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2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

Randy Greenlaw

Oro-Medonte

Sept. 20,2021

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 share these objectives. I have spent the last 4 years on council arguing for transparency, accountability, integrity, honesty and professionalism generally. Unfortunately, I have held a minority view and I believe council has actually regressed becoming more hidden and secretive in decision-making and ultimately less accountable to the people who place their trust in us. Decisions about the preservation of farmland, the protection of water resources and natural heritage have far-reaching implications across our township and across generations. Within the bounds of personal privacy, it is absolutely imperative that we are candid and open with our decision making.

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. Protecting our water resources is a priority. As I have written below, trying to remediate groundwater is very difficult. It is far better to take preventative measures with our water resources rather than trying to ineffectively clean up our mistakes. Where aggregate extraction threatens the quality and quantity of our water resources, then we need to find other development solutions.

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. Groundwater and groundwater quality must be protected. Any land use that adversely affects the quality of groundwater must not be permitted and I will work to see that our groundwaters are protected. We will need to rely on the opinions of the learned who are expert on the subject and to follow their advice. As I understand it, large aquifers once contaminated are extremely difficult is not impossible to remediate. We cannot afford to make such mistakes.

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

It is my understanding that "The Greenbelt" designation is intended to permanently protect lands from development. This includes preventing the fragmentation of agricultural lands and the protection of natural heritage and water resources as urbanization occurs in south-central Ontario. I fully support these goals. I am strongly in favour of protecting our rich rural and agricultural heritage. To that end, a Greenbelt designation for some of our land could well be part of the solution to protecting our heritage and addressing climate change. I believe that the next logical step would be to gather the necessary data to evaluate what lands should be protected and what is the best way to protect them. Once these determinations have been made, the next steps would be to begin implementing our solution.

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

Combatting climate change has to begin locally. We can't change the world, but as a municipality we can certainly do our part to improve the part of the world that we can influence. Municipal governments should be leaders not followers. We need to set an example for others. We can lessen our carbon footprint by reducing our energy demands and by switching from carbon-based fuels to more renewable sources. We can also protect our existing trees that act as a carbon sink and a generator of oxygen, and we can take restorative measures like reforestation. What ever measures we take; we need to work with residents across the township and encourage all to lessen our impact on the environment.

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?

Yes. Protecting agricultural lands just makes sense. It is of strategic importance. We need to be able to feed our people and prime agricultural land is finite. From Provincial Policy Statements (PPS) to our local zoning by-laws, we already have the planning tools in place that protect agriculture lands. We also have great planning resources that we can rely on from OMAFRA to the OFA to our own planners on staff. We just need to adhere to our plans and enforce them and not allow our agricultural lands to be lost to short-term piece-meal thinking. Where necessary, we may need to strengthen our planning by-laws. The PPS allows municipalities to go beyond the minimum standards where there are matters of local importance.

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?

Generally, when poor planning decisions are made, they are difficult to right but we can try. Depending on the issue, in this case it is a waste handling facility, we would need to get the facts and evaluate them. Based on what we find, we would need to build the case, and persuade others that we need and can do better. Building a case, means working with informed ratepayers and utilizing the expertise of staff and consultants who can provide candid, and non-conclusion-oriented advice. This is a crucial step as we try to persuade others that we need to do better and ultimately make future generations proud of our decisions too.

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

I have set out my priorities on my campaign website and in my campaign literature. I have actually set out 4 priorities. These are:

1. Community Health and Safety
2. Fiscal Responsibility/Accountability

3. Good planning and improved services

4. Promoting Resident Communication and Engagement

Environmental considerations underlie every decision that we make and are integral and inseparable from these four priorities. We need to be sure that our decisions consider not only the needs of the people here today, but the people who follow as well. As Mayor, I would like our children and our grandchildren to be proud of our decisions too. I know we can achieve this if we all work together.

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.