

Municipal Election Questions

As BIAs are self-funded local boards of Council and must remain non-partisan, we share our priorities through 'Our BIA Believes' statements. We invite all candidates to review these priorities and share how they would support them if elected.

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* Indicates required question

Name of Candidate *

Andrew MacGregor



What are you running for? *

- ☐ Office of Mayor
- ☐ Councillor Ward 1 - Otonabee
- ☐ Councillor Ward 2 - Monaghan
- ☐ Councillor Ward 3 - Town
- ☒ Councillor Ward 4 - Ashburnham
- ☐ Councillor Ward 5 - Northcrest

Marketing, Communications & Events

Our BIA believes that a vibrant downtown requires a strong promotion, tourism support, and community animation, and that municipalities should partner with BIAs to support events, placemaking, and the activation of vacant spaces to attract visitors and strengthen our district as a destination.

How will you support the promotion and animation of our downtown by partnering with the BIA to attract visitors, support tourism, activate vacant spaces, and invest in community events, beautification, and placemaking initiatives that strengthen our district as a destination? *

As a DBIA member for a few years now, I have been increasingly involved in DBIA event initiatives, helping to bring attractions/events to our downtown, and heartily promoting events and initiatives that really just need my vocal support.

After recent conversations with DBIA staff, board members, and other members, it has been made abundantly clear to me that what our DBIA needs most is vocal support at City Hall. I have heard over and over again how much the DBIA puts in effort to make things happen on behalf of businesses downtown only to be met with apathetic bureaucratic support. As an Ashburnham Ward candidate, who lives in Ashburnham Ward, and as a business owner in Town Ward, both wards which are DBIA program areas, my direct vocal support on Council will be a welcome representation for all of us business owners.



Vacant properties can be a blight on our downtown. How would you support enhancing property standards and encouraging property owners to improve and animate vacant or under-utilized properties in the BIA? *

There is an old adage that we sometimes forget in business, "Many fishers catch more fish." Often times we are tempted to believe that we are in competition with each other, but in reality, the restaurant that watches a new restaurant open across the street benefits from a greater capacity to catch customers together--customers feel more confident about "Getting a table" when there are more options, and feel less risk about making the trip to either one.

Our downtown is better when storefronts are beautiful, operating, and delivering excellent experiences to our neighbours.

An unfortunate reality that we are faced with is the provincial and federal taxation policies that treat unrealized commercial rent income as actual loss; a commercial property owner who collected \$1000 from one property but has a vacant \$1000/mo property will pay \$0 in taxes, removing any economic incentive to fill the unit or to maintain competitive pricing.

As such, I would be in favour of economic stimulus that make it easier for occupants to move in:

- assigned case managers for new business applicants
- reduced application/registration fees
- more transparent business permitting requirements



Downtowns are tourism destinations. How would you support the use of Municipal Accommodation Tax funding to enhance the downtown? *

I believe that taxes should be prioritized against behaviours we want to curtail.

A Municipal Accommodation Tax will increase the financial burden on visitors, reducing the demographic that can travel to experience what we offer. We should not want to penalize people coming to visit and staying at hotels in the area.

That said, if such a tax were deemed democratically preferable, I would advocate to apply its revenues as such:

- improvements to public transportation: beautiful and effective busses and routes marketed to tourists increases ridership (first by tourist adoption, second by local adoption), fare collection, reduced parking frustrations, making the bus programs entirely more financially stable
- towards infrastructure or capital investment projects: currently we can not afford expensive legacy projects that could aid in driving tourist income (A chicken or egg problem!)

Would you support financial contributions, letters of support, or joint grant applications with the BIA to implement community events, beautification projects, and placemaking initiatives such as patios, planters, wayfinding signage, street furniture, and lighting? *

Yes! With enthusiasm.

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