

We're Better Together, Let's Put McKellar First

I am writing as a candidate for McKellar Council, 2022. The beauty and tranquility of rural life in McKellar is unique and special. Let's work together to protect that rich heritage and to help ensure a bright future. To me it has been heaven being in McKellar full-time for many years, and I have been glad to have been able to give back as a volunteer and now retired McKellar firefighter.

In 2018, I received strong support in my bid for council. I got things done while serving on several committees and was actively involved in many events and initiatives. I am one to stand behind my commitments, even when it may not be in my personal interest to do so. When both Marco Ancinelli and I realized that we were no longer able to deliver on our commitments to you, we resigned in protest last August 2021. We look forward to a shift in governance to open the doors for a strong team, committed to the good of the township.

I have been encouraged to run again by those who noted that my demonstrated integrity is needed in positions of leadership. I will always **protect** the **best interests** of McKellar first.

Progressive Financial Management

The recent budget crisis resulted in a 5.67% budget increase. I believe that this increase could have been much lower with **forward-thinking** financial **options**. When I was on Council for the prior year budget, we introduced McKellar's first debenture, leveraging a low-interest loan for fixed assets that is essential for prudent "pay forward" financial management and to **stabilize** annual **budget increases**. "Cash only" policies and the "hoarding" of capital reserves actually cost the taxpayer more in the long term.

McKellar: Sustainable vibrant, healthy community for young and old

The 2021 census reports a 27% increase in full-time residents since 2016. Seniors continue to be our largest growth 'industry'. The over 55 age group now represents 64% of our neighbours. Our population base is looking for **THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO GO** and **SERVICES WE NEED** within our community.

Our 2019 Action Plan captured our citizens' ideas for active lifestyles, recreation activities and amenities: such as restaurant, gas station, day care, bike rest stop and many others. While some of these requests have been initiated, many have been stalled.

Creating jobs to retain young families in McKellar is key to future sustainability and the support needed to keep our seniors healthy at home. There are already some exciting beginnings to the "farm to fork" phenomenon. Agri-tourism is at the heart of a **rural sustainability strategy** and provides more options for local job creation and to shop local while respecting the heritage and environment of a rural community.

As we 'age in place' we must find ways to provide **better support** for in-home services. I had been in discussion with Whitestone Nursing Station about establishing clinics here in McKellar.

'Aging in place' has also rapidly increased full-time residents on seasonal roads, which can be challenging for emergency response and year-round road safety. The intent of the Roads policy, that I had shepherded, must not be undermined. I **support the preservation of the road policy, safety, access, and fairness**, which was recommended by our community volunteers on the Roads Ad-Hoc committee.

Protect Our Heritage

Protect our lakes, land and air. The work of our volunteer Environment Committee is impressive and vital to safeguarding our water quality, water safety, shoreline and the preservation and tranquility of our outdoor life – what legacy will we leave for the next generation? The lakes and fields are the reasons that many of us are here.

Restore Respect in Municipal Government and Get Things Done

The final topic I would like to touch on today is **effective government**. Much is said about the lack of transparency. Ironically, municipal government reporting was not designed to do this. It is up to us to make the changes we need within our community.

I will suggest that we move regular Council meetings to Sat. 9am to noon. This may provide more opportunity for members of the public to participate. I would also support more consistent and thorough staff reports that provide the necessary background to inform Council decisions.

I Get Things Done

In a very short time as a Councillor, I accomplished a lot. I did something extraordinary, by returning more than **\$60,000** in levies to our township, which was more than a 3-year Councillor salary.

- Fixed the problem of the “Schedule A” winter maintenance roads – that was contrary to occupational health and safety standards putting our staff (and ratepayers) at unnecessary risk, as well as adding expensive annual equipment repairs.
- Set in motion the reduction of the Belvedere Long Term Care Home levy from \$1.5M back to \$0.5M, which will reduce McKellar’s share from \$105,000 to \$35,000, **freeing up \$70,000 each year** for other services such as the annual pool and wellness centre levy. To date, \$20,000 saved annually.
- **Returned over \$42,000** from Belvedere which was added to McKellar Health Services Capital Reserve in 2021. The Long -Term Act only allows a 15% reserve equivalent to \$1.5M, not the \$2.2M cash that Belvedere had at that time. \$700,000 returned in total across the 8 municipalities.
- Stopped the contravention of the Ontario Charities Act that prohibits directors of charitable organizations from receiving a stipend. Councillors on Belvedere Board now comply with the Act and no longer receive \$10,000 total honorarium (among 7 members) for attending meetings.
- Establish fair compensation to protect Life Lease owners when they decide to return their units. Negotiated precedent to avoid potential **\$1M** one-time unwarranted cost to ratepayers.
- McKellar Council is now on salary which provides consistency, and we eliminated the historical practice of billing mileage from home to Council Chamber (which was contrary to CRA expense guidelines)
- Established McKellar’s first infrastructure debenture to “pay forward” future investments

I also contributed to many other initiatives such as: the Action Plan, Roads Ad Hoc revised roads policy, new sound system, grant applications (high speed internet, walking bridge, EV), business development ideas (wedding barn, fibre mill, village hub, BEDT concept), Lake Capacity Study, ICECAP.....

WHY VOTE FOR ME

I am a dedicated, hard-working team member. I have demonstrated problem-solving skills with innovative practical solutions to age-old challenges (such as our roads and long-term care services).

I get things done because I work effectively with staff to leverage my business and management expertise to make them successful. It's all about McKellar Together.

While I have the energy, creativity, and dedication to serve your best interests, no one individual can do this alone. We need a strong team of dynamic, forward-thinking individuals with the courage to collaborate to move forward: [PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO, SERVICES WE NEED](#). Let's go places and get things done – McKellar Together!

INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT OUR IDEAS TO SERVE YOU BETTER:

Don Carmichael
For Councillor

McKellar Together
Let's Get Things Done

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Visit our McKellar Together team website:

