

Trevor Chaulk-Candidate for Councillor at Large Minden Hills

Hello, my name is Trevor Chaulk and I have been a local resident for 17 years. I have started and grown a successful cabinetry company in Minden and have a great deal of business, financial, and human resources experience. I have a passion for the area as my wife and I have three boys we are raising in our community. Over the years I have met with many people from all walks of life in our area and discussed the good and bad of things that are happening around us locally. I have also served on the board at our local chamber of commerce and involved in many areas of fundraising and charitable work. I enjoy working with our community and solving problems with lasting solutions.

Here is a summary of some of our key concerns in the township of Minden Hills and the County of Haliburton.

There have been many issues that have been talked about during past election campaigns and we have seen very little come to light for the community members of Minden Hills Township to thrive from. There has been stagnant to little growth in our area to support the demand we are now facing with the steady surge of new residents during the covid period: Moving forward this population growth will continue over the next 5-10 years.

More so, we have noticed a steady decline in our local workforce. There are approximately 2000 businesses in Haliburton County and there are approximately 2-4 workers per business, many of which within the current workforce are between the ages of 54-63. This means if we think we have problems now, in the next 5-10 years, we will be in dire straights if we cannot attract and retain a workforce over many sectors that is required to service our area. We need to create an Industrial Park and allow for zoning for light to medium industry-FAST. Remember-everyone is competing for these workers, both at the civilian and government levels!

This leads us to discuss some of the key issues that are preventing our community from thriving. With the ever-rising costs during/after the pandemic, many people are struggling to make ends meet. Our area, has and is, fighting for the top spot for highest poverty in Ontario. We just cannot afford to be a seasonal area to the extent that it has been. If we are to attract a local year-round workforce (and Businesses) not just seasonal employment, there needs to be somewhere to live. In many cases, this starts with renting or purchasing something affordable and having affordable and accessible options for daycare in order to work. But how do we do this? We need to allow multi residential 2-6 unit buildings, apartments in homes-AND fast track the process (providing they are following all codes/laws). Not just focusing on large scale buildings that take too long to come to fruition. We need to implement transportation options, such as LYFT or daily shuttles. We need to fund and create accessibility for skills training-which helps combat poverty.

There is also the elephant in the room regarding "us vs. them" mindsets.... We have a large tax base coming from our lakefront residents, but there needs to be a balance of services relating to the diverse needs of seasonal vs permanent residents. How do we create a balance and mutual respect for all? How does our township support the residents regarding the roads that are falling apart in some areas? How do we maintain heritage while adding some modern amenities ie shopping/restaurants/entertainment etc., for those that desire to participate in while contributing to our local economy after 6:00 p.m ? How do we talk about amalgamation at a time when a great deal of items that have not been addressed or need to be addressed within our own townships? These are critical topics we need action and accountability to serve with balance and respect!

Another genuinely concerning issue is our seniors struggling to get the services they need on a day-to-day basis in order to maintain safety and independence. This includes, transportation, daily medical care/support, social activities, basic handywork done on their properties. We as a community need to step up and improve these services as many of our seniors only survive from their pensions and/or supports. They have no help in many cases and are unaware of where to go or who to talk to for help! We need to do better for our senior community members who have gone before us!

Shoreline, Shoreline, Shoreline! Well, this has been quite controversial, hasn't it? After almost 5 years in the process and many \$\$\$ spent with discussions both public and private, we now have a draft that has been approved. After reviewing this draft, which is scheduled to rollout over the next year or so, there are many gaps regarding clarity and interpretations are open to perception. I strongly believe we need to maintain and preserve our lakes and waterways, which keep our ecosystem vibrant and working the way nature intended. However, the County has proposed to hire bylaw enforcement officers, but remember we have not been able to find a local Planner and many other positions within each Township and County levels). Currently, a great deal of authority is placed on the Directors discretion (not clearly outlined who the "Director" is), as long as the Director feels the intent to follow the purpose is met. This can include discretions on economic, social and environmental well-being of the county. I hope this does not mean that money can sway approval of permits or allowances (economic discretion). Currently, security deposits may be required at the directors discretion to a max of the dollar work being performed, with no interest payable for the time it is held (this costs the homeowner much more to perform the work). And last but not least, the Townships or County levels of government can perform emergency or repair work without a permit, which they should, provided that the intent of purpose of the bylaw is being met – BUT with no inspection processes outlined in the draft or inspections performed to hold ALL accountable.