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2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

Janet-Lynne Durnford

Orillia

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?

Yes, I agree that the preservation and protection of farmland, water resources, and natural heritage, and accountability in decision-making are key issues in this (and all) elections. One of the key points of my campaign platform is to fully implement and build on Orillia's Climate Future action plan, which will reduce our environmental impact and strengthen our community's resilience in the face of climate change.

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, there is a need to protect our natural heritage features from development and extraction. In particular, Orillia is facing the Comprehensive Municipal Review process, and needs to make decisions about future growth. I believe that all decisions regarding boundary expansion need to be done within the "doughnut economy" economic model, which seeks to balance social needs with environmental limits. We need to consider how we can accommodate growth and intensification with the least possible impact on shorelines, wetlands, and farmlands.

I am also in favour of the proposal to include Simcoe County in Ontario's Greenbelt, to ensure it is protected from development.

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?

Yes. I have filled water bottles at the Elmvale spring and experienced first-hand the pristine groundwater of the Simcoe Uplands. I have attended rallies at the Teedon Pit, and listened to the concerns of residents and water keepers. It is egregious that some of the cleanest water in the world is being used to wash gravel. It is important to me to protect this and all freshwater resources.

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

I support the expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County. The wetlands, forests, farmlands, lakes and rivers of Simcoe County deserve permanent provincial protection from encroaching development and urban sprawl.

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

The present council has made a climate change action plan to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040. The three key actions in the plan are:

- **the generation of local, renewable energy**
- **encouraging the use of zero-emission vehicles, and investing in public transit and active transportation**
- **retrofitting existing buildings and encouraging high-efficiency new builds**

I am in support of full implementation of this plan, and I would support any measures that meet these goals.

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?

To my knowledge, there is very little agricultural land within our municipality, however, there is a lot of farmland surrounding Orillia. We are facing the question of boundary expansion under the Municipal Comprehensive Review. Intensification is part of the solution. We must ensure

that any boundary expansion does not involve the rezoning of agricultural lands. I am also in favour of utilizing and repurposing portions of public lands, such as parks and under-utilized spaces, to grow community gardens and fruit trees that are accessible to all.

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?

We should know better. Waste handling sites should not be built on agricultural lands, shorelines, or environmentally fragile areas. The next Orillia council will need to begin the process of looking ahead to the future of our own “Waste Diversion Site” landfill, which is built on the shore of Lake Simcoe - a mistake that cannot be repeated.

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

ANSWER

- 1. Sustainability
- 2. Housing
- 3. Health

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.