



[www.aware-simcoe.ca](http://www.aware-simcoe.ca)

## 2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

Bill Gordon – Mayoral Candidate

Midland

August 29<sup>th</sup> 2022

Please return the completed questionnaire to the sender as soon as possible, but no later than September 15, 2022. The answers will then be posted on the AWARE Simcoe website.

**N.B: As this is a Word document, you can take as much space as you wish to respond.**

=====

1. AWARE Simcoe considers the preservation of farmland, the protection of water resources and natural heritage, and providing transparency and accountability in government decision making to be the primary issues of this election.

Our goal is to elect representatives who support those objectives. Do you agree with this?

*Yes, however, I am concerned that the application of Natural Heritage Designation lacks any scientific or empirical evidence to support the restrictions that it puts on private landowners. The reverse onus, and costs associated, that landowners who are subject to this designation must bear simply to prove that, beyond trees, there are no significant features, flora, fauna or species on the property is an overreach of an otherwise noble attempt to calm greenfield development. I would like to see the governments held responsible for the costs to research and provide some evidence to justify the designations rather than the blanket application across municipalities. I place landowner rights in high regard.*

2. Do you feel there is a need to protect water, wetlands and recharge areas from development, aggregate extraction, and other intrusive activities in your municipality? If so, how will you achieve this?

*Yes, but much like my previous answer, this should be a matter managed by the Province rather than left to individual municipalities – who often will have much to gain from the development and revenues associated with it. Protecting our source water is a primary duty of elected officials, and the failure to take all reasonable steps to do so can see people made*

*sick or dead – and the stewards of these system imprisoned. I take that responsibility very seriously.*

3. Ancient deposits under the Simcoe Uplands in Simcoe County's Tiny, Springwater, Oro-Medonte and Tay townships contain pristine groundwater.

This water is the purest water known to science, and is the gold standard for water worldwide, a national and global treasure.

Ongoing gravel pit extractions on French's Hill, the water recharge area, now threaten to destroy this precious water. Will you work to protect this important local resource?

*This is beyond the scope of influence by Midland councillors but would be within my scope as a County Councillor. I will oppose efforts that put our shared, precious, and life-sustaining resources at risk for financial gain.*

4. Do you support/oppose expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County? In either case, please explain why.

*The greenbelt was put in place as a buffer against expansion and sprawl and as natural refuge for the wildlife we displace as we grow. These barriers should be protected from sprawl. As a County Councillor I will resist attempts to re-zone and develop our Greenbelts and the application for MZO to bypass the established checks and balances – and public input.*

5. What are your plans to combat climate change in your municipality?

*Our municipality has made gains in reducing our energy usage and carbon footprint however there is much more to do. Climate change resiliency is one of my core priorities and should be part of all our policy and decision-making processes. Increased weather severity which can impact our water and sewer system must be accounted for as well as how we implement site plan components like permeable surfaces as alternatives to pavement and concrete. There are many organizations that promote green and environmentally friendly alternatives for Municipalities to consider including options like capturing heat from ice surface chillers to heat recreational facilities and offset fossil fuel reliance. I will look for new and innovative technologies and techniques and hope to find the support of Council to implement them in our Municipality.*

6. Every municipality in Ontario is faced with row-on-row sprawl-style development, and surrounding farmland is being destructively gobbled up with little regard for future agricultural needs. Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland every day, it needs to be protected before it's too late. We need to ensure we have the land to grow food for today and future generations. Once it's paved over, it's gone forever!

How will you protect agricultural lands within your municipality?

*Municipalities have the tools to protect sprawl with secondary planning and master planning. Protecting these agricultural greenfield zones will require a majority of councillors and I will count myself among them. We must focus on intensification rather than sprawl. However, we need the support of the OLT to uphold our planning decisions and for the province to push back against MZO applications. If there is a path of least resistance for developers, they will take it – and who can blame them.*

7. Simcoe County Council chose a county forest in Springwater Twp – zoned Agricultural, as the site for a (much needed) waste handling facility, the Environmental Resource Recovery Centre (ERRC). Many residents in Simcoe County objected to this location, pointing out that this is an industrial use and there are suitable properties zoned Industrial where the facility should be built. What is your view?

*I have not read the planning rationale for this recommendation but at first blush, it seems like an incompatible land use. It would not be fair for me to take a position on this without the background information. If I was a County Councillor next term, I would have a very good answer for you as to why I supported or objected to the location.*

8. If elected, what are your top three priorities?

*Midland's growth and prosperity relies on a **shared vision for the future** that both preserves the small-town charm for our residents and attracts so many to Midland's shores on Georgian Bay. I will encourage the **responsible growth** of our community as a premier destination to live, work and play while **keeping Midland affordable** for our residents.*

=====

Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.