

Candidate Questionnaire

2026 Municipal Election • Working People. Strong Communities.

Your voice. Our community. Stronger together.

Thank you for running to serve the people of Sarnia. The Sarnia & District Labour Council represents thousands of working people across our community. Your responses will help our Executive Committee review candidates and make endorsement recommendations to our members and affiliates. Please answer each question in the space provided; feel free to attach additional pages if you need more room.

Please return your completed questionnaire within 2 weeks of receiving it to Candace Young at candace.d.parsons@gmail.com, or by mail to 1086 Modeland Rd, Suite 249, Sarnia, ON N7S 6L2. This form is fillable — you may type your answers directly, save, and email it back.

ID CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION

Candidate name:	Christopher Oram
Office sought:	City of Sarnia Councillor
Ward (if any):	
Email:	coram@sympatico.ca
Phone:	(519) 466-3902
Past elected office:	Treasurer, Police Pensioners of Ontario Association
Date:	Sept. 2, 2026
In 75 words or fewer, tell us why you are running:	

It is time for some new thinking on council. I think significant growth is just one good idea away.

A LABOUR & DECENT WORK

1. Do you support keeping municipal services public and in-house rather than contracting them out or entering public-private partnerships? Identify any services you would protect or consider contracting out, and explain your reasoning.

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

I believe the City of Sarnia has gone far enough, perhaps too far in contracting out services

2. How will you ensure municipal jobs — and jobs funded by the municipality — remain stable, fairly paid, and unionized? Include your position on temporary/contract labour and subcontracting.

As the former president of the Sarnia Police Association, in which position I strongly opposed any outside work for jobs that would be covered by dues paying Association members

3. Will you support Community Benefits Agreements, fair-wage schedules, and local-hiring requirements on major municipal infrastructure and construction projects?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

Self explanatory: As a candidate in this election, I want to promote job growth within Sarnia. Community Benefit Agreements are a potential win-win for the city and local industries to build infrastructure in a public-private agreement.

4. Do you support a living-wage policy covering all municipal workers, contractors, and subcontractors, tied to the City's procurement policies?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

self explanatory. It's good for the local workforce, and from the employer's perspective, you get what you pay for.

5. Sarnia's economy depends on turnaround and maintenance work in Chemical Valley. How will you use municipal levers (procurement, permitting, training partnerships with local contractors) to prioritize local, unionized skilled-trades labour?

Communication with industry, unions and contractors to ensure work opportunities are first publicized to local unions/agencies/workers

6. Will you commit to meeting regularly with the Sarnia & District Labour Council and its affiliates, and to consulting workers before decisions that affect them, if elected?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

One of my platform items is to increase the pre-determination consultative process. This would be more of an initiative for the individual councillor, except that affected entities should also be granted a chance to make their position known to council

7. Lambton County's By-Name List identifies roughly 390 people experiencing homelessness in Sarnia-Lambton, including about 190 who are chronically homeless. What concrete actions will you take on homelessness and supportive housing?

Given these issues are mainly a County responsibility, better communication with them is key. Also, Sarnia needs to enact/update zoning by-laws relative to supportive housing, shelters to minimize controversy like has happened with Indwell. Also in the zoning by-laws, dictate levels of service incumbent on the service provider security, admissions, etc.). Maybe a licensing regime

8. A County report warned that prematurely closing the Out of the Cold overflow shelter could more than double the unsheltered population. Do you support maintaining overflow and low-barrier shelter options while permanent supportive housing is built?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

But bear in mind supportive housing is not a cure-all. It only works for people committed to receiving help for their addiction/mental health issues. A Large amount of that 390 seem to be reticent to receiving care. Supportive housing won't work until they commit to getting help.

9. Will you support zoning and parking reforms that make supportive and affordable housing easier to approve — rather than changes that stall projects like Indwell's proposed 353 George Street development in Mitton Village?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Undecided

Please explain:

That would vary from situation to situation depending on the location and neighborhoods affected.

10. With more than 900 households on the social-housing waitlist and demand for roughly 2,500 additional affordable units, how will you increase the supply of affordable and non-market housing?

Mainly a county issue, but Sarnia must assess the load we should bear, as much of social housing does not require the same close proximity to services as supportive housing might. (Are the numbers you gave city only or county-wide)

11. Do you support a humane, housing-focused Encampment Response Protocol that connects people to services and housing rather than relying primarily on displacement or policing?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

Policing is not a solution to the overall problem. It is only incident-specific.

12. Major industrial investment (such as the proposed Northern Shield Energy Corridor pipeline) may add capacity while creating relatively few permanent jobs. How will you ensure new industrial investment translates into good, lasting local jobs?

It starts with budgeting. The financial policies of past councils ("zero debt," draining reserves to buffer taxes, lagging infrastructure work) have promoted no growth. I am advocating for adopting practices that area growing cities (London, Chatham-Kent, Strathroy-Caradoc, Windsor) partake in to promote new industry/business ventures setting up shop. This includes not being afraid to borrow funds to promote growth. (London presently carries a city debt load of \$500-\$1000 per capita, and project that to rise.) They maintain their AAA rating.

13. The closure of INEOS Styrolution affects local workers. What role should the City play in supporting displaced workers and ensuring a fair transition and retraining?

There are provincial programs for that. It is an economic-development challenge for the city, so being a clearing house/liaison for the various programs (Better Jobs Ontario, EI funded skills training, etc.) to promote the retention of skilled workers locally. On top of that, the best thing the city can do is create an environment for new ventures to build here (See answer 12). Again, whatever we can do to keep the workers here.

14. How will you attract and retain diversified jobs, commerce, and investment beyond petrochemicals — for example downtown, the port and waterfront, clean technology, and small business?

This goes back to answer 12. To attract these industries, we must have "shovel ready" sites to attract that new development, hence more spending on infrastructure. There is a return on that investment if we do it right.

15. Will you support apprenticeships, Red Seal skilled-trades training, and youth and local hiring through municipal projects and procurement — and if so, how?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

Apprenticeship roles, Hiring students on their work-learning modules, Summer students hired in areas of their field of study. That can work for both sides of the equation.

16. How will you support revitalization of downtown Sarnia and Mitton Village and strengthen local small businesses?

These areas need an "anchor" to bring people in. I have suggested (not knowing the exact feasibility) of possibly enhancing the Farmer's market to a 7 day a week venture and relocate to what land is available uptown, and expand it with spaces for local artisans, etc. This concept works well in other cities. Downtown revitalization is dependent on entrepreneurs. It is incumbent on council to create an environment that attracts their investment. The anchor is simply a large scale attraction that brings people there.

17. Aamjiwnaang First Nation and nearby Sarnia neighbourhoods face benzene and cumulative air-pollution exposure. What actions within municipal jurisdiction will you take to protect residents' health?

We are in a tough situation there. It's all about inter-government communication and cooperation. do we pass zoning laws?

18. Will you advocate to provincial and federal governments for cumulative-effects air-pollution assessment and stronger monitoring and enforcement in Chemical Valley?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

We need monitoring that everyone trusts and responds to. I would like to know what the benzene levels were after Styrolution shut down.

19. What specific actions will you take to implement and accelerate Sarnia's climate and emissions-reduction plans?

Follow all Federal and provincial laws and rules. That is what drives this.

20. How will you protect and expand access to affordable public transit and safe active transportation?

I need to know more on this. I know the city has been experimenting with electric vehicles and smaller busses, based on route demand.

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GOVERNANCE, SERVICES & RECONCILIATION

21. Which public services (water and wastewater, waste, transit, libraries, recreation, emergency services) do you believe must always remain publicly delivered, and how will you strengthen them?

All of them should be publicly delivered. Water and wastewater need much more investment (ref: my answers on infrastructure) Pretty much everything on this list falls under infrastructure. A good example of alternative funding is the Hub in Bright's Grove, which has received public donations for the library upgrade. Funding for adequate emergency services is key.

22. How will you advance meaningful reconciliation with Aamjiwnaang First Nation and the broader Indigenous community at the municipal level?

Having been on the Sarnia Police service for 32 years, I know there has always been communication in that regard, but there is room for improvement. They now have a dedicated community officer with Amjiwnaang. Regular meetings with Band Council and City Council could help enhance communication/problem solving.

23. How will you ensure transparency, accessibility, and meaningful public engagement in municipal decision-making — and how will residents know whether you are delivering on your commitments?

I am proposing enhanced pre-decision public consultation between council and the public. Given the amount of calls/emails I am getting as a candidate, I see how even these simple interactions make a difference

24. What is one decision you would make that may be unpopular in the short term but necessary for the long-term well-being of working people in Sarnia?

Due to reserves being depleted by the last council to offset tax increases, and its fixation on "zero debt" the next council will be faced with delivering a larger than normal tax increase. To address our non-growth issues, I am advocating and loudly campaigning as strategic debt to start the ball rolling on growth and proactively developing lands to at least brownfield/shovel ready status because that's what new investors are looking for. I have more detailed explanations on my website: chrisoramforcouncil.ca

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As you would see on my website, I think the city should actively seek out new industry that is contemplated under Canada's 2026 Military Industry Policy. The federal government is looking at increasing the military, and spreading the new industry required for that throughout Canada. This would be an area that the present USA tariff wars would not impact as much. The potential is there for all kinds of investment. Everything from uniforms to drones to weapons. There is a lot of industry there besides the dangerous goods related to military that could be a nice fit for Sarnia. (I have a lengthy article on my website about this> chrisoramforcouncil.ca

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for your commitment to building a stronger community for working people in Sarnia.