A PRACTICAL PLAN FOR OWEN SOUND

Housing, Taxes, and a City That Works Locally

A practical plan for homelessness, City spending, roads, transit, and neighbourhood representation.

Andrii Zvorygin · Candidate for Mayor

TRANSPARENCY

- Full financial disclosure
- Management accountability
- Track decisions & results

PARTICIPATION

- 7 local Wards
- Local Representatives
- Neighbourhood gatherings

COMPASSION

- Restore downtown
- Recovery & belonging
- Affordable homes & land

LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED **mayorofowensound.ca**

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I've been canvassing across Owen Sound and hearing the same concerns: homelessness and drug use downtown, rising property taxes, road conditions, transit, and neighbourhood follow-up. These issues share an opportunity: act earlier, connect spending to results, and bring responsibility closer to residents.

Housing stability starts while people still have a home

Homelessness can mean dying 3–5 decades younger. As new people lose their housing, the homeless population can keep growing even as some find housing, enter recovery, move away, or die. To steadily reduce homelessness, we need to help people keep the homes they already have and create affordable, secure places to live.

Phase 1: Bring meals closer now
Grey County has about 30–40 people living unsheltered. Many access meals and support in Owen Sound. Those repeated trips concentrate homelessness-related activity downtown, adding pressure to public spaces and affecting how comfortably residents, workers, businesses, and visitors can use the area. Work with OSHaRE and other willing providers on a mobile meal pilot bringing prepared meals and essential support by van to scheduled locations closer to where people

stay. Food and help would remain accessible, while downtown would carry less pressure and be easier for housed residents, families, and businesses to enjoy. The practical needs are a suitable van and operating resources, and the City could help make the pilot possible.

Housing, affordability, and rehabilitation

Preserve existing stability, make ordinary life affordable, and test one voluntary rural rehabilitation pilot.

Phase 2: Keep people housed

A secure home gives a person ground to stand on. From that foundation, health, family, work, creativity, and hope have room to grow. Help tenants keep secure housing and make better use of Owen Sound's existing homes. Create a City tenant-rights resource explaining lawful rent increases, Landlord and Tenant Board processes, useful evidence, and qualified housing-law assistance, including the Grey Bruce Community Legal Clinic. Introduce a vacant-home tax to encourage empty homes back into active use as rentals, owner-occupied homes, or homes for sale.

Phase 3: County action for affordable homes

Andrii has spent years participating in and following Grey County Council, researching and documenting its work, and advancing proposals on energy decline, rural resilience, accessible planning and affordable rural living. As Mayor, he would move from public advocate to voting member of County Council, able to introduce motions and build support for a County-wide Affordable Rural Communities (ARC) framework and model zoning provisions that participating municipalities could adopt. That creates an affordable-housing path for Owen Sound workers, families, seniors and young adults. More than 340 families now use OSHaRE's Family Assistance Meal Program, and most are working families. Secure households need ways to produce food, raise families, develop skills and build useful work close to home.

ARC pairs resident-owned homes with productive land. Households could grow food, establish fruit and nut trees, use workshops or shared equipment, and build productive capacity. Together, they could support local businesses, industry, food security and a stronger Grey-Bruce economy.

ARC separates ownership of the home from use of the land. Residents would own their homes and build equity as they pay down the home financing. The productive land would remain part of the intact rural property and be securely leased to each household, avoiding the cost of purchasing and severing a separate rural lot. Roughly **1 hectare per adult** provides space for food, heating biomass, and a resilient productive landscape.

A completed basic home is modelled at **$51,000–$74,000**, with about **$61,000** as the central estimate. Monthly costs are approximately **$350** for home financing, plus **$270** for a one-adult productive-site lease and shared infrastructure, totalling about **$620/month**. A two-adult, three-child family example totals about **$750/month** under these planning assumptions. Learn more: **helpos.ca/arc**

Phase 4: Rehabilitation pilot

A study of San Patrignano programme completers found about 70% drug-free four years later,

verified through toxicological testing. A separate five-year conventional inpatient follow-up found 29.8% continuously abstinent. These different studies and populations provide context rather than a guaranteed comparison.

Every person still carries abilities, relationships, and possibilities that can come back to life with stability, support, meaningful work, and somewhere to belong. Direct staff to develop one voluntary rural rehabilitation pilot combining stable accommodation, professional and peer support, meaningful work, community, and separation from the previous drug environment.

The sequence matters

HELP NOW → PREVENT NEW HOMELESSNESS → MAKE HOUSING AFFORDABLE. + PILOT A VOLUNTARY RURAL REHAB OPTION.

Make the City and local economy work

Residents regularly ask why property taxes keep rising while roads, transit, and neighbourhood services still need attention. The starting point is to understand **what we are paying for, what results we are getting, and where residents see better ways to do things.**

Put Transparency and Participation to work

As Mayor, Andrii would be responsible for proposing the City budget and could direct staff in writing to provide information. He would publish as much as law allows: service costs, staffing, management, contracts, procurement, debt, and results.

Transparency and Participation would help residents find duplicated work, problems, lower-cost alternatives, and services worth protecting.

Zero-based budgeting would start with the results residents need and justify spending from the ground up. Andrii's IT experience would help him use modern software to analyze spending, streamline processes, and reorganize work around better service. Savings could reduce taxes, limit increases, pay down debt, or fund higher priorities. **HelpOS.ca** demonstrates this.

Let residents help lower costs

As maintenance and service contracts come up for renewal, review them so suitable City-approved work can include **Shared Stewardship**, such as cleanups, gardening, minor public-space care, repair events, and skill-sharing.

This can supplement paid municipal work while safety, liability, qualifications, and collective agreements define which tasks fit.

Bring prosperity back locally

Owen Sound has a strong history of industry and enterprise. We can build new prosperity by producing more of what we need here.

Publish City purchasing and repair needs so local businesses and tradespeople can develop alternatives. Where local supply, production, or repair is competitive and legally permitted, buy locally.

Import replacement keeps money, skills, and work circulating through Owen Sound and Grey-Bruce, supporting businesses, creating jobs, and rebuilding a productive economy where families and young people can see a future.

Someone nearby who can help

To facilitate Shared Stewardship, each Local Area of roughly **150 households** could have a **Local Representative** paid for approved, logged living-wage hours. Residents could ask them about City projects,

raise local concerns, or organize around roads, drainage, parks, safety, and other neighbourhood issues.

A city becomes warmer when neighbours know one another, care for the places where they live, and have meaningful ways to help. An **annual voluntary neighbourhood gathering** would let residents meet, share concerns and ideas, organize projects, and choose their Local Representative for the coming year. Local Representatives would meet with their **Ward Councillor** monthly or quarterly and help follow concerns through City Hall.

Owen Sound would keep city-wide elections while assigning each of seven Councillors primary responsibility for one geographic Ward.

Put savings into useful services

Evening transit shows what modest spending can provide. Seventy-one per cent of respondents in the City's transit survey selected evening service. A one-route pilot is estimated at **$48,600 per year**; extending all four daytime routes to about **10 p.m.** could cost **$200,000–$250,000 per year**, subject to quotations.

Transparent budgeting and resident participation can help identify existing spending to redirect toward services people value.

How It Fits Together

Affordable, secure lives

Problems that look separate often share common roots. When we strengthen the foundations and connect the pieces, progress in one area can make progress elsewhere easier: existing homes return to use, modest homes and productive land become more affordable, and local food, heating, transit and recovery options help people build stable lives.

Connected neighbourhoods

Annual neighbourhood gatherings, Local Representatives and Ward Councillors connect residents with City Hall, local priorities, and improvements. Local purchasing and participation keep more skills, work, and money circulating in the community.

Open and accountable City Hall

Residents can see service costs, responsibility, Council directions, and whether work was completed. Easier-to-follow budgets, decisions, and results help residents participate meaningfully and hold City Hall accountable.

The result

The goal is more than efficient government. It is a city where people have a secure home, useful work, neighbours who know them, a voice that can be heard, and room to build a good life.

Owen Sound already has people, skills, land, knowledge, and a willingness to help. When those gifts meet and work together, much becomes possible.

We can care for one another, build what we need, and face the future with confidence. All is well, and all will be well. Where you want to live.

Transparency · Participation · Compassion

Make a plan to vote

Vote early: October 16–26

Vote Andrii Zvorygin for Mayor, and help a friend or neighbour vote too.

Mayor: Andrii Zvorygin

Deputy Mayor: Scott Greig

Participating independent Council candidates: Thomas Arakal · David William Schinbein

Independent candidates can cooperate while remaining accountable for their decisions.

Voting details:

helpos.ca/vote