

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:	Margaret Bird
Office sought:	City & County Councillor
Ward (if any):	
Email:	mgb29@teksavvy.com
Phone:	Cell: 519-869-8687
Past elected office:	City & County Councillor and LAWSS Board Director 2018 - 2022
Date:	
In 75 words or fewer, tell us why you are running:	

Sarnia needs a new chapter and I want to be part of writing it!! I run on my record and stand for the people! Sarnia must thrive once again, protecting both present and future. I will always watch for progress; Return of financial accountability; Operational transparency; Increase tax base - new firms, jobs and tourism; Prioritize correctly for issues/spending; Reinstate freedom of choice and information; Always listen to the Citizens of Sarnia Lambton!

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:

To continue growing as a City, we need to keep all taxes and expenditures right here. We have 90% of all the skills, trades and expertise right here on our doorstep and we should be promoting that. When consultants are hired from other cities, they are far more expensive and do NOT KNOW our city at all. We need to stay with people who have the history of our city as well as all the skills and resources for successful growth

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.

This can be achieved in many ways: 1) By council presenting motions for new and consistent procurement rules. 2) By more council motions to ensure that the appropriate and best-qualified employees are hired for staff (and thus eliminating the need to hire consultants from other cities. 3) By council motions to strongly encourage better communications and negotiation between management, staff and unions. 4) To maintain fair and stable pay, there are plenty of available comparisons with other similar size cities and the necessary skills and education

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:

This can bring significant local and economic advantages.

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:

But there are pros and cons with this. Fair wages means workers spend more money at local stores and restaurants which helps our community grow. Paying everyone the same good wage stops companies from treating some workers poorly or undercutting local labour markets. Fair wages and community benefit programs raise the total cost to build the infrastructure. And when outside contractors are used, they do not necessarily

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?

With better efficiency and communication between all the relevant departments. Follow-up and follow through on every step of the process, too!

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:

Yes, if elected, I will commit to doing everything that is necessary to represent Sarnia's working people and all their families to the very best of my abilities!

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?

Supportive housing is designed for individuals with complex needs - such as mental-health issues, substance use or disabilities, who face barriers to maintaining stable housing on their own. Of the 390 people on the SL list, I'm not sure how many of those would be in the 'supportive' housing category? All programs currently in place are dealing with small groups and don't address the magnitude of the overall homelessness problem. Also, simply give an individual a place to live (in this category) does not give them the ongoing medical/mental health

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:

Having shelters WITHOUT any in-house support is not achieving anything for these individuals. We must get the mental-health facilities back to be able to deal with the large numbers in a much better way, and with appropriate support staff in place. Also, the nearby home owners keep being given 'moving goal post' dates for closure and moving on, which keeps NOT happening!

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:

Because if we can convince the Province to open up the mental-health facilities once again, then we might not have to change any local zoning and parking reforms.

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?

This is a complex question and needs a major brainstorming session of all City and County councillors first of all. And, depending on the outcome of the provincial request (in the questions above) the answers could be very different for this question. Also, before building anything new, how about converting all closed churches and other (no long used) buildings?

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:

Housing FIRST is an adopted principle in Finland and some European countries but what works in one country doesn't necessarily work in Canada, Ontario, or Sarnia! The entire 'social services' structure needs to be examined extremely carefully and a new all-encompassing plan put in place for being able to move forward in a timely fashion instead of all the project stalling that continues to occur!

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?

To translate a massive project like this into more local jobs, the Sarnia leaders and Community Partners must intentionally link procurement, training and policy frameworks directly to the region's existing industrial footprint. Sarnia already possesses world-class machine shops, metal fabricators, and transportation networks (i.e., using local enterprises like Kel-Gor Ltd and regional suppliers rather than outside contractors). And, also, partnering with local groups like Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board to forecast exact labour demands for

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?

When an entire plant closes, the municipality should act as a rapid response coordinator, economic bridge, and community advocate, partnering with unions and agencies to host job fairs, fund re-training programs, offer mental-health support, and aggressively recruit new employers to the area (something they have not worked on for a long time!).

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 is very easy to answer when a community has a really flourishing TOURISM Industry. This is practically non-existent in Sarnia - nobody knows we're here, they've practically closed down the airport (no economic drivers). When TOURISM is booming, it triggers everything else - new firms moving here, lots more jobs, more housebuilding, more retail downtown, more arts and culture, etc., etc. BUT, in order to have all this, the Tourism Office needs to 'up the anti' and start promoting, advertising nationally AND internationally!! We have

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:

By working very closely with Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board, and also with the Provincial apprenticeship integration and funding office. By having the RS endorsement, it also means a tradesperson never has to be re-tested again so it acts as a good prompt for our city to keep up with fair-wage alignment, too.

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

Once again, this is something that the TOURISM Office could really help with - promoting us the way they should, for all areas, and encouraging new firms/retailers from all categories to move into our beautiful city, where they can all co-exist while growing our great City!

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?

If elected, this is a very important topic that I will be submitting motions for action and monitoring. I have already tried my best to get the fluoride out of the drinking water and used the success of the USA unprecedented court case results to assist my proposal because I had all the necessary proof - but none of the Mayors in Sarnia Lambton agreed with this proposal at all, EVEN with all the proof!!

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:

Because you can never have too much monitoring when it comes to checking air pollution, safety, and water quality!!

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

Firstly, find out exactly what the municipality has been doing TO DATE and ask for total transparency on all results. From there, a new place can be created and proposed with follow-ups at frequent intervals.

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

By passing CLEAR master plans, funding dedicated infrastructure, adjusting land-use policies, and subsidizing fares (low income, seniors, youth, or transfer point discounts, too).

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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 publically delivered. Strengthening of any public service can always be improved by 2-way communication and training and following up on all complaints and enquiries from the members of the public.

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

FIRSTLY, we have to all 'come to the table' together! There is far too much segregation in our city - this has to stop and we all have to work together for the betterment of our total community!!

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 believe in total transparency and accountability - I always answer all calls and emails from the members of the community and always disclose what I am doing and how I plan on doing it. If elected again, my main responsibility is to represent all the people without any personal agenda!! I run on my record and stand for the people always!

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?

Workers need to be healthy to be able to stay in their line of work, so for that reason, I would say I would put a motion forward, once again, to remove fluoride from the drinking water!! Once people see how improved they feel, and how much better their dental checks are, I believe they will finally agree. And, once again, I do have all the proof for this.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Thank you very much for the opportunity to offer some of my comments on very important topics - greatly appreciated. I will look forward to seeing you all on October 6th at 5.30 p.m.

Kind Regards,
Margaret Bird

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