

2026 SAUGEEN SHORES MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE SURVEY

Section 1: Vibrant Downtowns & Tourism Saugeen Shores BIA businesses serve residents year-round while also being an important tourism destination. BIAs help animate communities through marketing, events, beautification and placemaking

QUESTION 3

Would you support partnering with the BIA through financial contributions, letters of support or joint grant applications to deliver events, beautification projects and public realm improvements? Please explain.

Brian Putman (Not Putnam)

Mayor

The BIA and municipal economic development staff would be encouraged to work together to develop grant applications and deliver events. In addition, the municipality should encourage the continued participation of engaged public volunteers with respect to beautification projects.

Jeffrey J James

Mayor

I fully support partnering with the BIA through letters of support, joint grant applications, and budget collaborations because these partnerships leverage private sector energy and volunteer commitment to deliver public improvements at a fraction of the cost to taxpayers.

Luke Charbonneau

Mayor

Yes. I have supported many such partnerships with the BIAs in the past. I will continue to do so. I would include ongoing support for the in-kind contributions that facilitate BIA events and support their operations. I believe that we have been particularly successful in our partnerships supporting beautification. I look forward to working with the BIAs to advance more public art and events over the next four years. It is also a priority of mine to see the Town work with the BIAs to address the longstanding issue of dead trees in downtown Port Elgin.

Diane Huber

Deputy Mayor

I hope Municipal staff are already providing letters of support or co-applications when desirable or possible. There will be funds in various budget lines that may be available for BIA uses. The economic development team should be working through those collaborative actions. Additionally, BIAs can make requests via the annual business planning process or via a delegation to Council that will could provide opportunities for both in-kind support as well as dollars. Good ideas are always worth getting before Council and I am always interested in hearing those ideas and with considering how the Municipality might be able to help.

Odette Bartnicki

Deputy Mayor

Absolutely. I would support appropriate financial contributions, letters of support and joint grant applications for events, beautification and public-space improvements. Town staff and the BIAs should identify available funding, assess our grant-writing capacity and learn from municipalities with strong application records.

Partnerships with organizations responsible for events such as the Marine Heritage Festival and Pumpkinfest should also be strengthened. Where initiatives demonstrate clear community and economic benefits, predictable multi-year support would allow better planning and help attract additional funding.

Don Matheson

Vice Deputy Mayor

Yes, I would support these partnerships where they provide clear benefits to the business community and Saugeen Shores as a whole.

The BIAs submit their annual budgets to Council for approval, creating an opportunity to discuss priorities and identify areas where cooperation makes sense. Depending on the project, municipal support could include financial contributions, letters of support, in-kind assistance or joint grant applications.

By working together, the municipality and BIAs can make available funding go further and help deliver successful events, beautification projects and improvements to our public spaces. Each proposal should be considered fairly, transparently and with respect for the different needs of both BIAs

Jordan MacKinnon

Port Elgin

Yes, yes and yes. A thousand times yes. BIA budgets are limited in what they can achieve on their own and grants are an excellent way to do big things without burdening the membership levy. The municipality can leverage its staff, who have plenty of experience writing grant applications and council can help with funding, whether its partnerships, interest-free loans or other avenues of financial support.

Patricia Corrigan-Frank

Councillor Port Elgin Ward

Financial contributions are important but I feel we are trying to get to 0 budget financing or keep it to cost of living increases so I am hesitant to suggest more \$\$ at this time until budget time. I would certainly support working collaboratively on grant applications for these type of projects and look forward to brainstorming new ideas.

Rachel Stack

Port Elgin Ward Councillor

Yes, it goes without saying that letters of support and joint grant applications are necessary means of support to deliver events, undertake beautification projects and public realm improvements. Additionally, as Port Elgin Ward Councillor, if elected, I would support assessing whether and to what extent the Town can provide financial contributions towards such initiatives, provided there is a clear benefit to public.

Tamara McDonald

Councilor- Port Elgin Ward

Yes, I would support partnering with our BIAs through letters of support, joint grant applications and, where it makes sense, financial contributions. We have two very different downtowns in Saugeen Shores and I think we should recognize and support what makes each one unique rather than taking a one size fits all approach.

I also want to be honest that municipal funding ultimately comes from our taxpayers. I would support partnerships that are responsible, have a clear community benefit and make good use of available grants or other funding opportunities. I believe we can do more together without automatically putting the entire cost on the taxpayer.

Eric Tolton

Saugeen Ward Councillor

Yes, where there is a clear community benefit and sound business case. I particularly support joint grant applications and partnerships that leverage BIA and Municipal resources to attract funding from other sources.

Neil Sarginson

Saugeen Ward Councillor

I would support a partnership as long as a viable short and long term business plan supported the improvements. We need to be fiscally prudent given the current economic and fiscal environment

Brenda Reeves

Southampton Ward councillor

Yes, I would support through letters of support, joint grant applications, and where appropriate, carefully considered municipal funding. These partnerships can stretch local dollars further, support our businesses and create lively, welcoming downtown areas. Any contribution should be fair, transparent, and provide clear value for taxpayers.

Cathe McIntosh

Councillor, Southampton Ward

Yes, where there is a clear small business/BIA benefit and it is appropriate and permissible for the municipality to do so.

Cheryl Grace

Southampton ward councillor

Yes, of course. We are so lucky to have dedicated business owners who care about our public spaces and downtowns and show that dedication through their volunteer efforts and monetary contributions. Saugeen Shores didn't have an Economic Development manager until 2016. We need to continue to use that position to support our businesses and downtowns through all of the tools you mentioned above. Meaningful consultation and communication is essential to maintain the most productive working relationship.

Harry Mazmanian

Southampton Ward

I would if there is an effective, documented effort to include residents in this process.

John Divinski

Councillor, Southampton Ward

Of course since every little bit helps. Major projects are made up of major partnerships. It's how you get things done.

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