



2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTION ALL-CANDIDATES FORUM

WARD COUNCILLOR RESPONSES

DON HOWE – WARD 2

Question: *In addition to the watermain reconstruction downtown and Downtown Reimagined, what other infrastructure projects need to be addressed over the next four years?*

Answer: A huge unknown will be service and supply requirements for current and future mega-developments over and above the usual items. While a lot of these questions would have been dealt with at the planning stage, what about such items as water and sewage treatment and hydro capacity. Part of infrastructure is also the person related needs. How does the pedestrian move around either by foot, bike, or car. How do we provide the spaces that people need for a better life and by extension, health.



Question: *The toxic environment and lack of decorum at council meetings over the last four years is well-documented, and reflects the disturbingly disrespectful discord in politics at all levels right now. How would you, as a member of the next council, contribute to a more respectful and collaborative environment within council chambers and dealing with staff, to focus on making Grimsby a better place for residents, the business community, and visitors?*



Answer: The answer to the first part of the question is by being respectful, honest, open and with integrity in dealings with council, employees and constituents. Respectful being the fact that what we do is for the Town of Grimsby not our own egos or biases. Returning to a committee-based governance model allows for more information, which is critical to decision making, to flow between staff and the council members on that committee. Which in turn should eliminate theatrics at the council meeting.



Question: *What will you do to encourage the growth of the industrial and commercial tax base and control the rise in residential taxes?*

Answer: The Economic Development Strategy of the Town is a good start to growing the industrial and commercial tax base. However, we are not a municipality, such as Brantford, that has a lot of space around available for industrial development. We have between the lake and the railway tracks, along with limited opportunities on the escarpment. We need to target businesses to come to the little space that we have available, such as industrial and commercial plazas.



Question: *How do you plan to address the important issues and social justice initiatives of our time? The housing crisis, gender equity, Indigenous Reconciliation, 2SLGBTQ+ rights and safety, to name just a few.*

Answer: Many of these issues are mandated by upper levels of government. However, at the municipal level, we can ensure that, first and foremost, we lead by example, by ensuring that all people are treated with respect and honor. We must ensure that our policies, bylaws, etc enshrine equality. House affordability is difficult for a small community to develop on its own unless it has property, but support of local social agencies such as GBF is important.



Question: *Intensification is inevitable. Increased density is needed, especially along Main Street, to support the hospital and the GO train. How will you balance the need for intensification with preserving Grimsby's strong heritage?*

Answer: This question seems to suggest that Main Street intensification is the anchor for the hospital and Go train. The Go train wants riders; it does not matter where that rider lives. The hospital as it grows will need housing for staff recruiting purposes. Preserving our Heritage is what gives a Town character. Integrating the apartment/condo buildings with our heritage is the challenge. Part of that solution is to make sure the buildings and their surrounds are people friendly.



Question: *Economic Development is an investment, not an expense. Grimsby is finally catching up with our neighbours by hiring an Economic Development Officer. Do you support the Economic Development Strategy and its implementation? Will you invest in Grimsby's future to attract and retain jobs?*

Answer: See Question 3 answer. It is the function of Council to attract businesses that will supply jobs and increase the tax base and I will participate and support any ventures that are viable and will meet these goals.

