

Greenspace Alliance Municipal Election Survey

Judy Varga-Toth
Ward 5

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Q1 1. How important is green space for residents of your ward? **Very important**

Q2 1a. What do you believe is the greatest threat to greenspace in your ward?

The biggest threat is the risk of a lack support of the rural population on such initiatives when the City rules and regulations don't take into account the differences between rural and urban areas. A recent example is the Site Alteration By-law that required last minute amending to reflect the rural concerns.

Q3 2a. Are you aware of the City of Ottawa's Urban Forest Management Plan?

Somewhat Aware

Q4 2b. Funding of the UMFP has only been approved by council for the first year. If elected, will you support the funding of years two, three, and four of the Urban Forest Management Plan?

Yes

Q5 2c. How important is the Urban Forest Management Plan to you as an elected official?

Somewhat important

Q6 3a. Are you aware of the City of Ottawa's Site Alteration By-law?

Moderately aware

Q7 3b. The by-law will come back to council in two years to assess how well it has been working .The current method of enforcement is a complaint based system. The City of Ottawa is the only municipality in Ontario with a Site Alteration by-law that does not include a permit based system. As an elected official, would you consider moving from a complaint based system (after the fact) to a permit based system (in advance)?

Yes

Q8 How important is having a Site Alteration By-law to you as an elected official? **Somewhat important**

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SurveyMonkey

Q9 4a. Are you aware of the City of Ottawa's Significant Woodland Policy? **Somewhat aware**

Q104b. This policy (OPA 179) is under appeal and may return to council for consideration in 2019. As an elected official will you support the approval of the current Significant Woodland Policy? **No**

Q114c. How important is having a Significant Woodland Policy to you as an elected official? **Somewhat important**

Q125a. Are you aware of these Tree Conservation Bylaws? **Somewhat aware**

Q13i. Extend the protection to trees of 20 cm in diameter, down from 30 cm? **No**

Q14ii. Expand the definition of Distinctive Trees? **No**

Q15iii. Significantly increase the penalties for breaching the bylaw? **No**

Q165c. How important are the two Urban Tree Conservation By-laws to you as an elected official? **Not so important**

Q176a. Are you aware of the Greenspace Master Plan? **Somewhat aware**

Q186b. The Official Plan will be reviewed during the next term of Council, including the Greenspace Master Plan, which has not been updated since 2003. As an elected official, would you support these greenspace objectives set out in the Greenspace Master Plan and Official Plan? **Yes**

Q196c. How important is the Greenspace Master Plan to you as an elected official? **Somewhat important**

Q206d. Every review of the official plan addresses expanding the urban boundary, which results in the loss of rural green space. As an elected official, what is your opinion of urban expansion? Are you more likely to support intensifying within the urban boundary or expanding into rural Ottawa? Please explain.

"Rural population intensification" (as very different from suburban "sprawl") could be desirable but this requires thoughtful consideration and a plan. The Greenspace Plan, however, does not include any specific rural area and only refers generically to extensions from the urban area. It promises a "work program" for 2007 for the rural area but this is another needed plan that has yet to be addressed after a decade.

There is also a stated concern in the greenspace plan itself that "...there is a perception that Provincial and municipal land-use policy is 'urban-centric.'" Unfortunately, such plans have a much greater impact on individual landowners in the rural area than they do in the urban area. For example, rural residents are restricted in severances a small single lot in an Agricultural Resource Area but urban expansion can remove hundreds of hectares of agricultural land at a time."

There is a need to have a made-in-Ottawa solution for land-use issues that arise in Ottawa. The answer to concerns might be to allow farmers to develop a larger - yet still limited - portion of their land into housing lots, rather than restricting them to a single lot for a family member.

Q217a. Are you aware of the Chalk River nuclear waste disposal plan? **Very aware**

Q227b. In April 2018, mayors in the Montreal Metropolitan Community (CMM) unanimously opposed the proposal to build the permanent nuclear waste disposal site in Chalk River, Ontario. As an elected official, would you support a Council declaration opposing to the Chalk River nuclear waste disposal plan?

Respondent skipped this question

Q238. Do you have any other thoughts or comments about greenspace in Ottawa?

This survey is very much focused on issues of concern to urban residents and pays little attention to the rural aspects. Rural residents are very much aware of and concerned with greenspaces as this is so much part of the heritage of many of us. Our roots are inseparable from the management and protection of our environment. Our livelihood and survival have depended on it.

As in too many areas, regulations that will impact on the use of land must be thoughtfully viewed through the city's "Equity and Inclusion Lens for Rural Residents" at the earliest stages in order to properly reflect the needs of the rural component of our city and to avoid unnecessary conflict.

In the Greenspace Plan/ "Managing Land" Council is supposed to model stewardship on city-owned land and maintain or enhance its greenspace function. Consideration should be given to more non-permanent and productive use of greenspaces such as BeetBox that are agricultural in nature but are also very "green" in that the visual landscape is preserved. This is a very functional minimalist approach to local food production that leads to better health and lower greenhouse gas outcomes.

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