



Adam A. Donaldson @adamadonaldson

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Coming to you live from Mike Schreiner's town hall at Royal City Mission, which will start at 7 pm. There are still some seats here if you're interested in seeing it live.



It's five minutes after the start time, and I think we're waiting to see if a few more people might join us.



Mike has landed to we're going to get started.

There are about 20 people here in all. Schreiner thanks everyone for coming out, and notes that MPPs had 20 weeks off in the summer. He did a listening campaign about people's concerns, and with the Legislature coming back next week, we're here tonight!

Schriener says he hears housing (a lot) plus healthcare and education. Increasingly though, he's hearing concern about whether our infrastructure is ready to deal with climate change-

induced storms and whether we've got the right protections in place.

First question is about GO service, not enough options to get to Kitchener. Schreiner says he's pushing hard for #2WADGO, every since his first election in 2014. Still nothing and it's very challenging. He knows Metrolinx is trying to buy more tracks, but...

...they should in the mean time add trains, especially on the weekend. Or else, at least add a direct bus line. He's been pushing for GO bus service to KW, Cambridge and Hamilton, and has talked to CC, UofG, WLU and UofW, who's biggest barrier to collab. is more transit.

Question #2: What's the deal with Guelph hospitals? Schreiner says "hallway medicine" is a huge issue and it's everywhere. We're not in the same pit as other hospital, some in rural areas, that are taking out lines of credit to stay open, but most are critical and backed by OMA.

Also, 2.5 mn people who don't have family doctor, and w/o preventative care = more pressure on hospital. Barriers to ppl seeking mental health/addictions, long wait for long-term care, which also puts pressure.

Having said that GGH was built for 70k, we're at 140k so new hospital is inevitable. We've got phase 1 right now to what Guelph's hospital needs are going to be, and once that done, they'll look at land acquisition. Timeline, that's about 10 years in waiting.

Schreiner says the expansions at GGH are bandaids, hopes for ER groundbreaking later this year, and that will hopefully expand the capacity for urgent care. He's also pushing for additional diagnostics in other locations, but at end of day, GGH are working very hard.

Question #3: We're losing family-sized bungalows for McMansions, can we stop the flipping? Schreiner says he's frustrated with the hold-up on his bill to allow 4 units as of right. Knows realtors want to build that affordable density and to protect heritage character of old homes.

Schreiner also says that he hears about seniors in big family homes that have no where to downsize to, so he wants to make it easier to get co-housing going. We need to get people past fear that a 4plex is going to change the character of a neighbourhood.

Schreiner says that the ONgov knows that they're vulnerable on housing, which is why they're talking about tunnels, banning bike lanes and \$200 cheques now.

Question #4: The Community Living sector is in crisis, only a 7% increase in funding in 30 years, they've had \$3 mn deficit the last two years, have cut everywhere they can, and 900 people might lose services if Community Living goes away...

...so the question is what can Schreiner do to get action from the ONgov, and how can we as a community push too?

Schreiner says he feels for everyone that struggling to hold on to these services, and he's talked to one woman who's struggling to get services for her adult son. There's a deeper crisis of caring in Ontario right now, and that affects the most vulnerable in our community.

Schreiner says we're spending money on bandaids like police and emergency rooms, and if we spent money on compassion, we would save money. He's trying to corner the minister to have a convo about this, and while he believes the minister cares, he's not sure the premier does.

The government is only going to move if the people demand it, Schreiner says. What does it say about a society if you can't care about your most vulnerable citizens. Anything we can do to engage and mobilise the public.

Question #5: There's waitlists for every service in home care, but what will the ONgov do to retain nurses? Schreiner says the lowest cost is to help people within their community, but the easiest way to retain staff is better wages, benefits and working conditions. Blame Bill 124

Luckily, that Bill is gone and cost \$4.3 bn in the process. It's another example of ONgov spending money in ways that don't make sense, and the dire financials for hospitals is, in part, b/c the bill from 124 has come due. Also, we need wage parity across discipline.

Schreiner adds that a lot of institutions are hiring private care nurses at higher prices, which is good for the nurses with hire pay, but most would probably want the stability of their old jobs with better pay. Also, consistency=better patient care.

He's going to keep pushing the government to invest in health Human Resources.

Question #6: Guelph is a very rich city but the homeless problem seems to be getting worse every day. How can we address affordability gaps? Schreiner says this is the most important issue we're facing and homelessness crisis is a true tragedy and not just urban.

Schreiner: 93% of deeply affordable housing was built before 1995, which is when the upper levels of gov't got out of the game. Trying to do things like 4plexes and other things for the market, but we will not solve the crisis until we get more non-profit housing built.

Scotiabank said that we need 250k deeply affordable housing units the next decade to address the crisis, but when he raises this in the Leg. Ford calls him a socialist. Schreiner says that he doesn't believe Scotiabank is run by socialists.

In Guelph, we've built several new housing projects with collaboration between non-profits, the City, ONgov, Feds, and private developers. Is it enough? No. Schreiner says that we're further ahead than other communities despite the gaps.

Schreiner says there's no city in ONT where someone working full-time at min. wage can afford the average monthly rent. That's why we have to address the problem across the whole market spectrum, and work together.

Schreiner says he gets why downtown biz. owners are frustrated, but don't blame the community, blame the ONgov for falling short on housing.

Question #7: How do we balance community safety and trying to help destigmatize people? Schreiner says that's why it comes back to building homes for people, it would help prevent people from spiralling, homelessness turns into substance abuse and mental health issues.

Schreiner says he's talking to Guelph Fire who's responding to concerns about fires at camps several times a day, how much is that costing versus just housing people?! He's talking to the County about shelter for people with pets, and he's cautiously optimistic about future plans

But at the end of the day, all that's a band aid until people have homes they can afford, and that's what he's going to keep pushing for. Talk about closing CTS and involuntary care is tricky b/c we don't have enough services for people who *want* care.

The whole community has a declining quality of life, but at the same time the more we help our neighbours, the more we help ourselves.

Question #8: Stepping Stone has a facility on Highway #6 where there's no transit access, and they have to walk down busy highway. Schreiner understands the issue and he's talking to St. Stone about that. Also wants ONgov to carry weight on municipal transit.

Question #9: Thoughts on Urban Park at OR Lands. Schreiner says to thanks to everyone pushing for that, the community needs more park space. So why hasn't he endorsed? It's because we don't know where they'll look for hospital land acquisition. Doesn't want to take anything off.

...He doesn't want to send message to the ONgov that Guelph is taking big swaths of land of the conversation, and there are a lot of conditions that land will have to meet. He's been assured that it will be a public process.

On the OR Lands themselves, Schreiner says he's dedicated to the idea that this is public land and should be used for the public, need to max. the park space there period, and preserve the Indigenous art in the buildings.

As soon as this site is out of contention for a hospital land acquisition process, he will happily endorse national urban park proposal. Wants a "yes and" proposition.

Question #10: Yorklands Hub rep asks about timeline for that selection process. Schreiner says he doesn't know, but if the hospital had their way it would be ASAP, the sooner they can make those determinations, the quicker we get a new facility. Minister Jones toured GGH in June.

Schreiner says that he thinks they made a strong case to Jones, but it's still 🤝 when we will move on to next step.

Last question: What do you think of prediction that we will need 75% more energy by 2050? Schreiner says the lowest hanging fruit for climate action is transportation and heat, which means more electricity generation. Less enthused about AI energy needs though.

Where will electricity come from? Schreiner's worried it means more gas plants, 700% increase in pollution with ONgov's current plan which nukes progress post-coal's end. Lowest cost energy generation is solar, and more investment than gas now.

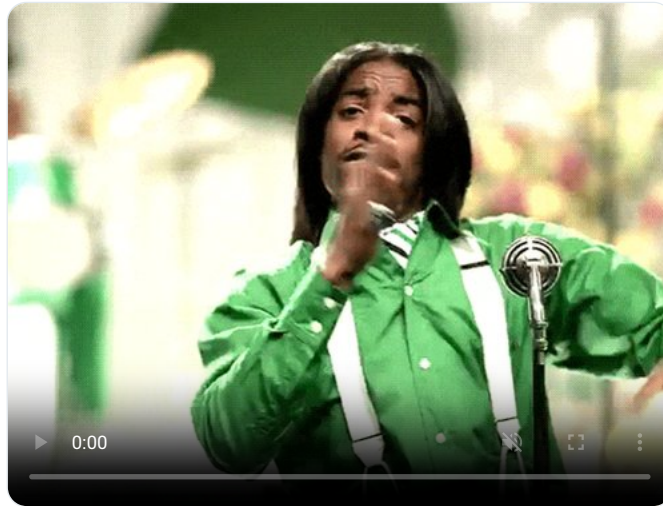
Wind, solar, storage and water. Schreiner adds that we should hold on to current nuclear reactors, but not build anymore. But it's a huge conversation, and in addition to supply, we also have to use energy more efficiently too.

Schreiner thanks everyone more coming out, and say he appreciates the opportunity to hear directly from voters. He's more motivated in working for constituents than party politics.

He knows that there's people here who are advocates for various causes, and he thanks them. Guelph is a better community for their advocacy and it's why he's so honoured to represent Guelph at Queen's Park.

He adds that his staff's work to help people is also very valuable. They don't always succeed, but they always try and they have a pretty good track record. Schreiner says he and his team

are here to serve and they're always trying to do better. His door is always open.
That's a wrap from Royal City Mission!



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