

Candidate Details

George Trihenea
Mayor of Kitchener

What is your motivation for running for election?

I am running because City Hall has stopped listening. Renters get pushed out, decisions get made behind closed doors, and problems sit until they turn into crises. As a 30 year veteran in the hospitality industry I am seeking to take a hands on approach by working with frontline workers directly and improving the service quality Kitchener receives. Residents deserve a mayor who is open about the books, careful with their money, and focused on affordability, safety, and getting things done.

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

Housing people can actually afford. Licensed daycare in the neighbourhoods that need it. And infrastructure that gets planned before it fails, instead of after residents are already stuck.

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

On housing, I want families, workers, and seniors to be able to stay in Kitchener. That means townhomes and multiplexes moving through approvals faster, homeowners allowed to add a secondary suite or laneway home without a year of red tape, and real affordable units locked into new builds, not promised and then dropped.

On child care, parents in high-need neighbourhoods should not be sitting on a waitlist with no end date. Licensed, affordable spaces have to be treated as a basic service.

On infrastructure, including water, residents should hear about a capacity problem before it freezes construction. Plan early. Say it in public. Do not wait for the exact situation we are currently in.

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

I would push missing-middle housing through faster: townhomes and multiplexes, not only towers. Secondary suites and laneway homes should be easier for homeowners to build. New projects should include truly affordable units, secured with non-profits and developers up front. And I would tighten the rules on unfair renovations so we stop losing the affordable apartments we already have.

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

Start where the waitlists are worst. I would work with the Region and local operators to add licensed, affordable daycare in high-need neighbourhoods, and I would publish the numbers so parents can see whether spaces are actually opening. Growth without child care just shifts the problem onto families.

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

Water and wastewater should stay publicly owned and publicly run. Residents pay for the system, and they should be able to see how it is managed. The Province's push for more private involvement does not fix late planning or weak reporting. I want capacity planned early and numbers published . A private operator does not give residents that. It adds a profit motive and another closed door.

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

Tell people early and publish in real time the capacity numbers. Keep the debate in open session unless the law actually requires otherwise. Kitchener should not find out about a servicing freeze after the fact. That is the same standard I want at City Hall: fewer closed meetings, better long-term planning, and no surprises.

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

The ones I hear about most are practical. Renters facing a renoviction. Parents who cannot find a daycare spot. Seniors and residents with disabilities who cannot get the snow cleared. I would deal with those directly: stronger protection against unfair renovictions, more licensed daycare in high-need neighbourhoods, and a snow-clearing registry for seniors and people with disabilities. Decisions should be made in the open so people can see who is being left out.

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

I am currently working with ACORN on renovictions. That work is about stopping landlords from using renovations to push tenants out of homes they can still afford. I also served on Kitchener's Advisory Committee, alongside local organizations working on downtown issues. Both sit next to what I am running on: stronger protection against unfair renovictions, licensed daycare in high-need neighbourhoods, and practical help for seniors and residents with disabilities.

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

Yes