field for small, local internet service providers and support provincial funding for programs to study best practices for tele-working as a climate-friendly alternative to commuting.

5.This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the county? Is there a strategy to incentivize development of "primary home" and market rent accommodations?

I believe that some of this has been addressed in my answer to the first question. I would, however, like to add that Greens would like to create more pathways to

home ownership, for example, allowing single family dwellings to be divided into multiple condominium units to create more attainable home ownership opportunities within existing neighbourhoods. Similarly, Greens will increase incentives and streamline the application process for first-time homeowners to add affordable rental units to their primary residence to help pay down their mortgage.

6. (Selected by Candidate from provided options)

How will the province help us recover from a mental health and substance use pandemic that is taking lives in our community?

So many of the issues we face are linked through health and housing by affordability. Mental health is health. The Greens were first among all parties to introduce a comprehensive mental health plan. Greens will make the investments needed to increase mental health spending by 10% of Ontario's healthcare budget and include mental health and addiction care under OHIP by offering services provided by psychotherapists, psychologists, social workers and other regulated professionals. Greens will create an accessible system by investing in a 3 digit 24/7 province-wide mental health crises response line so callers can be diverted from 911 and connected to a more appropriate service. Greens will expand support for addiction care by taking a Housing First approach and build 60,000 permanent supportive housing spaces with wrap around services and dedicate 10% of these homes to people with complex care needs.

Gene Balfour, Libertarian

1. What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

The housing crisis has more than one dimension. Each root cause deserves consideration, analysis and appropriate actions. One dimension is the ability to pay for housing with after-tax earnings.

Fact: The average Canadian pays ~53% of annual income to governments at every level; this has risen from 38% since 1961. Excessive taxation clearly affects ability to pay.

Excessive regulations in the housing sector is another root cause. The red tape and constraints that these burdens impose on builders and property owners adds greatly to both the cost of all housing-related inputs as well as the time it takes to meet the demand for affordable housing by residents.

Libertarians advocate for Less Government in order to unshackle all of the resources needed to make goals like affordable housing possible for everyone. Our approach is to pare back all unnecessary laws and regulations while ensuring the right balance for public safety. We can't do this, however, until the public demands it at the election polls. The means that voters must elect Less Government advocates at every government level who are 100% committed to shrinking the burden of excessive government. This is especially important to address all rising costs of living such as housing.

Freedom of Choice is our Party's theme for good reason. We believe that our economy works best when our citizens voluntarily exchange, compete and cooperate with each other in a fair and respectful manner.

Governments hold a monopoly on force, on the other hand. The word 'enforcement' describes the work of most of their personnel. If all citizens were to increasingly vote for freedom of choice to replace force & enforcement, then we can create the conditions for affordable housing.

2. The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

This question invokes my core area of professional expertise. Over 40 years of my career took place in the computer/IT sector of which I specialized for 36 years as a professional Recruiter. I have interviewed over 10,000 job candidates in my career and learned a great deal about how to attract workers to job opportunities. If elected, I would take great pride and satisfaction in using my

expertise to help the County formulate a plan to eliminate the current labour shortages.

No other political candidate can bring as much productive value to this issue as I can. However, like most issues, some of the problems arise from counterproductive government regulations. Like housing, these unnecessary constraints can only be repealed through the efforts of many appropriately-motivated and qualified MPPs in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

3. Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

To rely on politicians and government officials to responsibly and adequately address risks to tourism is not a great strategy. Take complete ownership of the issue at the County level and create your own strategy to mitigate these risks. Engage local stakeholders who have “skin in the game” so that you will have better control and buy-in of all needed resources.

BTW. I would never attempt to address any issue without considering all possible solution alternatives and then critically evaluating their trade-offs. A SWOT (strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats) analysis was the approach I used when working as a Director in an international consulting firm. I recommend that the County’s tourism stakeholders employ the use of SWOT for each tourist season. This will ensure that they employ a proven and disciplined approach to make the industry more resilient to the changing circumstances that will inevitably evolve.

Once again, politics does have a role to play from the perspective of your residents and their voting preferences. As mentioned in answer #1, past and current government policies have contributed incrementally to the challenges this industry faces, especially when the high cost of energy (gas, heating, electricity) is considered. If the majority of your residents vote for parties that demand more carbon taxes and green energy policies, then they are choosing politicians who will add to those challenges. Every resident must understand that there are real consequences to the viability of your tourism industry if they vote for Liberal, NDP or Green Party candidates who actively promote more of those harmful policies.

Instead, elect an MPP who is best qualified to be on your team and focus his/her efforts on identifying the areas where government interventions have exacerbated the risks. Secure his/her commitment to eliminate them permanently in the LAO.

A further comment on SWOT. I suggest a referendum-like campaign for your County to engage citizens in a SWOT-like community discussion regarding this vital topic. This exercise will help to inform and educate members of your community so that they will become aligned with your goals and chosen plans of action. As a community-building exercise, it can be an invaluable way to strengthen community spirit and citizen engagement. This approach has been practiced in Switzerland for many generations. A form of 'direct democracy', citizens in each of the 26 Swiss cantons participate actively in decision-making on matters affecting their communities. I have long wished to introduce direct democracy approaches to Ontario. If elected, I would gladly participate in this effort if invited.

4. What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

My immediate priority would be to become better-informed about the existing plans for rolling out these services within the County. I am aware that the federal and provincial governments have already committed sizeable expenditures to accelerate the roll out of fibre-optic cable across Eastern Ontario where current access is poor. Addressing any problem begins with understanding its details and then becoming an informed facilitator to achieve the intended goals.

Like all large projects, the schedule for this rollout has already been established. If the implementation schedule is not satisfactory to your residents, then this is something that can be addressed through negotiations or by other means. Of course, StarNet is already available for residents who are not prepared to wait for the promised fibre-optic cable services.

Prices are another matter. I do not favour government subsidies and prefer to investigate more creative ways to address these costs. I generally have little confidence in receiving timely and cost-effective 'help' from government institutions or promises made by Big Government politicians.

5. This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding, are there plans to remove red tape, barriers,...

I have been an Advocate for Less Government since 2007 when I first discovered Libertarianism and the Austrian 'school' of Economics. My commitment to reducing governments' size, cost and scope of authority has been long-lasting and unwavering.

Academically, I have read and studied Economics for many years. I consider this to be a vital domain of knowledge for any elected official to be able to make sound decisions. Since 2007, I have favoured Austrian Economics which teaches praxiology - the study of human action. It offers great insights into how individuals trade, engage and cooperate with others in society. In 1979, I studied Economics at University of Toronto as part of an MBA program. It only taught Keynesian Economics which focuses on the use of statistics to understand and manipulate the "collective" behaviour of groups in society. Government leaders and government-controlled Educational institutions have only taught Keynesian Economics because it actively promotes their role in the central planning and management of all social and economic activities. Needless to say, over many decades, many Economics students have graduated from government schools to enter the workforce (as I did) with the view that government officials and politicians are essential actors to shape a democratic society.

Considering how many Keynesian-trained students have built careers over recent decades, it comes as no surprise that we currently live under the controls of the mammoth public sector. In my view, the pendulum has swung too far in favour of concentrating power in government institutions. Our public sector is overly bureaucratic, excessively controlling, and far too expensive. Libertarians have been trying to hold back the pendulum from causing further harm. We hope to inspire our citizens to demand that it reverse direction.

What's the solution you ask? Your "exceptional measures" must certainly NOT include more government! If our citizens continue to vote for Big and Bigger government programs proposed by Liberal, NDP and Green Party politicians, then the Country's challenges will continue to get worse.

Education and critical analysis is a better path to take. Voters must understand how and why we allowed excessive government intervention to dominate our lives. Let's start with the basics...

All government spending is authorized by existing and new legislation. These laws have been passed by thousands of elected MPPs in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario (LAO) over many decades and they form the basis of authority for everything governments do. If citizens want less red tape and lower taxes, then they must elect MPPs who will be committed to repealing all legislation that authorizes government operations and associated spending in areas that we can no longer afford or that are causing harm to our businesses and citizens. For example, if they want to eliminate carbon taxes, they must elect MPPs who will commit to ax the related legislation.

6. (Selected by Candidate from provided options)

We are being threatened by emergency room closures, 1,000 people on waitlists to see a family doctor, County ambulances spending valuable time outside of the County transferring patients to Lindsay/Peterborough for Cat scans. What are the regional health plans?

The Ontario Libertarian Party (OLP) offers a unique plan to improve Health Care in every part of Ontario. It is guaranteed to resolve chronic issues like these when adopted fully.

Non-Government Options is a plan that will introduce greater Freedom of Choice through competition in the Health Care sector (and eventually all government sectors that are monopolies today). This type of approach already exists in many European countries where wait times and personnel shortages are rare. The issues identified in your question have persisted in Ontario for decades. Too many voters have stubbornly insisted on keeping a monopoly, government-run system even though it has failed our citizens far too often. Albert Einstein famously defined 'insanity' as repeating the same approach and expecting different results. Change much come.

The Non-Government Options model works by enabling non-government service providers to complete and co-exist with government service providers in a vibrant market of consumer choices. For this to succeed as envisioned, every citizen must

be free to choose to opt out of selected government programs and thereby be exempt from paying taxes to fund the related government service providers. In so choosing, they can save those taxes to pay directly for their choice of non-government services. Over time, more citizens will move away from government services allowing their after-tax disposable incomes to rise. The number and range of non-government services will then grow in direct proportion to the voluntary spending choices made by our citizens.

Economics teaches that minimally-regulated markets encourage innovative and productive competition. This keeps all market participants focused on being the best in meeting the needs of customers in a timely, convenient and cost-effective manner. Every shopper knows this from personal experience in virtually every business where they shop today. A healthy dose of competition in health care is just the remedy we need to bring out the best possible range of affordable choices for everyone.

As a final note, please look up two recently-established companies which represent the kinds of Non-Government Options that are already beginning to emerge to meet the needs of our citizens when governments cannot or will not provide them under a public system: immunoceutica.ca and <https://clearpointhealth.ca/about-us/>. Of course dental, chiropractic, massage, eye care and other health care service providers also exist but face excessive government interventions which could be adjusted by paring back legislation in order to make these services more affordable.

Our Health Care sector is in crisis and it's public monopoly model is a major part of the problem. Let's address it together. To better understand this crisis, read

<https://shawnwhatley.com/book-launch-when-politics-comes-before-patients-why-and-how-canadian-medicare-is-failing/>

Kerstin Kelly, Ontario Party

1. What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

Home prices in Ontario have risen 180% in the last decade while average incomes have risen just 38%. In the last year alone, the average price rose by about 25%. With an average home in the province now listing above one million dollars, working class Canadians can no longer afford a place of their own to raise their family.

In other G7 nations, there is an average of 471 housing units per 1,000 residents; in Toronto a study by Scotiabank found just 360 housing units per 1,000 residents. Simply put, the supply of homes is too low and demand for homes is too high, and, on both fronts, our current politicians are mostly to blame for this crisis. The solution is not government funding funnelled to new homeowners. As recent history shows, when government money is made available the market responds with proportional increases to home prices.

One of the Ontario Housing affordability Task Force objectives is to build 1.5 million new homes within the next 10 years. For the province to confirm the available land supply to accomplish this objective, we need to remove red tape and excessive legislation restricting single-family zoning in Ontario's most housing deprived areas. Property owners must be given more freedom to construct larger multi-unit residential buildings, and to add tiny houses to their properties, while we protect agricultural land. It should not take 6-18 months to get building permits.

We would advocate for establishing an Ontario focused purchasing ban on foreign investors on residential homes and vacant land, as well as, striking up a money laundering task force charged with rooting out corruption and instituting needed regulatory changes related to real estate sales and purchases.

In the Kawartha's, the lack of affordable housing impacts also the women's shelter, with women and children having to stay long-term at the only shelter. The Landlord Tenant Board of Ontario has created a crisis by making it impossible for good landlords to get rid of bad tenants, so now they are reluctant to take anyone else in. The LTB takes months to respond if ever and with impossible red tape has effectively inhibited good people from risking renting to

risky tenants. The law of unintended consequences has made a program for tenants turn into a block to renting. This needs to be corrected, so people once again open up their homes to rentals.

The most effective way to enhance building will be to get government and regulations out of the way, cut the red tape and use sound non-obstructive planning.

To make it easier for first time house buyers to get into the market, allowing affordable tiny homes and multiplexes. The solution is not government funding funneled to new homeowners. As recent history shows, when government money is made available the market responds with proportional increases to home prices.

The conversion of appropriate underused and unused commercial properties to create more homes is an excellent example of cutting the red tape and stimulating home building.

We need the community to use innovative and creative solutions and get out of the way of allowing solutions to happen. Throwing taxpayer money at programs has historically never solved any problems long-term. I look forward to hearing your ideas for solutions.

2. The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

To ensure there are enough skilled trades people in the labour force to build the needed homes, we must encourage and value trades in schools. We would lower the cost of tuition for those post-secondary programs leading to careers with the most labour market demand. Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) loans will also be made more easily available to students accessing those high demand programs and make it virtually free for qualified applicants to train in the skilled trades. Currently the Ontario government, or more precisely our province's taxpayers, cover nearly half--about 46%--of a post-secondary student's program costs. That funding is not allocated by job market need: a student in a program proven to have few related job prospects after graduation can access the same

levels of government funding as others (while their levels of funding are the same, their levels of defaulting on repayment is significantly higher). An Ontario Party Government will incentivize students to funnel into those post-secondary programs for which there is the most labour market demand and greatest opportunity for personal career success. Immigration should also be targeted to those persons bringing those in demand skills to Ontario. Retraining the unemployed into skilled trades as part of the requirement to accept unemployment payments, and ODSP where possible, may also be an area to explore.

There are 9 Essential Skills:

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Document Use
4. Numeracy
5. Computer Use
6. Thinking
7. Oral Communication
8. Working with Others
9. Continuous Learning

These skills are not presently the primary focus in our schools, and we need school reform, where students learn times tables, printing and writing again. Library programs, Toastmasters, and creative and innovative coaching mentorship and education programs should be encouraged to provide these necessary skills.

3. Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

Our Region relies heavily on our tourist industry for the economy, and we must remove all mandates, ineffective restrictions to business, lower taxes, less regulations and red tape to allow our creative entrepreneurs to innovate and to thrive. Ontario has lots of energy and there is no sound reason that we do not have cheap energy and lower taxes. CERB, UBI etc. all have the negative impact

of keeping people from working and driving prices up. Excess taxes and legislation drive prices up and this must be curtailed.

4. What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

Haliburton has many challenges with its highlands, rocks etc., making it difficult to promise high speed and affordable internet access, but satellite internet is coming rapidly, and many private companies are competing to provide service. Making it profitable for them over such long distances and low density has been a barrier and high taxation, preventing them from keeping their profits has been a deterrent to providing service. Removing red tape and providing tax incentives would be some of the steps we could consider to promote rural service, to those in need.

5. This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the County? Is there a strategy to incentivize the development of "primary home" and market rent accommodations?

There are plans to remove red tape, barriers and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in Haliburton. There is a strategy to enable homes and rental facilities to be built.

Removing all mandates and making a better plan is the core of the Ontario Party Platform.

The SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic in High Income Countries Such as Canada: A Better Way Forward Without Lockdowns By Dr. Ari Joffe and David Redman

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8672418/>

<https://www.aier.org/article/a-comprehensive-case-against-lockdowns-how-dr-ari-joffe-changed-his-mind/>

6. (Selected by Candidate from provided options)

We are being threatened by emergency room closures, 1,000 people on waitlists to see a family doctor, County ambulances spending valuable time outside of the County transferring patients to Lindsay/Peterborough for Cat scans. What

are the regional health plans?

Now Laurie Scott has passed Bill 65, making it more likely that ambulances will have to travel even further to Peterborough Regional Health Center. We need to promote more of our bright intelligent youth to be able to study medicine and nursing and remain in the area, instead of having to travel overseas for seats in medical school classes, and then never coming back to serve Canada. We must become involved as citizens to keep emergency rooms open, and make sure our hospital donations go to those purposes, instead of to management sunshine lists. CAT scans are becoming more available, and we could advocate to bring them to local facilities, instead of the present plan to centralize diagnostics, medicine and surgery in regional facilities. The move to centralize all services, and just use telemedicine to promote big pharma use and no longer have hands on examinations, in person doctor visits, and local care will negatively harm our health and erode our healthcare even more, as we head towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution, with robots, computers, and remote services. We as the people of our region, must demand better.

Don McBey, Ontario Liberal Party

1. What strategies will you be putting forward to address the housing crisis in Haliburton County?

There can be no doubt that average house prices have increased by \$500,000 under the Ford Conservatives. The Ontario Liberals will double the pace of home building until 1.5 million residential units have been constructed, 138,000 of which will be deeply affordable. We will tax owners of empty development-ready land to create incentives for new housing starts. We will end the blind bidding process which drives up house prices.

2. The County's labour shortage and the non-participation of many who could be up skilled to fill roles is a major concern for businesses. What will you do to address this issue?

We will train and hire time more healthcare professionals and repeal Bill 124 to attract currently qualified professionals back into healthcare and education. We will double OSAP and eliminate interest on provincial student loans. We will double the existing skills grant for apprenticeships and skilled trades. We will increase the minimum wage to \$16 dollars an hour starting in 2023 and from there we will create a structure of regional living wages across the province. All workers will receive 10 paid sick days and access to portable dental, drug, and mental healthcare benefits at an affordable cost. The Liberals will also provide \$10 dollar a day childcare with flexibility to accommodate irregular schedules and shift work. We will raise the minimum PSW wage to 25\$ dollars and cover tuition costs for medical and nursing students who will work in rural and remote communities. We will also create 25,000 green jobs and 2,000 internships for high school graduates in green sectors.

3. Haliburton County relies heavily on our tourist economy. With inflation and the rising cost of gas, how will you ensure that this industry is not negatively impacted?

We will restore funding for the arts, music, and cultural sectors. We will invest \$25 million a year in these sectors starting in 2023-24, and also invest \$5 million dollars for the Indigenous Culture Fund, which was scrapped by the conservatives in 2019. For rural Ontario, we will be making community transportation grants permanent. We will waive two years' corporate tax for small businesses whose revenues were devastated by the Ford shutdowns, on a sliding scale up to 100%. We will also be supporting restaurants by eliminating the HST on prepared food under \$20.

4. What is your plan to improve upon high speed, affordable internet access within the County?

The Ontario Liberal Party has committed to connecting all Ontarians with high speed, affordable wireless internet before 2025.

5. This is an exceptional time requiring exceptional measures. With this understanding are there plans to remove red tape, barriers, and reduce costs to ensure strong economic development in the County? Is there a strategy to incentivize the development of “primary home” and market rent accommodations?

By reintroducing rent control we will put more money into the hands of prospective home buyers and reduce speculation in the housing market. We will work with municipalities to end exclusionary zoning policies and allow the building of homes with up to 3 units and three stories as well as secondary and lane way suites. We will also create an Ontario Home building Corporation to cut red tape in the home building process and provide \$300 million in incentives to municipalities to expedite the housing approval process. We will unlock more land for homes by expanding the Brownfields Tax Incentive program to provide tax relief for the conversion of underutilized commercial space into homes. We will create a digital platform for development applications.