



2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTION PRIORITIES

PATH TO PROSPERITY FOR PEC
BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

Abstract

A strategy to promote economic growth and resilience in Prince Edward County. The recommendations detailed on these pages are interconnected and demonstrate the clear need for the County to adopt a comprehensive strategy for business success.

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce

is committed to helping create the conditions for growth and to improving the competitiveness of the County business community.

YOUR ADVOCATE IN BUSINESS

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce is actively involved in lobbying and influencing public policy at all levels of government on behalf of its members. Policy and advocacy can take the form of letters, meetings, conversations, and roundtables with stakeholders. The PEC Chamber is committed to helping create the conditions for growth and to improving the competitiveness of the County business community.

MISSION

Its mission is to represent, protect, and support entrepreneurs by building a sustainable and inclusive member community through advocacy, education, relevant programs, and networking.

*“The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce is the trusted advocate and tireless champion for local businesses. **We encourage sustainable growth and prosperity for a viable business ecosystem that accomplishes collectively what no business can do alone.** Doing so provides a vehicle for success for our members and the collective future of the County's business community.”*

Lesley Lavender, Executive Director

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce

OVERVIEW

Prince Edward County captures hearts and fascinates minds with its combination of rural calm and authentic sophistication. Combining the traditional and the contemporary, the County has always been a hub for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship against the extraordinary backdrop of historic, yet forward-thinking Ontario.

Building prosperity in the County for 117 years, the Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce is the largest and most quintessential business organization in the County, currently representing more than 360 businesses and approximately 10,500 people from all business sectors and industries across the County, in all wards and communities. Its vision is to drive the prosperity, diversity, and entrepreneurial spirit of PEC for generations.

The start of a new term of council is an opportunity for reflection as well as a time to set goals for the next four years. Recently, the PEC Chamber released the Vote Prosperity platform driving the provincial election, which helped to structure the “Path to Prosperity for Business and Community” municipal election priorities with three pillars:

- Business and Economic Recovery
- Improve Government Accountability
- Build a Sustainable PEC

On the horizon are several issues that will shape municipal discourse on a business level – a new provincial and federal government; a new official plan; the destination marketing organization; municipal accommodation tax; STA licensing; local bylaw and policy review; downtown revitalization plans; tourism management initiatives; affordable housing crisis; infrastructure needs; environmental sustainability; a desire to connect with First Nations; an overstretched healthcare system; Wellington development pressures; an aging and changing population; inflation; and labour shortages.

With all these factors in the future, the PEC Chamber is putting forward recommendations for councilors to consider as they make decisions that will impact the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recent roundtable discussions and on-going advocacy committee meetings with Chamber Members, showed that economic growth, planning, business environment, housing, and robust workforce were amongst the main priorities for local businesses. The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce’s 2022 “Path to Prosperity for Business and Community” municipal election priorities include the following recommendations under three pillars.

Business and Economic Recovery

Around 93% of chamber members are small business owners. Successful economic growth for the region will come from the creation and expansion of the new and smaller businesses. For this to happen, investment and continued council commitment to these areas are imperative.

1. Create working capital to provide direct financial support for small business.
 - a. targeted grants
 - b. fuel support for agriculture co-ops
 - c. sector-specific training for off-season
 - d. a community-led attraction and retention program to attract professionals

Improve Government Accountability

Transparency is fundamental to business confidence, economic recovery, and prosperity. Businesses need a stable policy environment with clear timelines, contracts, consultation, and strategies to help them plan and make long-term investments.

2. Provide business-friendly expectations around Planning, Zoning and Bylaw regulations so businesspeople can anticipate changes to ensure they can successfully adjust, particularly small businesses, by
 - a. consistent enforcement of rules
 - b. creation of a checklist of standard requirements
 - c. treating of all applications of similar nature with the same scrutiny

3. Commit to undertaking thorough consultations with businesses and other stakeholders prior to introducing new legislation or regulations that significantly impact labour and / or the business community, by
 - a. incorporating the business community into the community engagement process
 - b. creating advisory or sub-committees when bylaws impact the business community

Build a Sustainable PEC

To prepare for the future, council needs to place emphasis on integrated planning processes and decision-making, which involves using complementarity to recognize the relationships and interconnectedness between different sustainability challenges, strategies, and objectives.

4. Commit to the development of a long-term economic strategy to build a resilient community that focusses on levers of sustainable growth such as workforce development, immigration, technology, and infrastructure.
5. Increase the housing stock by supporting the building of various types of accommodation, including worker housing.
6. Implement a climate adaptation strategy and commit to providing adequate funding for climate resilience and environmental sustainability.
7. Develop a transparent, long-term plan to protect agriculture lands for future generations without increasing taxes or cutting valuable programs and services.

CONCLUSION

“The Path to Prosperity for Business and Community” municipal election priorities are the PEC Chamber’s strategy to promote economic growth and resilience in Prince Edward County. The three pillars detailed on these pages are interconnected and demonstrate the clear need for the County to adopt a comprehensive strategy for business success.

PEC has the fundamental ingredients for business predictability, inclusive growth, and competitiveness. The chamber and its members strongly encourage all candidates and residents to consider these recommendations throughout the election campaign and beyond.

For more than a century, the PEC Chamber has been the independent, non-partisan, indispensable partner of businesses in the County. The PEC Chamber looks forward to working alongside the next government to pursue a prosperous future for all people in the County.

Show Your Support

- Ask your candidates to support the PEC Chamber’s “Path to Prosperity for Business and Community” municipal election priorities
- Endorse the priorities as an individual or organization
- Help to spread the message on social media

Contact Us

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ABOUT THE PEC CHAMBER

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit, member-driven organization. Originally established in 1905 as the Picton Board of Trade, the Chamber was incorporated in 1979 as the Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce. It advocates, supports, assists and promotes business in the area to grow and strengthen the community. The PEC Chamber is an active member on more than 10 committees and advisory groups in PEC and the Bay of Quinte region and regularly meets and collaborates with the Belleville and Quinte West Chambers, extending the local network and reach. It is also actively involved with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce on projects and advocacy activities.

It is committed to helping create the conditions for growth and to improving the competitiveness of the County business community through its lobbying efforts at every level of government.

It is the trusted advocate and tireless champion for local businesses. With a long-standing reputation for excellence and leadership, the Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce continuously generates opportunities to connect people by bringing life to business. Doing so provides a vehicle for success for members and the future of The County's business community.

The PEC Chamber reflects a diverse network of small, medium, and large businesses from almost every industry sector and business profession. Through service on the PEC Chamber board, a PEC Chamber committee or a task force, members express their views, and direct and shape the activities and programs of the PEC Chamber.