

REPORT ON 2025 PROVINCIAL ELECTION TOWN HALL FEATURING CANDIDATES FOR
THE RIDING OF HAMILTON MOUNTAIN

Presented by Concession Street Business Improvement Association
Sunday, February 23, 2025 at 2:00 PM
At Dirty South Town Hall Social Eatery
581 Concession Street, Hamilton

Background

Although attempts were made to invite all candidates, some were not reachable due to lack of contact information publicly available. These were Ejaz Butt, Independent, Dan Preston, None of the Above Democracy Party, and Layla Marie-Angela Protopapa, New Blue Party. Although contact information was found for Monica Ciriello of the Progressive Conservative Party, there was no response to the invitation.

Green Party candidate Joshua Czerniga had confirmed attendance but canceled due to unforeseen circumstances.

Candidates in attendance:

Dawn Danko, Liberal Party of Ontario
Kojo Dampsey, Ontario New Democratic Party
Bing Wong, Ontario Party

Preliminaries

Coffee served by Incline Coffee was offered by way of free tickets provided by the BIA. There were also free baked goods on offer.

At 2:09 PM, the meeting commenced with introductory remarks by Eva Martens, Chair of the Concession Street BIA.

At 2:14 PM, the meeting was handed over to moderator, Janna Goodyear, BIA Director.

The meeting was structured for the candidates to answer five prepared questions. There was no open question and answer forum afterwards; however, attendees were encouraged to discuss further issues with the candidates one-on-one.

The meeting was video-recorded and fed live on Facebook. The video recording remains on Facebook where, at this writing, it has generated 198 views. Video services were provided by Suzanne Zandbergen of The Generator.

Candidates introduced themselves and the meeting proceeded to the prepared questions as follows:

Question 1: How do the candidates expect to aid small businesses in view of recent tariffs levied upon Canadian goods by the United States and possible retaliatory tariffs by Canada, as well as increasing costs.

Liberal:

Cut small business taxes. Break down interprovincial trade barrier

OP:

Do not engage in reciprocal tariffs; avoid a tariff war.

NDP:

Localize markets. Take necessary means to facilitate interprovincial trade.

Question 2: What can the candidates do to deal with rising commercial and residential rents?

Liberal:

Provide no-interest loans for persons having difficulty meeting a month's rent.

Reduce the amount of time to get to Landlord-Tenant tribunals and adjudicating disputes.

OP:

Deregulate. Currently, landlords are incentivized to sit on properties with vacancies.

NDP:

Institute rent caps.

Question 3: How can small businesses be represented at Queen's Park?

Liberal:

Consult locally with small business [as a group] and take concerns to the legislature

OP:

Shrink government

NDP:

Unify all businesses as a group, find concerns shared by all, so the MLA can take these to Queen's Park. Also involve all MPPs in the city, as well as municipal councillors.

Question 4: How do the candidates propose dealing with the rising cost of living

Liberal:

Institute a middle income tax cut.

Provide a tax credit for low income workers.

Remove HST from utilities.

Reduce the costs of new builds.

Remove Land Transfer Tax for first time homebuyers.

OP:

Reduction of PST by 3%. [Presumably, meaning the provincial portion of the Harmonized Goods and Services tax.]

Reduce taxes.

Mr. Wong is actually a member of the federal Peoples Party of Canada and is running in this provincial election under the banner of the Ontario Party and he honestly stated during this question that he was entirely familiar with the OP's platform.

NDP:

Provide a decent living wage for workers.

Speed up municipal processes and promote efficiency.

Question 5: What would candidates do to promote safety and security and deal with homelessness?

Liberal:

Security and crime has been a major concern of people met in door-to-door visits.

Increase supports around mental health and addiction

Liberal Party does not encourage or support encampments

Double the ODSP

Provide some kind of subsidy (such as a tax credit) for security equipment

Support a robust provincial police service (to deal with such things as transport of illegal weapons).

OP:

Shrink government.

Provide better options for people.

Support self-defense by loosening up gun laws.

NDP:

Mr. Dampney was co-chair of the 2021 City of Hamilton Safety Committee. At that time, they requested support from the City and the Province to no avail; however, they did secure federal funding for youth at risk.

Promote crime prevention.

2:42 PM: Doris Sanchez, Concession BIA Executive Director closed the question period and the meeting broke up into informal private conversation.

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