



Michel for McKellar

Forward thinking leadership

www.michel4mckellar.com

Vote for Michel Richard on October 24

Thank you for taking the time to read about my platform and my background. Voting is both a privilege and a right. I hope I can count on your support.

Where I Stand

McKellar is facing significant challenges that will affect residents and cottagers for years to come. We need a Mayor and Council that is prepared to meet these challenges, ensure our tax dollars are spent wisely, protect the financial stability of the Township, and meet people's needs fairly and democratically.

- Wellness Centre (Parry Sound Pool Project)
- Short Term Rentals
- Roads and Financial Management
- Lake Manitouwabing Boat Launches
- A Council Working Together for McKellar Taxpayers
- Meet and Greet
- Answers to Ratepayers' Questions via MLCA
- Testimonials
- Michel Richard's Background
- Partial Work History

Wellness Centre (Parry Sound Pool Project)

McKellar Council has committed our Township to join other area municipalities to pay for approximately 25% of the construction and operation of a pool and wellness centre in Parry Sound. The current design proposes two swimming pools, a gymnasium, an indoor running track, and meeting rooms. McKellar's commitment tops up the requirement of the federal and provincial funding that was announced last year, which covers the other 75%. Already, capital costs are

Wellness Centre (Parry Sound Pool Project), continued

2/...

expected to increase due to rising inflation and other factors. Official estimates are too low – in fact, McKellar may need to pay more than \$325,000 per year for 30 years to help cover our share of the capital and operating costs, plus pay an additional annual amount into a reserve fund.

In addition, McKellar residents who want to use the pool will have to purchase a membership, which could cost up to \$1,800 a year.

While the real costs are unknown at this time, this commitment places a financial burden on the Township budget that can only be paid for by raising property taxes. This commitment is not a wise use of our tax dollars when we have other urgent needs.

Instead of building a new facility, McKellar and the other area municipalities should look at gaps in recreational and cultural programming within existing facilities. The Bobby Orr Community Centre is a fully accessible facility that boasts an ice surface, a hall, two meeting rooms, and space for commercial trade shows, indoor sports, and concerts.

Kinsmen Centennial Park provides soccer and baseball fields for youth and adults and lighting is available for night play. There are washrooms and changerooms on site. It is also home to a skating rink and ample parking for multiple activities.

The Town of Parry Sound lists the following activities on its website: baseball, soccer, tennis, table tennis, basketball, a skate park, outdoor fitness equipment, playgrounds, play structures and equipment, an off-leash dog park, and public washrooms.

In addition, the private sector also offers public access to swim pools, a well-equipped gym, yoga studios, massage therapy and chiropractic clinics. As an alternative to expensive new facilities, I believe the area municipalities should take a fresh look at the programming and activities currently being offered. If a new pool is needed, then McKellar and the other municipalities should look at the possibility of building a less-expensive, stand-alone, enclosed pool adjacent to the existing YMCA building, with possible upgrades to that building.

If elected, I will urge McKellar Council to revisit its commitment, and either withdraw or minimize our funding of the pool project as it is currently proposed.

Short-Term Rentals

Do you know short-term rentals are illegal in McKellar? The bylaw that is currently on the books has never been successfully enforced. As a result, there are an untold number of rental properties on our lakes.

While many short-term rental property owners act responsibly and are good neighbours, some rental properties have become sources of noise that harm the enjoyment of life for others. In addition, I have real concerns about the state of the septic systems on many of these rental properties as well as fire safety in the residences.

I believe in property rights, but I also believe that the rights of neighbours must be respected. If elected, I will ask Council to consult with the people of McKellar, get the views of those who own rental properties and those who don't, and enact a licencing system that protects everyone's enjoyment of life as much as possible. This system could include the evaluation of septic system capacity and fire safety devices as required, annual fees that would cover the costs of additional bylaw officers, and a "three-strikes-you're-out" rule where rental property owners who are repeat offenders lose their licence to operate for a period of time.

A licencing system would treat short-term rentals similarly to commercial rental operators in McKellar who pay higher taxes, have liability insurance, operate under rigorous regulations, and compete for renters.

Other municipalities have successfully established similar systems for regulating short-term rentals, and I believe that we can create a system that is reasonable and equitable here in McKellar as well.

Roads and Financial Management

If elected, I would improve the financial management of the Township by ensuring that Council and staff perform their due diligence and that everyone understands the impact of new spending before commitments are made. We must avoid using debentures and the associated interest that will add to the Township's debt and increase our property taxes.

At the same time as we limit our debt, I believe Council and staff must maintain our roads and bridges at the level expected by taxpayers. Poor maintenance of our infrastructure will only lead to greater expenditures later. It is essential that the annual budgeting process is developed with the forecasted needs of our Asset Management Plan.

Lake Manitowabing Boat Launches

Last year, McKellar Township closed the main municipal boat launch on Lake Manitowabing with no public consultation. The public outcry resulted in the sudden departure of the CAO, the unexpected resignation of two councillors, and the subsequent reopening of the boat launch. Despite the controversy, nothing has been done over the past year to look at any issues that may be related to the boat launches. If elected, I will urge Council and staff to examine all municipal boat launches with the aim of ensuring that they continue to serve the community and are safe for everyone's use.

A Council Working Together for McKellar Taxpayers

Meet and Greet

5/...

A Council Working Together for McKellar Taxpayers

The Mayor and the Councillors work for the taxpayers of McKellar. They are elected as individuals to represent the community. Since voters can have a range of opinions on any given issue, all viewpoints should be considered at McKellar Council meetings. It is the responsibility of the Mayor to ensure discussions are informed, open-minded and productive.

I also believe that once Council discusses all viewpoints, members should work to reach a consensus. Council must always treat each other and the public with respect. They should also work in collaboration and avoid groupthink, which can lead to the polarization we see in party politics at the federal and provincial levels. Here in McKellar, we have the opportunity to elect people with a diverse range of backgrounds and opinions that would contribute to a more robust democratic process.

If elected, I would encourage clear and constant communication between Council, staff, and our citizens. I would recommend that Council return to twice-monthly meetings, with one of those meetings functioning as a Committee of the Whole, which would allow for more active exchanges between Council and the public.

Council and staff would benefit from hearing regular public input, and taxpayers would have more opportunities to have their voices heard while seeing their municipal government at work.

Meet and Greet

Since the end of July, I've had the good fortune to meet many taxpayers in the village on McKellar Market Saturdays and at the McKellar Fall Fair. My last opportunity to meet some of you at a community event will be the morning of the McKellar Thanksgiving Market on Saturday October 8.

In addition, from 11:30 – 3:00 that same day, there will be a Meet & Greet at the Hurdville Community Hall, where you will have the opportunity to meet many of the candidates for the upcoming election.

I hope to see you soon!

Answers to Ratepayers' Questions via MLCA

The Manitouwabing Lake Community Association (MLCA) was kind enough to solicit questions from our ratepayers and assemble them into categories. My answers to those questions are below.

- Building Size
- Dark Sky-Friendly Initiatives
- Team Approach
- Council Dysfunction
- Fireworks
- Lake Health
- McKellar Market
- Public Access to Lakes
- Sound System Improvements
- Short-Term Rentals
- Tax Increases
- Transparency and Communication
- Wellness Centre (Parry Sound Pool Project)

Building Size

The choice of building size is as individual as the people who build them. Building code and site planning regulations exist that stipulate certain aspects of new-build residences. I believe these are adequate.

Dark Sky-Friendly Initiatives

I am a firm believer in property rights. However, there are circumstances where the actions of a property owner can infringe or impair the rights or enjoyment of neighbouring property owners. This is the reason we establish bylaws. I would support any initiative to restrict the operation of artificial lighting that creates unnecessary or excessive light pollution.

Team Approach

I believe that the prescription for successful municipal governance is for individual taxpayers to vote independent candidates into office. It is then Council's responsibility to operate as I describe below.

Council Dysfunction

I don't believe it serves any good purpose to comment on the previous Council. If elected, I will use my leadership skills to ensure council functions at an optimal level: respectful, purposeful, and productive. I cannot speak for others who may be elected – taxpayers should expect all of us to come to the table informed on the issues, with an open-mind and an inclusive attitude.

If elected, I will work with anyone who is elected. I recognize there will be differing opinions and ideas, and I believe this is a critical part of the democratic process. I will listen to everyone with an open mind, including the other Council members, Township staff and ratepayers. It is my objective that the next Council will always work towards well-informed, sound and equitable decisions. Please click [HERE](#) to read my published platform on how Council should work together.

Fireworks

Yes, I would support a bylaw to ban all privately-initiated fireworks displays.

Lake Health

Personally, I've learned to reduce the manicured portion of my shoreline and lawn areas. I've planted more indigenous plants and trees and I've removed the boat launch railway system that was in place when I moved here. I hope to keep learning from our Lake Stewardship and Environmental Committee about other strategies to help preserve and improve the quality of our lakes.

Each level of government has their own defined responsibilities to protect the environment. McKellar Township must fulfill its role wherever possible, and I am committed to doing this at every opportunity.

McKellar Market

The McKellar Summer Market has just experienced another successful season. The location at Minerva Park offers the ability for visitors to drive, walk or boat to a scenic location. It is close to our retail activity and municipal docks. The Market has become an important part of the McKellar identity and it is my hope it will continue for many years. With the highway parking safety concerns addressed this summer, I see no reason to relocate the Market.

Public Access to Lakes

I am in full agreement that the Township has an obligation to maintain access to lakes within our jurisdiction. The planning, construction and maintenance of boat launches is a municipal responsibility. Each boat launch must be considered individually and the impact of the site selection, the design and surrounding properties are all elements that must be considered.

Sound System Improvements

I am committed to doing everything possible to improve the sound quality of our meetings. As Mayor, I would put forward a motion to address the failings of our current sound system with the following measures:

- Install acoustic panels on the walls of the Council Chamber.
- I would ask staff to establish a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the supply of microphones that are compatible with our equipment.
- Instruct the Town Clerk, the IT Consultant and the Audio-Visual Consultant to prepare a joint report on the potential remedies and a timeline to resolve the issues relating to the closed captioning, the transcript reports and the cause of intermittent service.

Short-Term Rentals

It is my opinion that a total ban on short-term rentals would not withstand a serious legal challenge. As previously mentioned, I believe in property rights so long as the actions or activities of that property owner, or guests, do not intrude or limit enjoyment of neighboring properties. There is an existing committee dealing with this issue, and I am hopeful they will deliver a report with recommendations that Council can consider. I personally believe a licensing system provides an equitable solution for those on either side of this issue. Please click [HERE](#) to read my published platform on short-term rentals.

Tax Increases

Council is responsible for overseeing the financial activity of the Township. To that end, Council must work closely with staff to ensure the annual budget addresses the needs of the Asset Management Plan. Council should also ensure reserves are established and maintained to deal with the deviations caused by unexpected events. Budget items should be scrutinized and examined to ensure

that the expenditures represent fair market value and are prioritized to reflect current and future requirements.

Transparency and Communication

If elected, I would propose that Council meetings be held twice monthly. I would like one of those meetings to be a Committee of the Whole, which allows for more interaction between Council and the public. I would propose that the Township website could be more interactive and provide a quicker response from Council members to questions from the public. I would also expect Council to adhere to the strict application of the Municipal Act which dictates that virtually all Council business must be conducted in public. However, the public should be aware there are specific instances outlined in the Act regarding which Council business should be discussed privately.

Wellness Centre (Parry Sound Pool Project)

My platform clearly states that I do not support this project. I don't support it because of the unknown, and likely high, costs to build it. Aside from two swimming pools, the complex would include a gymnasium, an indoor running track, meeting rooms, workout areas, etc. Meanwhile, there are existing facilities in Parry Sound that are under-utilized because of a lack of programming:

- The Bobby Orr Community Centre has a hall and meeting rooms that are rarely used. From April to September, when the ice surface is removed, the Centre's floor is under-utilized.
- The existing YMCA building also lacks programming to attract the wide range of community members who might actually use the facility.
- The Stockey Centre presents opportunities for more community engagement.
- Kinsmen Centennial Park, with its beautiful baseball and soccer fields, ice rink and children's playground area, is also under-utilized.

If these facilities are not being fully used, why are we building more? Please click [HERE](#) to read my published platform on this project.

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If anyone has any other questions they would like me to answer, please click [HERE](#) or email me at info@michel4mckellar.com.

Testimonials
Michel Richard's Background
10/...

Testimonials

As one of my directors when I was CAO at the University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus, Michel Richard managed major projects at U of T during a time of expansion, while still respecting the financial restraints we were all facing. It didn't matter how complex the project was, he completed the task on time and on budget. **Kim McLean, CAO of the Faculty of Arts & Science, University of Toronto**

It was an honour and a great pleasure to work with Mike. He built a new team of young professionals who, under his leadership, were responsible for executing complex projects with tight timelines. Upon Mike's retirement, I was confident in my abilities leading the team forward due to his mentorship!

Ryan D'Souza, Project Manager

Michel Richard has a proven track record in completing multiple simultaneous projects by listening to his clients. He was skilled at getting large groups of people to come together and deliver exactly what was needed.

Jim Derenzis, Director of Facilities Management, U of T Scarborough Campus (retired)

Michel Richard's Background

I came to McKellar as a cottager 12 years ago and settled here permanently after retirement. I've always cared about my community no matter where I live, and McKellar is no exception.

Before moving here, I lived and raised a family in the rural town of Brooklin, Ontario, for more than 25 years. My home was a four-acre property with a well and a septic system. Our children took 45-minute bus rides every day to get to school. I have years of experience with rural living.

I believe in rolling up my sleeves and getting involved. Among other things, I've helped raise funds weekly for local charities by volunteering at the bingo game. I was also active in the Knights of Columbus and helped at our children's school in

any way I could. My involvement in politics included acting as a local campaign co-ordinator for the late Conservative Jim Flaherty.

Most of my working career was in construction, both as a business owner and as a project leader. I worked collaboratively with colleagues, suppliers, clients, staff, teachers, and researchers. I built strong, effective relationships to ensure all projects came in on budget and met specific needs. The work was challenging, exciting, and very rewarding.

Taken together, I understand the realities of rural living – both the pleasures and the hardships. I also understand that good leadership means listening to people and then taking the right action. McKellar is facing difficult challenges, and we need leadership that can bring our community together, meet those challenges decisively, and ensure that we can continue to enjoy the wonderful life we have here.

I believe I have both the experience and the leadership skills to take on the job as your Mayor, and I hope I can count on your vote.

Partial Work History

- General Manager, Village Construction Services Inc.
- Plant Manager, Toronto Curtainwall Division, H.H. Robertson Inc.
- Director, Facilities Management, University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus
- Director, Design & Construction Department, University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus

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For updated information about my campaign, please visit my website at www.michel4mckellar.com/campaign-updates.

If you have any questions, please click [HERE](#) to send me an email or write me at info@michel4mckellar.com and I will be happy to answer.

Voting is a right that I encourage every taxpayer of McKellar to exercise. Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope I can count on your support.