

Candidate Details

Bryan Causarano-Bolton
Regional Councillor

What is your motivation for running for election?

I love this city and this region. I have been a resident here for almost 12 years, and have watched each of the cities develop over that time. As a small business owner, and cofounder of Grand River Pride, I have been involved in Cambridge politics for some time, but only from the sidelines. I believe that Cambridge is an incredible city, with a lot of work to do. We need to be prepared for the anticipated growth we are seeing in this region. As Regional Councillor, I will make informed, empathetic, thoughtful decisions that help us grow in an intentional ways.

What are your top three priority issues you want to address at Regional Council?

Homelessness, Transportation, and Infrastructure Sustainability.

What is your vision for each of the issues you identified above?

1. Homelessness - We need more deeply affordable and transition housing, but also protections in place so that no one needs to find emergency shelter. The wait times to get people from emergency shelters into long-term housing can take years, and creates a cycle where people end up back on the street. Our current shelter system is over run, leaving people out in the cold. My vision is that we reduce the number of people relying on shelters, and reduce the length of time that it takes for people to recover. This will require a multi-disciplinary approach.
2. Transportation - As we design the LRT through Cambridge, we need to also look at the other ways people commute through bike routes and walking trails to help relieve congestion in the city. This will be especially true in the Hespeler Corridor as it is redeveloped. The goal is to have communities that rely less on vehicles, and encourage walking and public transit.
3. Infrastructure Sustainability - With the upcoming report on Data Centers coming to council, I think it is important that we also audit what our 10 and 20 year plans for water and energy sustainability looks like for the region. We have an immense amount of growing planned for the next 5-10 years, and we need to prepare for those influxes now.

What tangible steps would you take to increase the supply of affordable housing across the Region?

We need more units reserved in new builds for affordable rental prices. This will mean working with responsible builders and non-profits to implement rent subsidies, and offering tax incentives to help offset development costs. Increasing the availability of transitional housing will also help to support the need for affordable housing. I will work with builders and the region to try to remove barriers that allow affordability projects to be move forward quickly.

What is your plan to expand access to affordable, high-quality child care and create additional child care spaces?

The region is currently on track to meet its CWELCC Goal by the end of the year, but estimates are that we still have 13000 children looking for licensed Child-Care. To meet this demand, I want to partner with local school boards to create modular centres on school

properties in underserved neighbourhoods to add more spaces quickly and affordably. Partnering with local non-profits who are already doing great work in this space can also help reduce the waitlists. We also need to improve our recruitment and retention programs to ensure we have ECE staff to meet these demands. I will also advocate for more funding from the province and region to ensure we can commit to the \$10 goal.

What is your position on the Provincial government's efforts to increase private sector involvement in drinking water and wastewater services?

Drinking water and wastewater are essential public services and should remain publicly owned, publicly accountable, and in the interest of the public. Decisions about our water systems should not be left with the public, not driven by profit. Residents should have a clear voice in rates, infrastructure investment, service standards, and planning. I will protect the Region's ability to make decisions about its water systems locally.

What role should the Region play in protecting publicly owned water services?

The region should be protecting infrastructure and making long-term investments in sustaining usage as we grow so that we do not end up with future shortages. This includes protecting the source of our water, maintaining and investing in treatment plants and pipelines, and addressing climate change and population growth. It also means evaluating consumption by major businesses and implementing legislation that regulates usage by Data Centres.

What forms of inequity do you believe are the most significant challenges in our community? How would you address them?

I believe the biggest inequities in our community are housing, income, access to essential services, and the barriers faced by marginalized communities. When people cannot afford a safe home or reliable transportation, they face greater barriers to employment, health care, education, and participation in community life. I will focus on reducing barriers and making investments reach the people who need them most. This means increasing deeply affordable and supportive housing, protecting affordable rentals, strengthening homelessness protection, and improving access to transit and essential services. This will also mean partnering with local non-profits that support marginalized communities to ensure they have a voice in designing the solution. We need to evaluate who benefits, who is left behind, and what we can do to close that gap.

What organizations, initiatives, or movements have you supported that work to address systemic discrimination or oppression? Please describe your involvement.

I am one of the cofounders of Grand River Pride, a 2SLGBTQIA+ organization that hosts events like Cambridge Pride and Ayr Pride, while also investing in local support programming. Every year our funding helps us to host our own events, and surpluses are reinvested in support organizations in our community that work to support queer living. I also contribute to organizations like the Cambridge Food Bank and Nutrition4Learning to help reduce food inequality, especially when it comes to programming for youth. Whenever I see injustice, I stand up. I know the privilege that I have as a white man, and I have always tried to use that privilege to empathize with other marginalized communities, and I use my voice to elevate the voices of others. I see the Regional Council role as just that. An opportunity so speak on behalf of the people of this city and region who need the support.

Can you commit to publicly speaking up in favour of these demands, including at Council meetings?

Yes