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2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Jonathan Scott

Municipality: Bradford West Gwillimbury

Date: 29 August 2022

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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?

I agree with and prioritize both environmental protection and transparent decision making.

I have been a committed environmentalist since I was a teenager growing up in Bradford advocating for a national climate mitigation strategy.

In my private-sector career as a consultant, I've worked with environmental NGOs such as Georgian Bay Forever, the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance, CivicAction and several others to advance projects related to conservation, water protection and smart growth.

As a Councillor these past two years since I was elected in a byelection, I've worked to prioritize environmental protection, climate mitigation and smart growth strategies. For example, we undertook significant, multi-million retrofits to improve environmental controls at our wastewater treatment centre. I also led efforts across our watershed to secure landmark funding for the Lake Simcoe Phosphorus Recycling Facility, as well as restoring federal funding to protect the Lake Simcoe watershed. We've worked in Bradford to double the number of trees we plant as a municipality, to move forward with creating a riverfront trail and conservation area, we cut our bus transit fares to just a "buck a ride" while

increasing service, worked with the province to secure upgrades to our GO Train station, and transitioned several municipal facilities to LED lighting. I have also initiated the town's first climate change mitigation master plan process. Finally, my ward is at the centre of Bradford's efforts to "grow up, not out", with more density animating our downtown revitalization efforts and ensuring we reduce sprawl through smart growth, a tight urban boundary and in-fill developments, especially downtown condos.

In terms of accountability, I've worked to find efficiencies in our budget, resulting in over \$200,000 in savings for taxpayers. I also am very responsive and communicate directly across various media to residents to keep them informed and aware of what is going on at Council. As someone with a law degree, I also feel I pay particular attention to ensuring decisions are made properly, scrutiny is welcome and those who make poor decisions are held to account.

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, I do. Our region is meant to continue to grow, and I will continue to take action to ensure we grow in as sustainable a manner as possible (as outlined in my previous answer). This means not only that we need transportation infrastructure, including transit and walkable, cyclable communities, but also environmental protection infrastructure to ensure our watershed remains healthy, our forest and wetlands are preserved, and we support biodiversity, agriculture, recreation and all the activities our beautiful natural heritage supports in this part of Ontario.

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?

Representing Bradford, I will confess I am not familiar enough with the situation in the northern portion of Simcoe County to comment informedly. What I have focused on in my work in Bradford is protecting the Holland River, the Holland Marsh and the Lake Simcoe watershed (again, as outlined in my first answer).

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

I do, and as a member of the Ontario Greenbelt Council, I will continue to advocate for sensible and conservation-focused expansions to the Greenbelt.

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

I initiated a process for our town to create our first-ever climate change mitigation master plan. I see an “all of the above” strategy as critical, where we continue smart growth and prioritizing walkable, cyclable and transit-oriented communities, natural heritage conservation, as well as green energy and electric vehicles, including of our municipal fleet. I am excited to see the process towards creating this master plan unfold next term, and I also would like us to create a more expressly environmental-oriented town advisory committee.

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?

Bradford West Gwillimbury has insisted that we grow within our existing urban boundaries in order to maximize the kind of density we wish to pursue, particularly in my ward near our downtown and GO train station. As further articulated in a previous answer, I want to continue to ensure Bradford grows sustainably, with walkable, cyclable communities that have the right mix of density and greenspace. I am also proud of our farmers and make it a priority to regularly meet with the Holland Marsh Growers' Association who represent the farmers in my ward to be responsive to their concerns as stewards of the 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?

Again, as a Councillor for the south end of Simcoe County, I am not familiar enough to comment informedly about this matter. However, I will say that I have my own frustrations with Simcoe County and strongly believe the County needs to be reformed to deliver effective representation based on population. I believe Simcoe County needs to take seriously the frustrations its residents and even some of its Council members feel, and ensure it undertakes long-overdue governance reform to ensure better and more responsive decision making.

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

ANSWER

1. *Continue to revitalize the older end of town I represent*
2. *Continue to work to protect our environment*
3. *Continue to support the vulnerable*

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.