**Peel Region Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire**

This survey will help us evaluate you as a potential Peel Regional Labour Council -endorsed candidate. We would very much appreciate you taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

In your responses, please be clear and concise. Please note that your responses may be made publicly available.

The questions are grouped according to the main areas of concern as identified by our local supporters.

**Strengthening our Local Economy**

1) What should the council do to promote stable employment and quality jobs?

**Not Applicable to Trustee Candidates**

2) What should the council do to improve economic prosperity for everyone?

**Not Applicable to Trustee Candidates**

3) Local governments have significant purchasing power, and their decisions on procuring goods and services can make a significant difference to local and domestic businesses. Do you support a “buy local, buy Canadian” strategy, and if so, how will you help ensure that the council will buy local and buy Canadian?

**Not Applicable to Trustee Candidates**

**Unions and Labour Related Issues**

4) What will you do to ensure positive labour relations, including collective bargaining rights both for employees of your council and with outside firms working under contract?

**This applies to school board trustees as well. I will answer that from the point of view of a school trustee. Fairness, Transparency and Accountability are what is missing in our city hall and school board. Sometimes, councillors and trustees’ intentions are good. But they neglected to follow the due process. Hence it caused a lot of skepticism in the public. If elected I will make sure due process is followed in order to create a trustworthy relationship between the board, labor unions, employees and outside firms working under contract.**

5) What are your opinions on taxes? How about Unions?

**Taxes are necessary to fund public services. However no matter where you come from on the political spectrum, we all need to make sure we spend each public door with accountability and due diligence. It is essential that as elected public officials, we don’t treat tax payer’s dollars like a personal spending account. Given the labor structure in place today, unions are an integral part of our work force and public service. I think we will have a much more productive and collaborative relationship with the unions if we are willing to sit down, listen to each other and have conversations around issues that matter to both the employers and unions. That would be a good place to normalize a working relationship.**

6) Should municipal and school board front line workers be consulted on decisions that may affect the quality and delivery of public services? How and when?

**Absolutely. School board front line workers need to be consulted when we are making decisions affecting the quality and delivery of public services. Unfortunately, this is not the case today. Had there been more out-reach, more communication, we wouldn’t even have had some of the grievances in labor dispute. Communication is key.**

7) What is your opinion on contacting out or privatization of public services (i.e. public money supporting private enterprise for profit)?

**I am against it. Hasn’t the economic crisis in 2008 taught us enough? Publicize the risks, while privatizing the profits, I don’t think that is respecting tax payers’ hard earned dollars. A lot of the times, the bidding processes are not even fair or transparent.**

8) Do you think public assets, like hydro and water utilities and schools should be sold off to generate revenue for municipality or school board?

**Realistically, as the reserve fund dries up in Mississauga, some tough choices will have to be made. However, as elected officials, we must do our due diligence to ensure fair, open and accountable bidding processes are taking place. We have to make sure selling public assets don’t turn out to be a Get Rich Fast scheme for those elite few who have political and business connections in our city hall and/or school board.**

9) Should the Region of Peel continue to provide long term care and accessible transportation and continue investing in these kind of services?

**Yes, investing in health care service is necessary for our aging population. It will also help create jobs in the health care sector.**

10) If you were a municipal councillor during last term, how did you vote on the Child Care Centres and the closures of those centres? If you were not a councillor last term, how would you have voted?

**Not Applicable To School Trustee Candidate**

11) How do you feel about having private funded hospitals in Peel?

**Public Private Partnership hospital(s) in Hamilton was a disaster. It will be a disaster in Peel. I am against it.**

12) Would you support community based campaigns like the following:

a. To Keep local services public? **Yes**

b. To improve the level of quality of local services? **Yes**

c. To mobilize and protect public services and endeavor to increase funding from the provincial and or federal governments in our community? **Yes**

**Building an Open and Inclusive Government**

13) What will you do to address limits to meaningful citizen participation in major policy decisions and the budget process?

**Citizen participation is necessary in the budget process. As of right now, no citizen participation is allowed in the budget process until presentation session in the last minute when decisions have been made. I think it could be a good idea to invite parents representatives from school councils to participate, similar to how we have citizen representatives on the transit committee.**

14) What will you do to ensure that local governments celebrate diversity and promote inclusion for groups that have been traditionally underrepresented or excluded from participating fully in our community? Please consider the following groups in your response:

a. Aboriginal persons

b. Ethnic minorities

c. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) persons

d. Persons living with physical or mental disabilities

e. Women

f. Youth

**Peel School Board currently holds events such as South Asian Heritage Week, Black History Month and etc. If elected, I would like Ward 5 to lead for Diversity in our school systems. This include equity in hiring practice, in addressing education issues sensitive to different ethnic communities in Ward 5 and an effective and agile outreach program to parents from different ethnic groups. The current outreach program in Ward 5 is failing. Large majority of parents do not even know what a school trustee is in Ward 5, let alone who their school trustee is. I will do better than that.**

15) Are there structures or systems which should change to improve meaningful citizen engagement, diversity, and/or inclusivity in our community? If so, what should be changed and how would you help ensure that change is achieved?

**I believe the best way to celebrate diversity is by actively reaching out to different groups, holding townhalls, information sessions for parents in their languages. And most importantly knocking on their doors. We as elected officials have to take initiative. The onus is on us.**

16) How do you feel about the position of Region of Peel chair not being elected by the residents of Peel?

**It is un-democratic, like the senate, it needs to be reformed. Although I am not running for councillor in this election, I hope the Region of Peel Chair will be elected by citizens in the future**

**Creating a Livable and Sustainable Community**

17) What is your vision of a livable and sustainable community? Are there any initiatives or policy changes that should be undertaken? How will you promote these to the council? Please consider the priorities identified below in your reply:

a. A healthy, local food system

b. Livable neighbourhoods

c. Intensification of the core areas

d. Water quality

e. Public spaces

f. Addressing traffic congestion

g. Improved active transportation; specifically: walking, bicycling, and transit

h. Protection of natural areas and agriculture

I. Age-friendly design and planning

18) How would you balance revenue and expenses? Specifically:

a. Are there areas of expense which you would like to see reduced?

b. Are there areas of expense which you would oppose reducing?

c. Are there any ways that you believe the efficiency of the various government departments and government processes can be improved?

d. Are there any revenue sources (e.g. taxes, user fees, etc.) that you believe should be increased, introduced, decreased, or eliminated?

**Not Applicable to School Board Trustee**

**Addressing Poverty**

19) Do you support a living wage for employees of the municipality/region, including those of contracted firms? (A living wage is the wage necessary for a full-time worker to maintain a safe, decent standard of living in the community.)

**I absolutely do. Research has shown that the states in US which increased their minimum wage did NOT go bankrupt. Instead, their local economy thrived and unemployment rate fell. Everyone is entitled to a living wage in my opinion.**

20) Recently, the provincial government has re-organized its benefits programs resulting in a significant shortfall in the Discretionary Benefits budget in the Peel Region, a budget which includes food hampers, dental/vision care, bus tickets, and eviction prevention. This has led to some benefits being discontinued or access becoming severely restricted. If you are running for regional council, what would you recommend to address the shortage of funding for discretionary benefits? Whether you are running for regional or municipal council, what would you recommend to address poverty in our community?

**Not applicable to School Board Trustee Candidate**

21) How should the council support the development of affordable, supportive, and co-operative housing?

**Not applicable to School Board Trustee Candidate**

**Candidate Suitability**

Please provide information about your candidacy, including:

22) Let us know who you are, why are you in this Municipal Election and for what position?

**My name is Karen Lin. I am a senior developer working in the digital media team for CTV. I am also a proud UNIFOR member. I sit on the executive board of UNIFOR 723M. I head the young workers committee at my local. I am also a young workers’ committee member in UNIFOR National. I am running for public school board trustee in Ward 5, Mississauga. Public education used to the great equalizer of our society. Yet it has been in steady decline. A majority of parents in my ward do not even know what a trustee, let alone who their trustee is. The incumbent says he doesn’t want to change anything and is happy with everything . That is an attitude of arrogance, complacency and neglect. Ward 5 is ready for someone passionate, someone experienced and someone better.**

23) Experience in and knowledge of the workings of the council and local issues.

**Not applicable to School Board Trustee Candidate.**

24) Your role in the community, such as past activities and public exposure.

Ran a successful after school tutoring program serving low income families and busy working parents in my building

* **Volunteered at the Big Brother And Sisters Club**
* **Volunteered at Local Food Banks**
* **Youth Un(der) Employment Campaign with Premier Kathleen Wynn.**
* **Raise The Minimum Wage and End Poverty in Ontario Campaign**
* **International Women's Day Rally To End Poverty and Violence against Women.**

Received a lot of media attention since launching of my campaign. Have been interviewed on

* **OMNI Punjabi**
* **Cable 10 Live**
* **Rogers Peel TV**
* **Rawal TV**
* **Pinoy TV (Filipino Channel)**

25) Your leadership qualities and experience.

Leadership Style:

* + **Focused**
  + **Experienced**
  + **Authentic**
  + **Passionate**

Experience :

**A standing member of political action committee in UNIFOR 723M. Have been actively involved in n numerous MPP / MP’s campaigns in the past. This year alone, I was recruited to work in 3 MPP campaigns. I am an experienced campaigner and that has proven a great advantage for my campaign staff and team.**

26) Please tell us about your campaign strategy and what makes you electable. We intend to put the resources of Peel Regional Labour Council behind candidates who not only share our values, but also have a realistic chance of being elected.

1**) I am prepared for the School Trustee role. I have been going to school board meeting for a long time. I have never seen some of my opponents there. I fully understand the issues facing peel schools in Ward 5.**

2) **I have registered in March, much earlier than my opponents. I was able to leverage that, sign up volunteers and most importantly generate a lot of excitement and media attention around the trustee race. Normally media doesn’t even pay much attention to trustee elections**

3) **I have proven leadership among young people. My campaign is for the youth and by the youth. My unique ability to connect with young people, get them to work on my campaign, educate them about labor issues, and convince them and their parents to go to the polls for me on Oct 27 will give me an advantage over the 72 year old incumbent.**

4) **I am the only candidate running in Ward 5 that is actually from Ward 5. 90% of parents living in my Ward have no idea what a trustee is, let alone who the incumbent is. Therefore in this case, the 72 year old incumbent does NOT have the advantage of name recognition. I, on the other hand have been working strategically and diligently since March. I generated a lot of excitement and awareness in the neighborhood and have made some quite significant gain on the campaign trail**

5) **Timing. This time we are electing a new mayor, new councillor in my Ward. By talking to people on the campaign trail, they tell me they are ready for change. More importantly, they are ready to elect someone who can closely engage young people and actually from Ward 5.**

6) **I have signed up a strong and effective volunteer team that consists of UTM Poli Sci, Law students, high school students, young new democrats, young liberals. They are from different cultural background, with the same goal : see change happen in Ward 5 schools. This is truly a diverse, collaborative and energetic team! My campaign advisory team consists of people who have successfully ran trustee campaigns and experienced political advisors from the municipal government. Most importantly, our team is GROWING FAST!**

7) **My ability to draw media attention to my campaign.**