

The Survey

Question 1

Special interest groups can dominate citizen participation, use misleading information and false context to frame an issue or an individual, and influence public opinion. What, in your opinion, should be done to reduce conflict that could arise in the municipality?

Better communication between Council and the public would reduce conflict and in some cases, may reduce or eliminate the need for a special interest group. However, special interest groups have their place and in some circumstances can bring important ideas and information to Council for consideration.

Question 2

In order that citizens may have a say in local government policy, there must be involvement beyond simply casting a vote. How would you propose to increase citizen input to the business of the municipality during your term as a member of Council?

For important issues, there should be open committees made up of residents and Councillors. There would be notices to the public of meetings so that matters can be discussed openly at the committee level with public input before being discussed at a Council meeting. In this way, residents could be heard and concerns could be addressed long before a vote at Council is being considered.

Question 3

Our elected Council manages over 20 million dollars of public money in the municipal treasury each year. Many citizens wish to reduce their municipal taxes, but few want their public services cut back. Which services would you reduce or eliminate if taxes were to be lowered: fire, police, garbage, library, roads, snow removal, recreation, drainage, or other? Why would you cut these?

Drainage is not a municipal expense. I would not cut any of the other services. It is unrealistic to expect taxes to be reduced. Municipal taxes go up with inflation. The high quality of services that the Town provides makes Mississippi Mills an attractive place to come to live. For seniors unable to pay property taxes there is a deferral program.

Question 4

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' statistics regarding Mississippi Mills' industrial base, state that the largest growth in jobs since 2011 has been in the arts, entertainment and recreation industry, an increase of 81%.

How would you sustain this prosperous community business sector?

Council financially supports the cultural and recreational sectors in the Town with grants to museums, concerts, festivals and the fair board. The Town provides arenas, ball parks, numerous soccer fields, a splash pad, parks and the Old Town Hall as a performing center. Council must maintain these programs and be receptive to new recreation and entertainment proposals.

Question 5

Some Ramsay and Pakenham rural residents of Mississippi Mills, residents in the village of Pakenham and hamlets of Appleton, Blakeney and Clayton, feel they are being under-served relative to Almonte Town.

Describe how you would deal with this issue.

Pakenham has had a recent arena renovation and a major redevelopment of the library both of which serve the whole township. Mississippi Mills provides road maintenance, garbage pick-up and snow plowing to all rural areas. We have completed 7 rural bridges at close to \$1 million per bridge. We are developing the 2020 plan which will provide fiber optic internet service to the rural areas. Council brought in experts to demonstrate how on-site sewer and water services could be developed in a small community. Council is working with the rural residents to maintain and improve services.

Question 6

The Ontario government, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing follows provincial policy as stated in the Planning Act requiring each incorporated Ontario municipality to create and maintain an Official Plan. The primary purpose of the Official Plan is to provide the basis for managing growth that will support and emphasize the municipality's unique character, diversity, civic identity, rural lifestyle and heritage features

An Official Plan is a guide which sets out a vision of the community into the future. The way the Official Plan guidelines are implemented is through zoning bylaws.

Is our Community Official Plan a good thing for the municipality, or a bad thing?

Please explain your choice.

Our Community Official Plan is a good thing. An Official Plan is essential for modern development. Our updated Community Official Plan has just been approved. Our new Planner has established a priority list and timetable for amendments that will keep our Official Plan current.

Question 7

The building of new homes and commercial spaces in small towns is often accomplished using existing buildings and storefronts, rather than suburban expansion. Describe your vision for the management of future business and industrial development in our municipality.

The serviced portion of our industrial park is almost completely sold. The lots have been sold to entrepreneurs who will provide employment. My vision is for the Town to provide services (pavement, sewer and water) to the rest of the lots in the Industrial Park. Our Community and Economic Development Director works with new businesses to help them get established. The Community and Economic Development Committee works on policies to encourage more businesses to come to our town. I support a continuation of this committee's efforts.

Request 8:

"As a potential member of municipal Council, please form a QUESTION, not a campaign statement, that you would want to ask the citizens of Mississippi Mills.

What can we do to make your life here more pleasant?