

Candidate Information:

Scott Hamilton

Mayor of Cambridge

1. What is your motivation for running for election?

I want to build a Cambridge where families can afford to live, businesses can thrive, infrastructure keeps pace with growth, and neighbourhoods remain strong and connected. With rising costs, growing affordability challenges, and rapid growth across our region, Cambridge needs confident, steady leadership to meet these challenges head-on and build a strong future for our city.

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

Affordability, Housing, Public Services

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

Affordability - My approach to affordability starts with controlling what City Hall can control: launching an Affordability Audit to ensure spending, taxes, fees, and major projects deliver value; supporting more attainable housing; planning growth so infrastructure keeps pace without placing unnecessary costs on existing residents; and investing in the roads, transit, recreation, childcare, and services that make Cambridge affordable to live in.

Housing - My vision is to build more homes across the housing spectrum that Cambridge residents can actually afford, with a greater mix of family-sized homes, townhomes, multiplexes, and other attainable options. We should make better use of city-owned land, reduce unnecessary delays in the approval process, and work with regional and provincial partners to unlock more affordable housing. Growth is coming; we need to make sure it delivers homes for the people who already call Cambridge home and for those who want to build their future here.

Public Services - My vision is for Cambridge residents to have access to the public services they need, without having to leave our city to find them. That means fighting for the LRT to extend to Cambridge, bringing more mental health and social services to our community, and working with regional, provincial, and community partners to address gaps in services for our most vulnerable residents. For too long, Cambridge has been described as a "service desert". We need to make sure our growing city has the transit, healthcare, social services, recreation, and community infrastructure to support residents at every stage of life.

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

I would focus on increasing the supply of attainable housing by making better use of publicly owned land, supporting a wider range of housing types, and reducing unnecessary delays in the approval process. I would also work with regional and provincial partners to secure funding and advance affordable housing projects, while ensuring new growth is supported by the infrastructure and services residents need.

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

As the Region continues to grow, we need to plan for child care as essential community infrastructure. Bestwr.org has identified the potential need for 4,136 new childcare spaces in Waterloo Region as we prepare for a population of 1 million people (<https://bestwr.org/scorecard/livability.html>). I would work with the Region's Children's Services team to identify gaps in capacity, coordinate new spaces with regional growth and development planning, and advocate for provincial funding where additional capacity is needed. We should also work with child care operators and developers to incorporate new spaces into growing neighbourhoods and public facilities, ensuring families have access to affordable, high-quality care close to home.

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

Water and wastewater are essential public services and should remain publicly owned, publicly accountable, and focused on the long-term interests of residents, not private profit. I would oppose efforts to increase private-sector control over these services. Our priority should be maintaining safe, reliable infrastructure and keeping rates affordable. Decisions about these critical services should remain accountable only to the communities they serve.

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

The Region should protect public ownership and accountability of our water services, while continuing to invest in the infrastructure needed to provide safe, reliable, and sustainable water for a growing population. That means maintaining strong public oversight, planning for long-term capacity, protecting our water sources, and ensuring decisions about an essential public service remain focused on residents and the public interest.

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

Some of the most significant inequities in our community are unequal access to housing, health and social services, transportation, and economic opportunity. I would address them by identifying where gaps are greatest, directing resources toward communities and residents who face the greatest barriers, and working with regional, provincial, and community partners to

bring essential services closer to home. As our community grows, equity should be built into how we plan housing, infrastructure, transportation, and public services.

We also need to recognize the barriers women continue to face, including unequal economic opportunities, access to affordable child care, and the disproportionate burden of caregiving, and ensure our policies and services help address those gaps.

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

Much of my experience addressing systemic discrimination and inequality has come through my work at United Way, where I worked closely with community organizations and frontline leaders addressing poverty, housing insecurity, gender-based violence, mental health, disability, and other barriers that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. That work has given me first-hand experience understanding both the challenges people face and the organizations working to address them. As a member of Council, I have also made a point of standing up for residents facing gender-based violence, members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, seniors, youth, and people with disabilities, and ensuring their perspectives are represented in municipal decision-making. I have also supported community efforts focused specifically on gender equity, including participating in YWCA Cambridge's Take Back the Night event and engaging with organizations such as Soroptimist International of Cambridge.

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

Yes