

RESPONSES FROM KAREN RAS

1. Community Engagement

Please describe how you plan to fulfill the role of councillor and outline your qualifications to do so, including your knowledge of Ward 2 and how you'll 'hit the ground running'.

Over the last four years, I have been very engaged with Ward 2 residents and have utilized several methods to reach out such as: community meetings, paper and electronic newsletters, social media, web site and many one-on-one meetings with residents. Should I be privileged enough to get re-elected, these community outreach initiatives will continue.

The role of Councillor is not just about engaging with residents but also being actively engaged in the many committees at both the City and the Region. Presently, I sit on 17 committees and have a reputation for being a financial watchdog and someone who does their homework!

2. a) Lakeshore Rd. / Dundas St. Corridor

How will you handle traffic congestion due to new developments, both in progress and in the future, and how will your solutions be funded?

The City of Mississauga did not invest in public transit for many years and now we are playing catch up. The Hurontario LRT will be the north/south spine of our transit system. That area has also been designated for intensification.

With any new developments, especially at Lakeview and the old Imperial Oil Lands are being built as "complete communities" where people live and work with an expectation that there will be less reliance on cars and focus on other modes such as public transit, cycling and walking.

The Lakeshore Connecting Communities study was expedited by Council and we expect to have more information on what the future will look like along the Lakeshore in the coming months.

Having said that, as our population increases, there will always be traffic. Especially over the next few years with major construction coming to the QEW, our area will likely experience higher traffic volumes as people find alternate routes along Lakeshore and Dundas.

2. b) Lakeshore Rd. / Dundas St. Corridor

Is the sole paramedic station in progress at Jack Darling Park sufficient for the anticipated population (i.e. an additional 30,000+ residents in Mississauga South) and if not, what will you propose and how will it be funded?

There are two new paramedic satellite stations being constructed in Ward 2 to address our growing and aging populations. There is also a new station planned for East Ave in Ward 1. These have been already accounted for in the current and future budgets from a capital and operational perspective.

2. c) Lakeshore Rd. / Dundas St. Corridor

Is our water treatment facility sufficient for the anticipated population (i.e. an additional 30,000+ residents in Mississauga South) and if not, what will you propose and how will it be funded?

In short: yes.

Between 2011 and 2016, the Region of Peel grew from 1,350,000 to 1,438,000 people. We experience an average annual population growth of 17,600 people in Peel which is on target for how the Province expects us to grow. At Peel, we make sure our infrastructure keeps pace with our population growth while managing the financial risk inherent with investing in infrastructure prior to growth arriving.

3. Safety

What is your plan to address Mississauga's recent increase in violent and other crimes (such as robberies, car thefts)?

Ward 2 remains one of the safest areas of the Region but we know there has been an increase in crimes. We recently held a community safety forum with elected officials, Peel Police, school boards, and community groups to discuss strategies for dealing with crime. Certainly greater police presence is key but there is work to be done within communities to open lines of communications with residents who may have an inherent distrust of police. This will take time and resources and have asked the Chief to come to Peel at budget time with a plan to address these issues.

Earlier this year, I hosted a crime prevention session at Clarkson High School and was very well attended. I will plan for another one in the Spring. There are simple things that residents can do to protect themselves, their possessions and keep an eye out for neighbours. We all need to work together to keep our communities safe.

4. Environment

We live in a stressed air shed with health implications. With the plan to add 30,000+ additional residents in South Mississauga, there will be an increase of pollutants. What is your plan to mitigate pollution and the harmful effects to our health?

It is my understanding that the developments in south Mississauga will be very green and sustainable which is great news for everyone (I heard that they will be having a closed garbage system at Lakeview). Given that we have to accommodate increased populations, infill development is better for the environment than putting single detached homes on viable farmland many kilometers away from stores and services. With the closure of the coal plants a few years ago, cleaner cars and fuels, we have seen fewer smog days and breathed cleaner air. Pollution from industry is a responsibility of the Provincial Government and they also need to step up to provide our residents updated air quality data so we can get a better understanding of how we are doing and put mitigation plans in place.

5. Section 37/Community Benefits

We, as residents and residents' associations, feel strongly about our engagement in the determination of community benefits. How will you present our ideas to City Council and ensure our engagement and input from start to finish?

The idea of an historic train station replica as the Moldenhauer contribution to their development has the support of many residents and residents' associations, as well as Heritage Mississauga, the Mississauga South Historic Society, and the Friends of the Museums. As Councillor of Ward 2, will you support this community benefit?

I will commit to engaging the community related to future Section 37 and community benefits. With respect to the Clarkson Road development, there is a subcommittee that is looking into what would be appropriate. We have not had a meeting in a few months. I do not know how a train station replica would fit into the site based on the OMB decision or the cost but happy to explore this further. Not sure what a train station replica entails. A façade or something else? Hopefully there will be another meeting soon. If not, I will request one.

**SOUTHWEST MISSISSAUGA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS
QUESTIONS FOR WARD 2 COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES**

6. Region of Peel

Including advantages and disadvantages, what is your position on seceding from the Region of Peel?

My position on this topic has been clear. Whatever decision is made by the Province (Mississauga cannot unilaterally decide to unilaterally do it), it has to be in the best interest of the Mississauga taxpayers. It is possible for Mississauga to “go it alone” and have the Region of Peel operate like a utility board but Brampton and Caledon would likely be disadvantaged since Mississauga pays around 60% to Regional coffers. That percentage will go down over time as populations increase in Brampton and Caledon. So the questions are: is it doable? Is it right for our taxpayers in the short term and long term? I don't have those answers yet.

7. Affordable Housing

What is your plan for creating low-income housing and implementing the City's 'Making Room for the Middle' strategy?

There are over 13,000 people in Peel waiting for subsidized. Clearly this is too many. For too long, other levels of governments that were once involved have seemed to abdicate their responsibilities.

If we spent the entire \$600M operating budget in Mississauga on housing, we wouldn't even make a dent. We can't address the waiting list along on the backs of property tax payers.

Last April, Council approved a new Housing and Homelessness plan for Peel to reduce wait times for housing. We also approved a 0.5% increase in property tax to be dedicated to housing.

The other aspect to housing is how can people who make between \$60-100K afford a home in this market? Mississauga is one of the costliest real estate markets in the Country! Mississauga did adopt a new housing strategy entitled “Making Room for the Middle: A Housing Strategy for Mississauga.” The strategy focuses on the middle class who make too much money to qualify for assistance and yet can't afford to purchase a house. We have identified 140 ways to fix housing and will need many partners to step up such as developers and other levels of government.

These two plans have just begun and we need to work through the ways to address the housing crisis but make no mistake, there is a price tag attached. That is still to be determined.