

**Candidate Name:** Bonnie Crombie

**Campaign Website:** <http://www.bonniecrombie.ca>

## **The Economy:**

### **1. How would you ensure Mississauga remains an attractive community in which to invest and conduct business?**

This is one of the most important issues facing our city – to remain competitive, we must continue to grow our economic base and create good paying, value-added jobs. We must keep business taxes low and maintain a quality of life that is second to none.

When I talk to businesses in my ward, they tell me that Mississauga is attractive because of our high quality of life, but also our strategic location – Toronto Pearson, six, 400-series highways, the City of Toronto, and our close proximity to multiple border crossings

My economic development strategy, "A City that Thrives" is based on the following:

- Developing sector-specific strategies to maintain our key sectors - ICT, Financial Services, Life Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing;
- Fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to ensure we are at the cutting edge of the knowledge economy;
- Leveraging our great diversity to continue to bring talented newcomers to our city and use their language and business networks to bring the foreign direct investment and the world to our doorstep and
- Investing in critical infrastructure, including rapid transit to ensure goods and people can move seamlessly throughout the region, especially to areas like the Airport Corporate Centre and the Meadowvale Corporate Centre.

We must make investments in rapid transit and infrastructure to put us on a solid foundation. As any builder knows, you must get the foundation right first before you can build the rest of the building. It is critical that we maintain our strategic advantage, while at the same time making investments and decisions that will allow us to succeed in the new economies.

### **2. What role do you see the Mayor's Office playing in promoting economic development?**

The Mayor must be a champion for economic development and have a strong understanding of how businesses operate and what they need to be successful. Mayor McCallion has been a champion of economic development for 36 years, which has resulted in significant growth in our city, the development of entire corporate centres, and the creation of a strong GDP. The Mayor must set the direction for our economic development strategy and take a leadership role in promoting our city and meeting with our businesses regularly.

As a former business woman, entrepreneur and community advocate, I see economic development as my number one priority. As a City Councillor, I have visited many businesses along with Mayor McCallion. With the depth and strength of

our corporate partners in Mississauga, I believe it is of utmost importance to balance the issues of our residents with those of our small, medium and large businesses by making regular corporate calls.

## **Civic Governance:**

### **3. How would you ensure that municipal taxes remain competitive with other jurisdictions?**

I have committed to holding taxes to the rate of inflation. I hear from residents and businesses every day that they are stretched. Our property tax ratio between business and residential is currently 62/38. My goal is to take it to 60/40. I have also committed to undertaking a full scale review of the City's programs and services to find efficiencies and cut waste. We must take action to ensure we are running as lean a government as possible. Mayor McCallion has run an efficient government and I think it is imperative that we continue to follow her governing principles: pay as you go, do your homework on all issues before making a decision, and not spending what you do not have. There is a reason Standard & Poors has given Mississauga a "AAA" credit rating for the 10th year in a row. As a Councillor, I worked tirelessly to make sure resources were managed and allocated carefully and thoughtfully. As Mayor, I am committed to continuing the City's stellar financial record. I have a record of fiscal accountability and I believe every financial decision needs to have a responsible business case before tax dollars are spent.

### **4. How would your administration help support a business friendly environment with respect to regulations, zoning, and dealings with the municipal government?**

As a City Councillor with over 10,000 businesses in my ward, I hear all the time about the struggles large and small businesses face in applying for permits and re-zonings. It often takes weeks to receive comments and permits are not turned around in as timely a fashion as they could be. I have been a proactive City Councillor and assisted many businesses in navigating City Hall's many departments.

In my platform, I have dedicated an entire section to a "City that Works, For You," wherein I outline the steps I would take to reduce red tape at City Hall and assist businesses. These include:

- Creating a point person at the Planning and Building counter to help navigate the building and permit process and break down silos between departments;
- Launching an open government portal to allow businesses and residents to access important information, but also understand it much better;
- Recreating a development liaison committee that brings together senior planning and building staff with the development industry to sort out issues and discuss policy;
- Modernizing the technology used in the Planning and Building Departments to ensure we are operating as efficiently and effectively as possible, including

being able to submit permit applications electronically, rather than printing reams of materials;

- Streamlining services between Region and City to avoid duplication and reduce administrative burdens; and
- And overall, fostering a culture of customer service at City Hall.

**5. How would you work to contain municipal costs, including labour costs?**

As a City Councillor, I have been vigilant during budget discussions to ensure we get the best value for money and keep spending tightly controlled. I will continue to remain vigilant as Mayor, just as Mayor McCallion has done for the past 36 years. I have committed to working closely with labour to find efficiencies in the delivery of service and to conducting a full-scale review of our budgets, programs and services to ensure we're running the leanest, most efficient city possible. I have also committed to a full scale review of the City's programs and services to ensure we are operating as efficiently as possible and finding opportunities to streamline services and deliver them better. For instance, there is overlap between planning departments at the Region of Peel and the City of Mississauga. There is an opportunity here to streamline these services to eliminate duplication and enhance service.

## **Employment:**

**6. Describe your plans for supporting effective employment growth strategies?**

I spoke about my commitment to building alternative modes of transportation. In addition to building an LRT along Hurontario Street, I propose we investigate the feasibility of building a BRT on Derry Road and through the Dundas Street corridor as these two communities are ready for economic growth and redevelopment.

Along with building critical infrastructure, creating jobs and economic growth must be our top priorities. The Mayor's office must continue to be a champion of these issues and lead the charge on attracting new business, just like Mayor McCallion has done for the past 36 years. I have outlined a robust economic development strategy in my platform that includes:

- Fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in our city to ensure we are at the cutting edge of new economies;
- Working with the private sector to build an Innovation Accelerator to allow our entrepreneurs to take their ideas from concept to commercialization more quickly;
- Forming the International Investment Advisory Council comprised of MBOT, and local cultural business associations such as the Indo-Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Mississauga Chinese Business Professional Association, to name two;
- Developing sector specific strategies to target high value growth industries, in particular our foundational sectors of Information Communication Technology, Financial Services, Life Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing; and

- Organizing trade missions and host trade delegations from emerging markets to attract new businesses to Mississauga.

**7. How would your administration help support effective employment integration for newcomers and opportunities for young people?**

The integration of our newcomers into our society and the job market is critical to our success. We attract some of the best and brightest people from around the world, but too often they are unable to work in their profession or have difficulty finding a job. I will work with the federal and provincial governments, as well as our local settlement agencies to ensure we are doing everything we can to integrate newcomers and maximize their potential. In my platform I have also proposed developing a "Welcome Wagon" style information package to newcomers to let them know about important services in their community.

With respect to youth, I am fearful that if current youth unemployment rates stay at around 20%, we are at risk of losing an entire generation of youth. The pay gap between young people today entering the workforce today and those entering the workforce even 15 years ago is growing. As Mayor, I will work to create opportunities for youth by:

- Launching the Mayor's Youth Jobs Challenge to challenge our businesses to hire local youth, create paid internship programs, and provide opportunities for youth for co-op placements to gain on the job experience. My goal is to have an additional 1,000 youth hired by our local businesses every year;
- Partner with our post-secondary institutions and career colleges to educate students about the value of entrepreneurship; and
- Alter the City's procurement policy to include the hiring of local youth as a criteria when firms bid on city contracts.

## **Infrastructure:**

**8. How would you address traffic congestion in Mississauga?**

I would tackle congestion by investing heavily in a regionally integrated rapid transit network, complimented by an efficient local transit system that moves people across our city efficiently and reliably and connects Mississauga to the GTA and beyond. To reduce congestion, we need to get people out of their cars and onto transit. As the price of gas continues to rise, owning a car is becoming more expensive, which is why we need to build a transit network that will serve commuters looking for an alternative.

**9. What are your plans to improve public transit in the community?**

We have ten transit systems in the GTA and they all operate in isolation. We need to make connections to other cities and build a regionally-integrated transit system that provides seamless movement across Mississauga and the GTA.

Mississauga is a net importer of jobs - more people come into Mississauga every day to work than leave. I have developed a robust transit plan called Mississauga Moves, which is a bold vision for a regionally- integrated rapid transit network that will move people around our city and seamlessly connect them to the wider GTA.

My plan includes:

- Expediting all-day, two-way, electrified GO Train service on the Lakeshore and Milton lines to allow us to build Regional Express Rail like that seen in other major cities around the Globe. This will be a game-changer for Mississauga;
- Working closely with the province to get shovels in the ground on the Hurontario LRT as soon as possible to build what I believe to be the spine of a regionally integrated, rapid transit network;
- Commissioning studies on the feasibility of a Dundas Street BRT or LRT and the potential of extending the Hurontario LRT along Derry Road to meet up with Malton and completely open the northern part of our city to rapid transit. This is where the bulk of our office and industrial lands are and they are currently not well-served by public transit; and
- Conducting a full-scale service review of Mississauga Transit to ensure among other things that bus schedules are realistic and that we have adequate express buses, especially on those routes that connect into the subway.

#### **10. How do you propose funding those plans?**

Like Mayor McCallion, I will undertake a feasibility study of the proposed new lines and develop a business case first before proceedings. We did not know the full cost of the Hurontario LRT – or even if it would be an LRT – before we commenced the study. We did our due diligence and determined a price tag. We then consulted with residents and undertook the proper studies. We did our homework.

I put forward my vision for transit because I believe that if we don't look at what could be possible, we will never strive to get there. We need someone in the Mayor's office who will look to the future to develop a plan to serve our growing community.

I will work with the province and the federal government to ensure Mississauga receives its fair share of funding and that investments in our transit networks are a top priority. At the same time, I will work closely with the private sector, in particular those developing in our community, to look for innovative ways to build transit and transportation infrastructure.

I will also look at making use of tax incremental financing (TIF), where it makes the most sense to do so, to incentivize the private sector to take on the building of capital infrastructure. Along with using TIF, I will also entertain using Tax Incremental Equivalent Grants to encourage investment and redevelopment.

**11. How will you ensure that the City's maturing infrastructure is maintained and/or improved upon?**

Investing in our infrastructure is critical to our economic health. Mississauga has prided itself on making the proper investments in infrastructure, which in turn has made our city an attractive destination for new business and for existing businesses to expand. It is imperative that we continue to make these investments to ensure we continue to remain an economic powerhouse in this country.

To do this, I will:

- Target the critical aspects of infrastructure, with safety and quality as a top priority;
- Develop longer-term strategy to grow the level of density in the City Centre. My commitment is to build out the City Centre, invest in transit, and plan to attract more businesses to Mississauga.
- Increase transfers to our capital reserves to ensure we are able to fund future asset replacement and rehabilitation;
- Investigate the potential of accessing funds through agencies like Infrastructure Ontario and P3 Canada. We need to explore opportunities of working with the private sector, and I will endeavor to do as much, however, I will ensure that it is always to the benefit of Mississauga's ratepayers; and
- Engage the provincial and federal government (and Federal) to request sustainable funding and revenue tools to allow Mississauga and all municipalities to make the required investments in infrastructure needed for growth. Major and developing urban centers are the source of economic growth in Ontario.

**12. How do you envision funding infrastructure renewal?**

\$400 billion is the current national infrastructure deficit. This is large than the federal budget. Of this \$400 billion, municipalities own 55% of it. Yet at the same time, we only receive 11 cents of every tax dollar.

There is a huge financial imbalance between what municipalities are responsible for and what they receive in revenue. In Mississauga, we have \$91 million in projects each year that we have to delay or defer because we are unable to finance them.

We are heading toward an infrastructure crisis in this country and all three levels of government need to work together to solve it. The federal and provincial governments need to come to the table in a meaningful way to help us fund the maintenance of existing and new infrastructure.

Both have signaled in recent years their intent to do so – the federal government through the permanent gas tax fund and the province through its recent \$130 billion commitment to infrastructure over 10 years. This needs to continue – we need a cities agenda nationally and provincially if we are going to make a dent in our infrastructure deficit.

As Mayor I would advocate strongly for a portion of the income tax – cities are the

economic engine of the country and as the economy grows, so too would our portion of the income tax. We need a greater slice of the revenue pie because the property tax was never designed to fund large capital infrastructure projects in perpetuity.

## **Candidate Experience and Suitability:**

### **13. Describe your experience, including professional, business, community leadership, and public exposure.**

I am a long-time Mississauga resident and have been a strong advocate for our City and its residents. I have the energy, the vision, and the long-term commitment to ensure Mississauga remains one of the best cities in which to live, work and raise a family.

I was elected as the City Councillor for Ward 5, Mississauga in the September 2011 by- election. Previous to this she served as the Member of Parliament for Mississauga Streetsville. I have represented over 210,000 Mississauga residents, almost one-third of the City's population. I have served on the Standing Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and as my party's GTA Caucus Chair. As a City Councillor, I currently serve on the Governance, Transportation, and Audit Committees at City Hall and the Waste Management and Intergovernmental Affairs Committees, as well as the Early Learning and Childcare Taskforce at the Region of Peel.

Prior to seeking elected office, I worked for two Fortune 500 companies including the Walt Disney Corporation, and McDonald's Corporation where I oversaw local store marketing for five states in America. I have also successfully practiced public affairs and launched two successful small businesses, including being one of the founders of Cargo Cosmetics, whose products are now sold around the world.

Outside of my work in the public and private sector, I have a lengthy history of community leadership and volunteer service having been asked to serve by the Mayor on the Mississauga Mayor's Taskforce on the Arts. I was subsequently elected as Vice Chair of this task force. I have also dedicated her time to various charitable and not-for- profit boards, including the Credit Valley Hospital Foundation, Peel Region 11th Division Police Community Liaison Committee, the Canadian and Ontario Brain Injury Association, and Arts Umbrella

I have an MBA from the Schulich School of Business and a Corporate Director's Certificate from the Institute of Corporate Directors at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. In January 2012 I was honoured to be awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for my work in the community. I speak French, Polish and Ukrainian and with my husband Brian, I have raised three children, Alex, Jonathan and Natasha, right here in Mississauga.

**14. Describe your experience and knowledge of the workings of municipal government and public policy.**

I have served as a Member of Parliament and currently serve as the City Councillor for Ward 5. I have an intimate understanding of how our municipal government operates, as well as the issues facing our city and our residents today. I am in touch with the concerns of residents, as well as the business community as I represent over 10,000 businesses as the Ward 5 City Councillor.

I have had great success moving motions, creating and passing by-laws, and debating issues on Council. I have a strong understanding of public policy because as a City Councillor, I am currently charged with making it. I have been involved as a volunteer in politics for over 35 years and prior to becoming an elected representative, I practiced government relations where I worked with business and not-for-profit clients to advance and change public policy.