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2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

George Vadeboncoeur

Penetanguishene

04/09/22

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: I support the objectives, but I do not feel they are the primary issues of this election.

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: Yes. I would ensure appropriate policies are included in the Town’s Official Plan; ensure the Zoning By-law reflects the appropriate limitations so that surface water, ground water, wetlands and recharge areas are protected. I would also ensure the municipality’s well head protection program is well managed

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 don't know very much about the issue. First, I need to educate myself on the issue and then form an opinion. I don't believe the issue impacts Penetanguishene.

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

ANSWER: I think a small portion of the greenbelt already extends into Simcoe County. I think if there is an opportunity to expand the greenbelt further, it should be looked at. Other factors such the County of Simcoe's obligation to meet provincial requirements for additional population need to be considered as well. Some of the work done by the County of Simcoe as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review discussion could lead to finding that balance of preserving farm land and other natural features and providing lands for future growth.

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

ANSWER: Council adopted a Climate Action Plan in April 2019. The plan recommends a 6% reduction Green House Gas (GHG) emissions reductions target for the community of 6% by 2028 and a 25% reduction target for the corporation by 2028. There were 14 recommendations contained in the report. I want to visit the actions taken to date to achieve the targets and work with Sustainable Severn Sound to develop new objectives to take the town to 2028.

In addition to the formal process outlined above, I'd like to see the Town's tree planting/replacement program reviewed to see if there are opportunities to plant more deciduous trees in the community so as to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the air.

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: Penetanguishene is an urban community with a defined urban boundary and very little farm land. What farm land exists is identified in the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law and is unserviced land. I would have to think long and hard about any request to extend services and change the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. I would support intensification within the urban boundary before expanding into designated farm land.

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: The County of Simcoe went through a lengthy process to determine a suitable site for the ERRC. Many studies were done on the property before the County moved forward and recently the Ontario Land Tribunal approved it. No matter where it is located it will draw attention and objection. According to the County web site the County selected a site that will only use 5% of the 207 acres with 95% of the forested area remaining untouched. I note that further approvals and processes are required from multiple levels of government before the project can proceed. In an ideal world, perhaps an industrial site would have been better. However, the County looked at several sites and picked this one. Given all the background work that has been done by different experts, I don't have an issue with it going where it is proposed.

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

ANSWER

1. Determining the future use of the former PSS site;
2. Developing a financial plan for the future arena/community centre, while keeping tax increases to a minimum;
3. Working with the County of Simcoe on bringing more affordable housing to Penetanguishene.

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.