

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:	Clara James
Office sought:	Sarnia City Council
Ward (if any):	N/a
Email:	Clarajames4council@gmail.com
Phone:	226-448-7985
Past elected office:	N/a
Date:	September 13th, 2026
In 75 words or fewer, tell us why you are running:	

I am running to serve what I believe to be an under represented demographic currently in politics which is our young voters and youth. I also am running because I believe I have the time to commit to the role and serve the people of Sarnia well.

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 municipal services should be kept in house and public as much as possible taking into consideration the local capacity to provide services as well as the cost benefit analysis to the Sarnia taxpayer, priority should be given to local private entities when entering private public partnerships.

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.

Prioritization of local unions for contract considerations and by entering into mutually beneficial collective agreements in a way which satisfies both the union and the employer, temporary labor and subcontracting should not be used at the expense of union work covered under a collective agreement.

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:

Local hiring requirements when predictable will ensure that Sarnia union employees and local talent are utilized to the utmost whenever a major municipal project is undertaken local unions should be prioritized always in the consideration of such projects and associated contracts, fair wages and benefit agreements should be front and center in every collective negotiation.

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:

Unions that hold collective agreements with the city and contracted employees should have C.O.L.A (cost of living adjustment) applied to any negotiation over compensation for work completed on the behalf of the Corporation of the city of Sarnia.

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?

Chemical valley and the jobs associated with the plants are a vital part of the local economy and provide gainful employment to many residents of our city. Partnerships between the city and local unions for training, permitting, and procurement are vital, and local labor should be given permit incentives to remain competitive with outside bids.

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:

The Sarnia labor counsel should be kept abreast of any decisions that my impact local workers and unions and those unions and workers should have a strong voice in either supporting or opposing those decisions for which they would be most impacted, frequent meetings between counsellors and the labor counsel are vital to ensuring those concerns are heard in a timely fashion so solutions can be reached.

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?

If elected I will be taking a preventative and rehabilitation based approach to homelessness and supportive housing. I would be advocating for more treatment facilities to be built which would create jobs both in their construction and in daily operations. I also would be a firm advocate for drug free supportive housing as I believe the rest of the individuals experiencing housing insecurity who are not hooked on illegal drugs or are recovering should not be housed in the same places.

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:

I would need more information on how this could impact the wider community and safety measures. I understand the need for shelter options for these individuals but the root causes as to why there are there need to be addressed or I believe any housing provided will face similar issues and challenges as the Out of the Cold Overflow Shelter has.

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:

I would need more information on how this could impact the wider community and safety measures.

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?

Providing a streamlined permitting process and by reviewing zoning where applicable including the review of city real estate assets that could be repurposed into supportive and affordable housing where such changes would be practicable and have low impact.

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:

I believe that we must recognize that there are fellow community members living in encampments, and we must also recognize the amount of challenges and illicit activities that tend to happen in them as well. We need to enforce existing laws and local bylaws, while also having spaces for these individuals to go. We also need to recognize clear accountability measures for individuals who are doing illegal activities so that the broader community is also safe and taxpayers are not once again on the hook for millions of dollars.

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?

By negotiating with the province and federal government for priority access to ongoing maintenance contracts for the pipeline and its associated infrastructure as well as negotiating city contracts with the pipeline operator to use local workers where we can.

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?

By negotiation with local unions to build capacity for retraining and the creation of new positions.

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?

I would need to look into those areas of investment more. It would involve collaborating with local organizations and existing businesses to see what is working for them and what isn't.

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:

Yes, apprenticeship opportunities are vital to building the local workforce and talent pool as well as creating new union jobs in the city. A commitment from the city to take on apprentices where possible should be negotiated with the appropriate unions.

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

I will push for better communication between the city and local businesses to collaborate on ideas that could impact them. I will also see how we can tie in revitalization in business areas to pre existing budget lines to make sure tax dollars are being spent as efficiently as possible.

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?

N/a

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:

The city should be a strong voice in the protection of its residents' health, and should always be in advocacy for stringent air monitoring where workers or residents may be exposed to harmful emissions.

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

N/a

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

N/a

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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?

Public services such as wastewater, waste, transit, libraries and emergency services should remain in public hands, constant communication and adjustment to evolving needs by council will be vital in maintaining the affordability and ability to provide these services, should a private entity be approached to provide services strict contract requirements and local hiring mandates must be part of any negotiation.

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

N/a

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?

If elected I will ensure that the public is able to reach me easily and frequently. I will advocate for more townhall events where residents can ask questions to their local officials and boards and hold them accountable if things are happening that they are concerned with. I will also look into passing a motion where more easy record keeping of councillors motions and votes can be viewed so that residents have quick reference to them and can challenge them more easily. I would also push for larger public consultation of the operational budget.

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?

One decision I would make is to focus more on creating stable, well-paying local jobs instead of only trying to attract big companies. This may be unpopular at first because it could make it harder to attract some businesses, but in the long term, it would help working people in Sarnia by giving them better job security, training, and opportunities. I know from speaking with many tradespeople local job insecurity is top of mind and has made them leave the area for more dependable employment.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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