

Hesham Genidy

## Statement of Qualifications – Ward 6 Council Appointment

The City of Guelph • July 2025

Submitted respectfully to His Worship Cam Guthrie, Mayor of Guelph and the Members of the Guelph City Council

### 1. Opening Appreciation & Purpose

Your Worship Mayor Cam Guthrie and Honourable Members of Council, thank you for the remarkable work you do every week on behalf of all Guelphites. I begin by congratulating former Ward 6 Councillor **Dominique O'Rourke** on her election to Parliament and by recognizing Councillor **Ken Yee Chew** for stewarding south-end matters single-handedly these past weeks. Councillor O'Rourke leaves big shoes to fill; it is with humility — and unreserved enthusiasm — that I offer myself to fill them.

My family chose Guelph's south end in 2013 for its alignment with our values and its promise as a place to raise children and build a business. I now seek an appointment as Ward 6 Councillor so I may give back to the community that has given so much to us. I am ready to serve immediately, collaborate openly, and—importantly—to contest the seat in 2026 so Ward 6 enjoys consistent, long-term representation.

### 2. Deep Roots & Long-Term Commitment in Ward 6

- **Resident and Neighbour:** I live on the border of Ward 5 and Ward 6 and spend most of my days in my office near Gordon and Clair in Ward 6. My children have attended local public schools, and Saturday mornings often begin at the farmers' market and end with volunteer math tutoring for youth.
  - **Active Volunteer:** Through shifts at the winter shelter, I have learned that the best ideas rarely start at a podium—they often begin on a porch. Those porch conversations shape how I see Ward 6: a community that values safety, green space, and a fair shot at a first home.
  - **Here for the Long Haul:** Ward 6 has seen rapid turnover in recent years. I commit today to running in 2026 so projects such as the South End Community Centre, the Clair–Gordon transit hub, and multi-year road upgrades have a shepherd beyond a single budget cycle.
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### 3. Professional Qualifications — Ready on Day One

**Core Skill**

**Evidence**

**Benefit to Council**

**Municipal & Public-Law Expertise**

Law Professor & researcher in municipal/public administration law; licensed Lawyer in 3 jurisdictions, including New York and (pending articling) Ontario.

Fluent in the Municipal Act, planning law, procedure, and ethics — **no learning curve**. Ability to immediately contribute to complex by-law reviews, Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) matters, and the interpretation of new provincial legislation like the Municipal Accountability Act and Strong-Mayor regulations. This reduces the learning curve for the entire council body and can potentially reduce reliance on external legal counsel, saving valuable staff time and taxpayer dollars.

**Board & governance leadership**

15 years chairing non-profit and corporate boards; modernized bylaws, meeting rules, and strategic plans

Proven ability to move motions, build consensus, and respect procedural fairness

**Financial & entrepreneurial acumen**

Founder of a business advisory firm; managed multi-million-dollar project budgets; secured government and private grants

Rigorous budget scrutiny, value-for-money focus, and red-tape reduction for local businesses

**Innovative mindset**

Led blockchain pilots for public procurement and supply-chain audits

Fresh tools to boost transparency and reduce administrative costs without sacrificing accountability. This aligns directly with the Future Guelph Strategic Plan's objective 5.1 to 'Improve customer service through the Service Simplified Strategy' and objective 3.4 to 'Foster a culture of continuous improvement' by exploring new technologies for service delivery.

Add to this the simplest qualification of all: **I already read every Council agenda** and know the Future Guelph 2024–2027 Strategic Plan inside-out. City building is not homework for me—it is a passion.

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#### 4. Governance Approach under a Strong-Mayor Framework

Provincial reforms now grant Guelph a **strong-mayor model**, empowering the mayor to advance priorities such as our pledge to facilitate **18 000 new homes by 2031**. I fully support leveraging those tools while safeguarding the Council's tradition of collaboration. My approach is:

- **Evidence-based debate, unwavering respect.** “Strong opinions, loosely held.”
- **Partnership with all members.** I will work closely with Mayor Guthrie, Councillor Chew, and every Councillor so that policies earn broad buy-in and withstand public scrutiny.
- **Transparent decision-making.** I will publish plain-language ward reports after each meeting, demystifying Council actions for residents.

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#### 5. Key Focus - Housing Affordability & Ending Homelessness

A 2024 needs assessment identified a deficit of 8,202 affordable units in Guelph. Meeting Objective 6.1 of our Strategic Plan—“Meet our housing pledge”—requires urgency and discipline. If appointed, I will collaboratively work on:

1. **Unlock Missing-Middle Housing.** Ensure the new zoning by-law makes fourplexes, coach houses, and walk-ups truly as-of-right.
2. **Fast-track Non-Profit & Supportive Projects.** Create a concierge team inside City Hall so that carrying costs do not kill projects like 65 Delhi before breaking ground.
3. **Pilot a Serviced Tiny-Home Community.** Partner with local agencies to provide a dignified bridge from the street to permanent housing, aligning with Mayor Guthrie's stated priority.
4. **Inclusionary Zoning & Housing Fund.** Require developments of 10+ units to include 15-20% permanently affordable homes or contribute to a ring-fenced Affordable Housing Fund.
5. **Built-for & Housing-First Mandate.** Built-for-Zero Partnership. I will secure City staff, data-sharing protocols, and targeted funds to bolster the County of Wellington's real-time By-Name List and weekly case-conferences. This alignment

will equip outreach teams with up-to-date information, accelerate housing matches, and move Guelph–Wellington toward functional-zero homelessness.

## 6. Learning from the Best: Adapting for Guelph

- **Vienna:** Treat housing as an essential infrastructure by seeding a municipal housing corporation that builds and acquires mixed-income rentals.
- **Minneapolis:** End exclusionary zoning to let gentle density blossom.
- **Finland:** Pair rapid access to homes with voluntary wrap-around supports, cutting both human harm and public costs.

Guelph does not need to reinvent the wheel; we need to pick the wheels that roll on our terrain and get moving.

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## 7. Snapshot of Additional Priorities

- **Reliable Transit:** Pilot on-demand micro-transit linking Clair–Gordon nodes to high-frequency routes.
- **Infrastructure Renewal:** Deploy a modern asset-management dashboard to triage the \$2 billion renewal gap.
- **Climate Action:** Launch *Guelph Greener Homes* retrofit grants (including heat pumps and insulation) to reduce residential greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Snow Equity:** Publish a “snow-clearing heat map” to ensure parity across new subdivisions.
- **Youth & Seniors:** Expand programming at the South End Community Centre and explore property tax deferral options for fixed-income seniors.

Each file will receive deeper discussion at the Committee, but this snapshot reflects my habit: **define the problem, bring a proven tool, and measure the results.**

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## 8. Integrity & Accountability Commitment

The forthcoming Municipal Accountability Act, 2025, will strengthen codes of conduct and integrity commissioner powers. As a legal professional, I welcome these reforms. I pledge to:

- Adhere strictly to Guelph’s Council Code of Conduct and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
- Maintain a fully transparent disclosure of interests and recuse myself where required.

- Foster a safe and respectful workplace for the Council, staff, and the public.
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## 9. Vision & Dedication Beyond 2025

I offer Council—not a placeholder—but a partner invested in Guelph’s next decade; major files on this table today will outlast the current term:

- Delivering the **South End Community Centre** on budget and on schedule.
- Securing sustained provincial and federal funding for growth-related infrastructure.
- Meeting our 2050 net-zero target through built-form and transit changes decided now.

I plan to be here for every vote and every neighbourhood coffee chat along the way, and I will earn residents’ endorsement in 2026 by demonstrating the transparency and hard work I will show between now and then.

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## 10. Closing Call-to-Action

Guelph Council faces a choice: appoint a councillor who can **learn the ropes** or one who can **hold them** from the first meeting. My legal fluency, governance record, entrepreneurial mindset, tech innovation, and deep Ward 6 roots position me to join you seamlessly and make an immediate difference. Just as important, my mindset is collaborative, curious, and anchored in integrity.

**If honoured with your confidence, I will:**

1. **Be ready for the August Committee cycle** without missing a beat.
2. **Report to Ward 6 residents monthly**—in plain language—on decisions made.
3. **Work with every Councillor and with staff** to advance our shared strategic plan.

I am eager to roll up my sleeves and serve alongside you. Thank you for considering my application and for the trust you place in all who aspire to public service in this extraordinary city.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Hesham Genidy

Ward 6 Candidate for Council Appointment