

## **Responses of Dale West**

### **SOS Collingwood Questions for Candidates for Collingwood Town Council**

**1.) In order of priority how would you rank the top five (5) priorities for the Town of Collingwood over the next 4 years?**

The managing of development and growth will be a key priority, as will financial stability. We are also going to be busy focusing on keeping the town affordable while providing residents with opportunities to enjoy the recreational lifestyle important to us all. Very little that happens in our neighbouring communities won't affect us and vice versa. With that in mind strong inter-community relationships and cooperation will be vital.

**2.) Much has been said recently about the need for greater "Transparency" in how the Town conducts its affairs. What changes do you think are necessary to improve transparency in how Council, and Town staff, make decisions?**

When it comes to transparency keeping residents informed is an important duty of council. The bigger the issue the more updates provided is crucial. There are procedures in place, and it never hurts to review them regularly to make sure every effort is being made to give the residents a chance to review if they choose.

**3.) What is your position on inter-governmental cooperation between the Town and its neighbouring municipalities (e.g. the Town of Blue Mountains, Clearview and Wasaga Beach) and where and how do you think such cooperation would most benefit Collingwood?**

I included inter-community relationships in the question about priorities. We have a number of municipalities in close proximity and while each has its own goals and visions and strategies there is very little that happens in each community that doesn't affect the other. Services that benefit the residents like transit are examples of how co-operation should work and an inter-community task force could investigate potential projects of a similar nature.

**4.) Collingwood is under intense development pressure like it has never seen before in its history. What increased complexities and pressures do you think this presents, and how will you ensure the Town's planning and building departments are equipped to address them? Are there any additional skills and experience you feel are required to manage these pressures?**

Note: The candidate provided a single combined answer to questions 4 & 5. It is printed below question 5.

**5.) The mounting development pressure in the Town is generating a heightened level of community interest in the Town's planning and development process and decisions. Do you think the Town has adequate public consultation processes in place to deal with these decisions or do you think changes are required, and if so, what changes?**

The staff members at town hall are professional, and take pride in being up to date with the skills and knowledge required to deal with growth and development demands. As a council it is important to encourage and facilitate professional development to help the people in these departments do their job to the benefit of residents. I also think that council needs to have Queen's Park review a policy that was set earlier this century. Does that plan still expectations that are reasonable for a municipality?

Staff already has a procedure to follow that makes efforts to keep people informed about projects. Every proposal must follow this process. But as with all procedures a regular review to test the effectiveness of the procedure is a good idea.

**6.) The Town has recently approved a Waterfront Master Plan. What is your perspective on that plan? Do you think it contains the right priorities or are there changes you feel are required? Should its implementation be a priority for the new Council?**

Note: The candidate provided a single combined answer to questions 6 & 7. It is printed below question 7.

**7.) Both the Waterfront Master Plan and the Town's Official Plan state that the protection of Collingwood's sensitive wetlands and shoreline areas are a top priority. How would you rate Collingwood's performance in protecting these areas to date? Do you think Collingwood currently has appropriate processes and controls in place to protect these areas (especially from development), or do you think improvements are required, and if so, what improvements?**

The unfortunate reality about Master Plans is that they are designed to look well into the future, which of course means beyond the mandate of the council that introduces them. It is important to understand the core goal of a plan, and determine if it contains attainable targets. This current plan contains elements that have been long discussed in the community, how they are implemented remains to be seen. It is council's job to help the plan become reality. It is highly unlikely everyone will agree on the order of the projects but that shouldn't keep the plan from advancing.

**8.) What role do you see Collingwood's protected wetland and shoreline areas playing in your vision of the Town's social, cultural and economic future?**

The town doesn't work alone when it comes to the protection of sensitive lands near wetlands and the shoreline. Anyone wishing to develop must follow strict criteria. Yes I think there are appropriate controls in place, and feel it vital that council protects various setbacks and buffer zone, and where possible enhance those protections.

**9.) SOS Collingwood has raised specific concerns regarding the recent development proposal for the Living Waters/Bear Estate property. While the developer has asked the Town of defer consideration of the application until 2019, a decision on the matter will likely come before Council early in its next term. What are your views on that proposal and what level of public consultation and input do you feel needs to occur?**

With the conflicting views presented over the past several weeks it is fortunate that the next council will have a chance to review the ideas and concerns fully. Because the recent stories have probably drawn more people to be aware of the plans it will also be a good chance to hold more public sessions to review the steps that have led to this point, and get more input.