



CHATHAM-KENT
CHAMBER *of*
COMMERCE

August 14, 2026

Dear Candidates,

On behalf of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce, thank you for putting your name forward for municipal office.

Running for public office requires time, energy, courage and a genuine commitment to community. Regardless of background, experience or perspective, every candidate who steps forward contributes to the democratic process and helps shape the conversation about Chatham-Kent's future.

As we move toward the close of nominations and the official campaign period, the Chamber wants to introduce its planned municipal election engagement program and outline what candidates can expect from us in the weeks ahead.

This first communication is being sent one week before nominations close so candidates receive the same information early and can get a head start on what to expect from the Chamber. All candidates will receive the same information; candidates who file closer to the nomination deadline will be provided the same materials so the process remains fair and consistent.

The Chamber's role in this election will be non-partisan, evidence-based and focused on solutions. We will not endorse candidates, rank candidates or campaign for or against anyone. Our purpose is to help elevate the election conversation so candidates, members, media and residents can focus on issues, practical leadership, accountability and the conditions required for long-term community prosperity.

Our election engagement will be built around the theme:

"CHANGE is just a slogan? Leadership is the work."

This theme is not a criticism of any candidate or current member of Council. It is an invitation to all candidates to move beyond campaign language and explain how their priorities would work in practice. When candidates speak about change, voters and businesses benefit from understanding what would change, who has the authority, what tool would be used, what it would cost, what trade-offs are required and how success would be measured.

In the coming weeks, candidates can expect a short series of communications from the Chamber, beginning with:

1

Why "CHANGE is just a slogan?"

A brief explanation of the Chamber's election theme and why leadership requires more than a campaign message.

2	What Is a Chamber of Commerce? An introduction to who the Chamber represents, why we engage in public policy and how our role differs from partisan politics.
3	Elect Respect and the Standard for Public Dialogue A reminder that strong democracy requires respectful disagreement, fact-based debate, safe participation and a focus on ideas, policies and outcomes.

Following those introductory pieces, the Chamber will share additional information on municipal leadership, business and community priorities, infrastructure, government financing, investment readiness, technology, prosperity creation and quality of life.

The Chamber will also be surveying member businesses and not-for-profit organizations to better understand their municipal priorities. That survey will help identify the qualities, issues and practical actions members believe should guide the next term of Council.

Once the survey data is collected and summarized, the Chamber will host three regional candidate information sessions across Chatham-Kent. These sessions will not be campaign debates or platforms for campaign speeches. They will be Chamber-led briefings designed to help candidates hear directly from the business, employer, not-for-profit, agriculture and agribusiness community.

The purpose of these sessions will be to:

- debrief candidates on the survey findings;
- communicate the main election priorities identified by Chamber members;
- explain the issues affecting local employers, entrepreneurs, not-for-profits, agriculture and agribusiness;
- outline the business community's expectations for practical, accountable municipal leadership;
- give candidates the opportunity to listen, learn and ask clarifying questions.

The Chamber believes candidates are best served when they have access to clear, practical information about what matters to the people and organizations that build businesses, employ residents, serve communities, attract investment and contribute to Chatham-Kent's quality of life.

Our intention is collaborative, not confrontational. We want every candidate to have the same opportunity to understand the Chamber's perspective and the priorities of our members before Election Day. We also want to work constructively with whoever is elected.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve and for putting community first. We look forward to a respectful, informative and constructive election conversation.

Sincerely,



Rory Ring
President & CEO
Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce