



**2022 Municipal Elections, Candidates Questionnaire
Town of Huntsville, Brunel Ward Candidates
David Caplan, Monty Clouthier, Ken Inglis**

Click on any question to go directly to the answers for that question.

1. What should the Township/Town do to reduce its carbon footprint and facilitate movement away from fossil fuels?
2. The Muskoka Watershed Council is recommending an Integrated Watershed Management Plan for Muskoka which would require municipalities to base planning decisions on impacts to the entire watershed, not just the local municipality. Do you support this approach? Why or why not? How could this change planning decisions in the Township of Lake of Bays/Town of Huntsville?
3. What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too much funding and why?
What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too little funding and why?
4. There has been an increase in year-round use of seasonal properties due to the Covid pandemic, retirement, and other factors and trends. How should this affect municipal services such as roads and garbage, and other non-municipal services such as internet?
5. How should the Township/Town evaluate its Short-Term Rental Licensing program?
6. The Lake of Bays Association has identified several Election Priorities (see cover letter). What can the Association do to help council address any one or more of these priorities.

Contact and other information.

1. What should the Township/Town do to reduce its carbon footprint and facilitate movement away from fossil fuels?

David Caplan: Tackling climate change is a challenge every human needs to come together to prevent. As an easy first step, it would be wise to consider converting town vehicles to electric or hybrid options where it makes financial sense. Gas prices aren't decreasing anytime soon and the range of electric vehicles would now allow for a full day's use.

I would also recommend designating a council member to be an environment champion whose responsibility is to look at all projects and developments brought forward to the Town and questioning the impact. Future projects with sustainability at their core should be encouraged.

Encouraging residents to commute using different forms of transportation by designing our town to make use of active transportation modes. Expanding current trail systems and making the Town more bike friendly is one such method. Consideration should be made for projects promoting these alternative transportation methods, such as developing a free bike sharing program to encourage tourists and residents to ditch their cars when moving about Town.

Monty Clouthier: To continue to implement the program which the Town of Huntsville currently has and to look towards the use of electric vehicles, lawn equipment and more environmentally friendly maintenance equipment.

Ken Inglis: Perhaps replacing existing power mowers, trimmers, etc with battery powered smaller equipment. Also, pickup trucks and some Town vehicles could be switched to Hybrid or EV. Charging would be done overnight for cheaper rates.

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2. The Muskoka Watershed Council is recommending an Integrated Watershed Management Plan for Muskoka which would require municipalities to base planning decisions on impacts to the entire watershed, not just the local municipality. Do you support this approach? Why or why not? How could this change planning decisions in the Township of Lake of Bays/Town of Huntsville?

David Caplan: Our waterways are one of the best features of Muskoka and a part of what makes Huntsville and the Lake Of Bays a wonderful place to live and visit. The health of our water systems is incredibly important and while I'm not an expert on watershed issues, it does seem prudent to integrate the management plans for all municipalities in Muskoka. Water systems do not understand municipal borders. As all living things depend upon the ecosystem, cooperation is paramount if we are to coordinate efforts to care for and improve our watersheds. I would also suggest that this cooperation may need to extend to municipalities outside of Muskoka as our watershed isn't isolated from others.

As the Integrated Watershed Management plan proposed by the Muskoka Watershed Council aims to drive all forms of environmental management and land-use planning, it would dramatically affect planning decisions in the region. With a goal of creating more sustainable communities, the stakeholders would need to consider socio-economic criteria along with environment management when making planning decisions.

Monty Clouthier: I'm unaware of the facts and decisions around this watershed management plan, I'd need to investigate this further prior to providing further comment at this time.

Ken Inglis: I do support District wide Watershed Management. We are all similarly connected through our various rivers, streams and lakes. Since Huntsville sits near the top of the watershed, everything polluting our waterways flows on down to South Muskoka. Planning decisions should consider the effects of runoff which will affect downstream. Wetlands and swamps must be protected.

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**3. What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too much funding and why?
What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too little funding and why?**

David Caplan: It is very difficult to give an opinion on the inner workings of the Town's budget from studying lines on a spreadsheet. Without having a firm understanding of what makes up these figures and the decisions behind them, it would be disingenuous to pass judgement. There are many areas of our lives the Town, its staff and facilities touch on a daily basis and I'm sure we all want everything to be better. For some, roads are a primary concern, while for others it is the library, and for some the tax rate.

I would consult with Town staff to gain a greater understanding of their budget challenges and offer suggestions for solutions. The Town's budget is interconnected and any changes will have effects on different areas.

Monty Clouthier: Question 1: I'm happy with the current budget in which the town currently has implemented, it hasn't raised the property taxes dramatically year over year and it's providing households with a stable yet minimal increase of their property taxes. I do feel however some of the budget funds can be spread around to other certain areas with a small increase. Question 2: I feel the by-law department receives too little funding at this time and it needs to have more funds set in the budget to help with the population growth we've experienced in the past years along with the infrastructure throughout the town.

Ken Inglis: I am not aware of where all of the spending goes or the amounts. However, I believe that our streets and sidewalks obviously need more funding as there are several in need of resurfacing with permanent potholes in some places.

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4. There has been an increase in year-round use of seasonal properties due to the Covid pandemic, retirement, and other factors and trends. How should this affect municipal services such as roads and garbage, and other non-municipal services such as internet?

David Caplan: While residents are converting seasonal properties for year-round use, it does not mean infrastructure and services can instantly appear. Many of the properties were initially planned and built without Town services and adding them will increase burden on tax-payers. The Town will need to make adjustments in either taxes or fees to fund these new municipal services.

Non-municipal services such as internet services are even trickier as they are often provided by businesses who need to ensure profitability. The cost to build fibre internet cabling is very high and it is not always feasible when there are low population centers. Wireless towers are likewise expensive and there is no guarantee of service due to factors such as line of sight and foliage affecting the signal strength.

There is no easy answer or fix to this issue, but we need to work with private industry and our provincial and federal counterparts to find affordable solutions.

Monty Clouthier: To enhance the regular maintenance of the services of the roads, snow removal and garbage pickup at the peak times of the year during the population influx of seasonal property owners. Some of these matters will need to also be brought to the attention of the District councillors. As for the internet matter, I will bring the issues around this matter to the attention of our federal MP as I have a close working relationship with him.

Ken Inglis: Since the seasonal people pay taxes and support local businesses, this must be considered when supplying and planning future services.

5. How should the Township/Town evaluate its Short-Term Rental Licensing program?

David Caplan: According to the Town's website there are 170 Short-Term Rental License properties within the Town's borders, and in the 2022 Town Budget Short-Term Rental permits generated \$110,000 in revenue for the Town. STRA providers are also required to charge and collect the Municipal Accomodation Tax. These two fees allow the Town to maintain some control over STRAs and ensure they are operated safely and allow the Town some measure of control over who runs them and how many there are. Town staff just completed a review of STRAs and made recommendations on strengthening the by-law which the committee accepted.

Monty Clouthier: I think the first step to this is steeper enforcement through the by-law department as there's currently not enough support to look after all the issues that arise from the short term rentals. What needs to happen is more policing of the issues and responding to calls at the time the complaints are filed.

Ken Inglis: I do not have information on this topic and would have to be partaking in discussions in order to know where we stand at the moment.

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6. The Lake of Bays Association has identified several Election Priorities. What can the Association do to help council address any one or more of these priorities.

David Caplan: The Association should continue to advocate on behalf of their membership by communicating and presenting ideas, concerns, and priorities to council and media. From my limited exposure with the Lake of Bays Association, it appears to be a strength and I commend the association for reaching out to me.

Having a council that already has similar priorities as the Lake of Bays Association will make presenting ideas and finding support much easier. I imagine most candidates would agree that improved internet services are very important in this digital age and thus should support initiatives that help. The key will be finding solutions that are affordable and working with private industry will be crucial.

Besides lobbying all levels of government, the Association can continue to encourage their membership to take action on their priorities, such as climate change. Excellent articles on issues such as algal blooms help to educate your membership and with examples from other lake associations to help illustrate the impact we can all take. The Association is an excellent NGO and has provided some quality newsletters, information and are excellent stewards for their membership!

Monty Clouthier: I feel that communication between all parties involved within the area and with positive input to council we can achieve all of these priorities you've listed to preserve this beautiful area we live in.

Ken Inglis: The Association can continue to work with councils as they have been doing , as they are the people who live on the waterways

Contact and other information.

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