

2026 SAUGEEN SHORES MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE SURVEY

Section 2: Partnership with the BIA

BIAs are local boards of Council. A productive relationship between the BIA, Council and municipal staff can help identify challenges, develop solutions and ensure municipal decisions reflect the needs of the business community.

QUESTION 6

What municipal service standards do you believe are most important within the BIAs, such as cleanliness, garbage collection, landscaping, infrastructure maintenance and snow removal, and how should these service levels be measured and improved over time?

Brian Putman (Not Putnam)

Mayor

I believe that all of the indicators mentioned above contribute greatly to the overall view and continued viability of businesses in Saugeen Shores. I plan to develop a performance framework that will be developed with the BIA's, local businesses and the public to produce achievable service delivery targets in these areas.

Jeffrey J James

Mayor

I think we need to create a conduit of information and feedback from business owners, tax payers and the respective BIA's to inform council of what is working and what isn't. I am a big proponent of year round public garbage collection and improving the curb appeal of our entire municipality.

Luke Charbonneau

Mayor

All of the service areas listed in the question are important to Council. We have set levels of service in each of these areas. We measure our performance at meeting those standards on an ongoing basis and report the results to the public annually. Levels of service can be improved, over time, in an affordable and sustainable way. I support working to achieve this through careful, long term planning. As our 10 year capital and operating budgets enable us to find savings, efficiencies and new revenue sources, it will be possible for us to enhance core services.

Diane Huber

Deputy Mayor

The Town will have a service standard protocol outlining timing etc. for regular maintenance as well as seasonal and winter operations activities. I hope this information is shared with the BIA Boards for awareness. I want our community to look good always. Visitors and residents should see that public assets and spaces are being taken care of generally and most definitely when there's emergency needs due to weather events or events/programs that require enhanced servicing. If things don't look good or aren't being attended to individuals or the BIA itself should be commenting or questioning to enable the Town to assess situations and adjust or enact servicing as needed. Specific to landscaping - trees and plants have to be kept alive and healthy. If trees, in particular, are struggling to survive or are dead they need to be removed and replaced with appropriate trees or other decorative features. I'm not a big fan of hanging baskets downtown but I do really appreciate the potted containers that frame the sidewalk and are so visually significant to pedestrians (feet on the street). The look and feel (the vibe) on the street should help energize the areas in front of restaurants, professional services and retail operations downtown - if that's not happening the BIAs can work with the town economic development staff and the community services staff to see what can be improved. Proper, attractive, accessible public bathroom facilities are necessary. We don't have enough facilities available and the ones that exist are outdated and not so accessible. We can do better. I think the Town does a good job with snow removal in the cores but there may be room for additional sidewalk plowing and quicker removal of snowbanks to provide for a better pedestrian experience. Special attention to intersections is vital too to ensure safe crossings for diners and shoppers.

Odette Bartnicki

Deputy Mayor

Cleanliness, reliable garbage collection, attractive landscaping, safe sidewalks and roads, timely snow removal, and well-maintained lighting and infrastructure are essential to successful business. Standards should include clear schedules and response times, regular inspections, and an easy way for businesses to report problems and receive a response. The Town and BIAs should review results and business feedback following each season, identify recurring concerns, and adjust service levels where needed.

Don Matheson

Vice Deputy Mayor

For me, it really comes down to taking care of what we have.

Our downtowns should be clean, safe and welcoming. Things like garbage collection, snow removal, sidewalks, landscaping and general maintenance may seem like small things, but people notice when they're not being done well.

And I think we need to listen to the businesses that are there every day. They're often the first ones to see where there's a problem.

That's also an important role for the Council representative on the BIA—to be that liaison between the BIA and the Town, to listen to what's working and what isn't, and make sure those concerns are brought back to Council and staff.

For me, it's pretty simple: maintain what we have, keep the lines of communication open, and fix the problems when we find them.

Jordan MacKinnon

Port Elgin

All services that the municipality provides within the BIAs are important. The most important thing is that these services are provided consistently. First impressions are lasting impressions, so making sure our downtown is clean, well-kept and accessible is paramount.

I think a reporting system that tracks complaints, observations from staff, BIA members can help identify ideal service levels. I'm quite confident these things are already happening; it's just a matter of making sure the data is shared and discussed prior to setting service levels for the next budget.

Patricia Corrigan-Frank

Councillor Port Elgin Ward

These services should also be part of the MOU that defines Municipal v. BIA responsibilities. I would like to know who is currently responsible for these items. I imagine local businesses were not happy when, as of January 2026, they no longer had curbside recycling. They now have a drop-off. Where is that? Does the BIA supply flower baskets and Muskoka chairs? What else? I assume the sidewalks, garbage, snow removal are the responsibility of the Town.

Rachel Stack

Port Elgin Ward Councillor

From a BIA perspective, cleanliness, garbage collection, and snow removal are the most critical. Services levels should be baselined every 5-years and adjusted for growth.

Tamara McDonald

Councilor- Port Elgin Ward

I think the basics matter. Clean streets, reliable garbage collection, good snow removal, well maintained sidewalks, landscaping, and infrastructure all contribute to how our downtowns look and function. I'd want clear service standards, for example, response times, how often areas are cleaned or maintained, how quickly issues are addressed and whether snow and garbage removal are being done within the expected time frames. I would want regular feedback from the BIAs and businesses because they see these issues everyday. Those standards should be reviewed regularly using that information. If we aren't meeting them I think we need to understand why, look at what can be improved and measure again to make sure those changes are actually working.

Eric Tolton

Saugeen Ward Councillor

Services such as garbage collection, snow removal, and infrastructure maintenance are all important to successful commercial areas. Service standard should be clear and easily measurable. Regular BIA input should be solicited to help identify problems and opportunities for improvement.

Neil Sarginson

Saugeen Ward Councillor

Clean streets are welcoming and encourage people to stay longer. Snow Clearing & Winter Access should be priority including clearance of pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalk and municipal parking lots within the BIA. Clearing snow banks at curb-cuts is critical to keeping street-level storefronts accessible and visible. Landscaping should include scheduled watering, pruning, and health monitoring of municipal trees, planters, and gardens. Infrastructure Maintenance should be timely including repair of broken sidewalk, damaged curbs, curb extensions and street furniture. All services should be measured with the goal of continuous improvement

Brenda Reeves

Southampton Ward councillor

Both downtowns should be clean, safe, attractive, and accessible year-round. I would prioritize garbage collection, well kept landscapes, prompt infrastructure repairs and timely snow and ice removal. Service standards should be public and measured through response times, inspections, receiving complaints and regular BIA feedback with council reviewing results annually and addressing gaps.

Cathe McIntosh

Councillor, Southampton Ward

Access is key: snow removal and clean and accessible sidewalks. Timely communication is essential when road closures, construction or other municipal issues could interrupt access to businesses. If there are other municipal services that negatively impact (or are a positive impact), I would ask the BIAs what they need and identify whether it is within the municipalities ability to respond. Clear service standards regarding snow clearing and street maintenance could be further explored if needed.

Cheryl Grace

Southampton ward councillor

All of these service standards are important, and our staff should collaborate with BIAs to ensure that those standards are being upheld. The exclusion of businesses from curbside pickup through the provincial changes to recycling collection is frustrating, and I'm sure the businesses are very annoyed. The Town is providing special depots for collection of recyclables at the landfill, but our staff needs to check in with those who have been designated as "ineligible sources" by the province to see how that system is working and what else the Town could do to make things easier. For example, would it be helpful to businesses to have the landfill open until 7 PM to make it easier to get recycling to the landfill? Likewise, regular check-in with downtown businesses about street furniture placement, what kinds of plantings, are plants and trees being watered? Our business people are there every day, so their observations are invaluable, and staff should be checking in regularly.

Harry Mazmanian

Southampton Ward

All of these municipal services are important. These services can be measured through recorded and published online surveys and town hall meetings where attendees can voice their opinion via a paper questionnaire that is tallied, recorded and published. Also, regular reports from town departments heads detailing their review of operations under their specific control, including required additional support or procedural modifications is essential.

John Divinski

Councillor, Southampton Ward

Cleanliness which includes garbage collection and landscaping; Safety of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians is paramount; and making the business section a nice place to visit and be in.

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