

Michael Keegan
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City of Guelph
1 Carden Street
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 3A1

July 2, 2025

Dear City Councillors,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the vacant Ward 6 City Council seat.

With over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, I have gained a deep understanding of the legislative, administrative, and community engagement functions essential to effective municipal governance. Throughout my career, I have collaborated with elected officials and civil service leaders at all levels, contributing to initiatives that have delivered substantial long-term benefits to businesses, organizations, charities, and our broader community. I am adept at working with a political team with purpose, working together for outcomes in service to a bigger picture set of outcomes for broad public benefit.

My previous role as Chief of Staff to the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food has equipped me with the skills to navigate complex decision-making processes, engage with diverse stakeholders, and harmonize the distinct needs of constituents with the strategic objectives of government.

As President of Michael Keegan & Associates, I have focused on fostering strategic leadership and collaboration within public policy—an approach that aligns seamlessly with the Council's responsibilities to represent the public, develop municipal policies, and uphold accountability and transparency in operations.

I am deeply passionate about our community's well-being and committed to understanding the diverse challenges affecting our residents. I firmly believe that our collective future prosperity requires active participation from all community members, myself included.

During the pandemic, I intensified my efforts to elevate local governance, leveraging my extensive networks across the business community, public sector institutions, and not-for-profit organizations. As the volunteer Chair of the Guelph Chamber of Commerce Advocacy Committee, I provided insights and guidance to the business community, advocating for critical initiatives focused on homelessness, mental health, addiction strategies, and accelerating housing development. My ongoing collaboration with organizations like the Community Health Centre and Guelph General Hospital reflects my commitment to addressing these pressing issues.

Professionally, I have partnered with the City of Guelph on innovative initiatives such as the Circular Economy for Food and an extensive Food Hub study, which aim to enhance sustainability and drive local economic growth. Additionally, I successfully supported 10 Shelldale in securing operational funding for its new supportive housing project and collaborated with the Downtown Guelph Business Association to reshape its relationship with the City and refine its governance structure.

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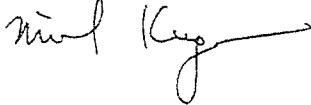
I believe my extensive background in public policy and politics, combined with my dedication to our community, positions me well to make effective contributions to the future of Guelph and to represent the interests of Ward 6 residents effectively.

Key areas where I can contribute as a Councillor include:

1. Policy Development - I look forward to collaborating with fellow Council members to create and assess policies that manage Guelph's resources effectively, promoting both social well-being and economic growth.
2. Constituent Representation - I am dedicated and experienced in representing the perspectives of constituents, actively listening to concerns, and advocating for policies that reflect public needs.
3. Accountability and Transparency - Upholding the integrity of municipal operations is vital. My governance experience will support ongoing program and spending reviews to contribute to responsible and effective allocation of funds.
4. Land-Use Planning - I am aware of the need for careful land-use planning that balances economic growth with environmental sustainability and look forward to addressing these challenges through informed decision-making.
5. Community Engagement - Building strong relationships with local boards, commissions, residents and stakeholders is essential for tackling concerns, and I am committed to maintaining open communication with all.

Thank you for considering my application. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring my skills and experiences to the City Council of Guelph, working collaboratively to enhance our community's quality of life. Together, we can support the city's continuous improvement and ensure a thriving future for all residents.

Sincerely,



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CAREER SUMMARY

Private Sector Experience

Michael Keegan & Associates (MK&A)

President

2014 – Present

MK&A is an innovative business venture that set out to fill the gaps in strategic leadership, strategy and collaboration in public policy. The primary focus has been on organizational change, leadership development and support; business development and economic growth including, supply chain/business model innovation and relationship innovation, strategic growth and business re-alignment, strategy development and execution, policy development and implementation; and, public policy advocacy built around understanding the inherent public policy risks and opportunities inherent in industries critical to the well-being of people, economies and the environment. Clients have included small, medium and large companies; municipalities; sector organizations; public sector ministries and crown corporations.

Public Sector Experience

Progressive positions with the provincial and federal civil service moving through a number of management positions including acting Director, Rural Community Development and acting ADM Economic Development Division and Policy Division roles. Roles included policy, economic development, governance and accountability for crown agencies, federal-provincial-territorial and trade relationships. I developed a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, professional expectations and core competencies of skilled public servants.

Government of Ontario

2006-2011

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

1. Manager, Intergovernmental Relations and Trade, Strategic Policy
2. Manager, Program and Issues Coordination, Rural Community Development
3. Manager, Agriculture Development Policy, Economic Policy
4. Manager, Governance and Accountability, Farm Finance
5. Senior Policy Advisor, Farm Finance

Government of Canada

2010

Manager, Program Policy and Development, FedDev Ontario

(Industry Canada)

Political Sector Experience

Government of Ontario

2011-2014

Chief of Staff and Special Advisor, Minister of Agriculture and Food

1. Office of the Minister, Kathleen Wynne
2. Office of the Minister, Ted McMeekin
3. Office of the Minister, Leona Dombrowsky
4. Office of the Minister, Steve Peters
5. Office of the Minister, Chris Bentley (Ministry of Labour)

2003-2006

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Senior political staff roles with a number of Ministers and two Premiers. This required a unique combination of competencies including policy domain expertise, political acuity, collaboration and communications skills as well as leadership capacity to inspire and motivate a diverse set of stakeholders and decision-makers.

My final political position had me in a unique circumstance where the Premier was also the Minister of OMAFRA. In this role I was both a Chief of staff to the Minister but also a senior advisor to the Premier. This very unusual circumstance required daily innovations to ensure proper Ministerial accountability, effective support for issues management and decision-making and an extraordinary collaboration with the Deputy Minister the Ministry senior management team, partners and stakeholders. This unusual situation allowed me to do some very transformative things for the sector including developing the Premier's Agri-food growth challenge, restructuring and saving the provincial horse racing industry and helping to raise the profile of the industry that lead, over time, to such success the sector recognition in the Report from the Federal Advisory Council on Economic Growth (The Barton report).

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EDUCATION

Master of Arts

September 2001 - October 2002
International Relations
University of Sussex.
United Kingdom

Bachelor of Arts.

1995-1999
Honours Political Science
York University.
Toronto, Ontario

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Executive Development

April 2009 - Governance and Accountability
Strategic Management/Performance Management
Queen's School of Business - Kingston, Ontario

Ontario Public Service

October 2009 - Leadership Program
Performance Management
Centre for Leadership - Guelph, Ontario

Canada Public Service

April 2010 - Public Service Managing Essentials
Canada School of Public Service - Toronto, Ontario

Executive Development

September 2010 - Speaking as Leader
The Niagara Institute - Niagara, Ontario

International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP)

United States, State Department – USA
September – October 2015

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Board Director – Kindle Communities (in progress)
- Past Chair, Advocacy committee, Guelph Chamber of Commerce
- Vice-President, YMCA of Three Rivers Camps – Bi-Annual Alumni Construction Group
- Captain, Guelph Athletic Club Interclub Squash Team, Western Ontario Squash League
- Past Board Director, Guelph Public Library