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2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

Bob Ossowski

City of Barrie Ward 2

September 8, 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.

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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?

ANSWER

Yes, I agree with the primary issues listed in your statement.

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?

ANSWER

There is a need to protect water, wetlands and recharge areas in our municipality. For too long sensitive areas, like marshes and streams that feed Lake Simcoe, have been overlooked. Many of these areas need to undergo clean-up and restoration. These are 'hidden treasures' that are often forgotten. A plan of action is needed to survey them (working with the NVCA) and come up with a short term plan to restore them and a long term plan to protect them.

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?

ANSWER

I am aware of the reputation of the ground water in the Elmvale area. Gravel extraction is a legal activity and the company doing so has a right to do so provided that they have necessary permits and follow any existing environmental guidelines. That being said I would like to see a study by geologists that explain the possible impact, if any, on the surrounding ground water.

What we can do is reduce the need for gravel extraction by changing construction techniques. Present construction is far too intensive and reliant on concrete. Reduce the demand for aggregates and in turn reduce the profitability thereby reducing extraction.

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

ANSWER

The Greenbelt can certainly be expanded. We need to identify the specific areas that are most in need of protection. Development in Simcoe County will happen. We need to ensure that it is done in an intelligent manner and simply not for the profit of development corporations. Any development that does happen needs to take into account affordability, sustainability and the protection of sensitive lands.

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

ANSWER

My plan is to push to change how we develop the City of Barrie. I believe that past practices have wasted land with sprawling residential and commercial developments. We need to stop building structures over 5 or 6 stories. Apartment and condo developments should approximate the height of the tree canopies to utilize the natural cooling and sheltering effects of trees. Also building apartments with large windows is simply not energy efficient. Paving over large areas only worsens flood risk with torrential rainfall. The designs of future developments and construction projects should minimize their effects on the surrounding environment.

We as a city have to decide if we are going to change our reliance on natural gas in heating homes and businesses. This could involve capping future construction and uses fossil fuels and rely on heating with electricity.

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?

ANSWER

First, I want to champion the cause of redeveloping what has already been developed and paved over. We need to switch for keep building for the sake of building something new to building to make better use of what we already have. In this way we can also preserve land for future generations.

Farmers have a right to sell their land if they choose but as a city we can decide how that land is zoned. Some land could also be purchased for restoration and recreational use. Much of the agricultural land in Simcoe County is used to grow animal feed. Perhaps we need to ensure that agriculture is profitable so that farmers wish to stay in that business.

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?

ANSWER

This is a County of Simcoe issue. I read up on this issue and it appears that this project will have minimal impact on the forest. The choice of this location will probably limit issues such as odours. The City of Barrie processes organic waste on the edge of the city in a semi forested area. They are able to process organic and yard waste into compost.

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

ANSWER

1. Affordable and sustainable housing.

2. Improve the quality of life of Barrie residents.

3. Control spending and ensure that as a city we budget for the improvements that make Barrie a better place to live.

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.