

# Candidate Survey on Resident Priorities

## PAC, URBAN PLANNING BYLAWS & THE PERMITS PROCESS

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) was only created as a provincial government requirement around 2005, and many urban planning bylaws were only created in the 2010s. For approximately 110 years before PAC, residents enjoyed greater freedom to produce the many fine examples of architecture in the Town.

**All questions had Agree, Disagree, or Undecided options as answers.**

1a. Review and overhaul of bylaws, simplification of the permits process making it more user-friendly with greater trust in residents' judgement.

1b. Two or three citizens, in addition to interested PAC members, should be part of the review process mentioned in question 1a.

2. Reduce the number of projects that require permits.

3. Establish a well-defined appeals process.

4. Create an online table of 25-30 common household projects indicating whether they require permits and/or approval.

5. To favour homeowners, PAC decisions should be majority decisions and not consensus-based as is currently the case.

6. PAC membership should be open to residents other than those who are architects, urban planners, or in construction (i.e. the current criteria).

7. Time-sensitive emergency maintenance & repairs after flooding, sewer backups, leaking roofs, broken front doors, broken windows, etc. should not require approval or permits.

8. In a town where so many homes are plagued with water issues, a permit should not be required for a French drain.

9. Planning department and PAC decisions need to be made as quickly as possible so that residents don't lose their priority with their contractor.

## **TRANSPARENCY**

Residents would welcome access to studies, recommendations, and committee memberships as a way of being more connected to Town affairs and promoting civic engagement.

1. Publish the annual Infrastructure Priority List on the Town website.
2. Publish all traffic studies – including for speed bumps, and recommendations by the Traffic Safety Committee
3. Publish all other studies and reports commissioned by the Town.
4. For awareness and to encourage participation, publish the membership of all Town committees: who's on the MADA (seniors) committee, the Public Safety committee, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Residents would appreciate timely responses and feedback from councillors and Town civil servants, surveys to gauge public opinion, and a forum for discussion.

### **A. Response & feedback from councillors and Town civil servants**

1. Town officials/staff should be encouraged to reply to residents within 5-7 working days.
2. Council, including the mayor, should reply to residents within 5-7 working days.

### **B. INFORMAL SURVEYS**

It's time to start making use of social media for non-binding surveys of resident opinions.

3. The Town should experiment with using informal online surveys to gauge public opinion and promote engagement.

### **C. PERIODIC OPEN FORUMS**

Opportunities for discussion on topics of importance to residents beyond what is possible during council meeting question periods would be useful.

4. Hold public meetings, perhaps 3 a year, to encourage discussion, debate and feedback.