

Responses of Sal Greco

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?

- **1st Local Economy:**

Council needs to focus on bringing jobs to Collingwood and preventing the loss of jobs. We need to understand how regional and national issues like NAFTA impact local businesses and then execute plans with the community to prevent economic hardship.

- **2nd A Healthcare Campus aligned with the new hospital:**

We need to work with Georgian College to create a “Health Care Campus” on Poplar Road adjacent to our new hospital to train new health care providers for the 21st century.

- **3rd A GO Transit Link to Barrie:**

Collingwood needs weekday, rush-hour GO Transit bus service to Barrie to bring new jobs and workers to our town. In the future, we need all-day bus service to Barrie seven days a week.

- **4th Waterfront development:**

Access to Georgian Bay is a tremendous asset. Let’s use our waterfront as an attraction for everyone. Repair the elevator. It’s a landmark for Collingwood. Our town’s heritage is shipbuilding. Why not bring the SS Keewatin to Collingwood harbour? Or a navy ship? And, I’m not onboard with selling any remaining waterfront property.

- **5th Accountability & Taxes:**

We need fiscal responsibility and common-sense action by Council. I believe in finding ways to save money and spending that increases value. Taxpayers must know their tax dollars are well-spent.

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?

- Council’s decision-making must be open to all its citizens. Council needs to make a firm commitment to ending in-camera meetings that prompt concerns about Council secrecy.

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?

- A very good question. Many of the issues that Collingwood faces are shared by Blue Mountains, Wasaga Beach and Clearview. Finding a solution to the big-scale problems requires a strong, unified voice. We need to focus our combined our combined resources and where necessary use our combined clout at Queen's Park.

For example, providing low-cost housing.

Council needs to work with all levels of government to identify real opportunities to provide low-cost housing to young people, seniors, and those who want to work in our town. The cost of housing must not be a deterrent to people living in our community.

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?

- Someone once said, *"We live in challenging times"*.

This is certainly true for Collingwood today. We're fortunate to have this challenge of balancing the priorities of our citizens, our seniors, our children, our weekenders and our tourists.

Collingwood has unlimited potential. We have everything that can make our community a great community with advantages and attractions that would be the envy of any community, anywhere.

But as the question states, Collingwood faces unprecedented pressures in areas of development. We need to make the right decisions for our citizens and our future citizens. That said, I support a full review of our current competencies to manage growth. That includes adopting, where appropriate, best practices of other governments and evaluating our planning function.

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?

- Our community needs to be aware of its future. Our citizens need to know what is planned for development, have an opportunity to voice their support or concerns and once that communication process has been completed, move forward with the decision.

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?

- As I stated in Question 1 Priorities, the Waterfront is a high priority for me.
Let's use our waterfront as an attraction for everyone. Repair the elevator. It's a landmark for Collingwood. Our town's heritage is shipbuilding. Why not bring the SS Keewatin to Collingwood harbour? Or a navy ship?
And let me be very clear, I'm not onboard with selling any remaining waterfront property.

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?

- Collingwood is doing a good job in protecting its wetlands. But, we can always do better. We should anticipate threats to the wetlands in future. Anticipating this, Council should review its wetlands processes and controls to ensure that they provide the required protection for the wetlands. They are our legacy.

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 wetlands and the waterfront are the keys to our future. They should be focal points for the Town's social and cultural future. In terms of the economic future, I am very cautious as I do not support any future sales of our harbour lands and wetlands.

Collingwood has tremendous potential. We have everything that can make our community a great community with advantages and attractions that would be

the envy of any community, anywhere. The wetlands and the harbour are the crown jewels in that potential.

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?

- I support a proposed Conference Center at the Bear Estate.

A new conference center will provide an economic stimulus to the town and provide more jobs. But ... let's not ignore the guidelines identified by town planning act. A new conference center on the footprint of the existing Bear Estate not exceeding five stories. And, let's ensure that we provide our citizens with the opportunity to consult and provide input.