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VOTE FOR A HEALTHY & GREEN
OTTAWA-ELECTION 2014

ALL-CANDIDATES SURVEY

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WOULD-BE MAYORS OUT OF STEP WITH COUNCIL CANDIDATES

A solid pro-environment consensus among candidates for city council is not shared by all candidates for mayor, raising the potential for conflict over such issues as transportation, climate change and the Energy East pipeline proposal.



Candidates for mayor of Ottawa hold views on environmental issues that diverge sharply from the remarkable consensus demonstrated by City Council candidates. In a survey conducted by Ecology Ottawa, the individuals running for city council overwhelmingly endorsed an enhanced cycling and public transit network and major new in-

vestment in storm-water management. A sizable majority of councilor candidates also favoured aggressive city action on climate change, an independent assessment of the risks of a proposed oil pipeline through Ottawa, and an ambitious new tree-planting program.

Asked the very same questions, mayoral candidates agreed in part on water management and fully on trees. But on transportation, climate change and the Energy East pipeline, their viewpoints diverge from each other and from the majority of council candidates. Of the five mayoral candidates that responded to Ecology Ottawa's survey, Anwar Syed, Jim Watson and Darren Wood echoed the attitudes of the vast majority city council candidates by answering YES to most of the 14 questions. Candidates Mike Maguire and Robert White, meanwhile, answered NO to nearly all questions.

The initiative to plant one million trees by Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017 was the only issue to garner the backing of all five mayoral respondents. A new Forest Management Strategy also won the support of four of the five, as did enhanced storm-water management, although Mike Maguire expressed doubts about permeable surfaces and green roofs as solutions. Robert White opposes both the forest strategy and enhanced storm-water measures. Among council candidates the forest strategy won 90 percent endorsement and the storm-water investments 96 percent; the million-trees initiative received 92 percent support.

The issue that garnered least support among mayoral candidates is cycling infrastructure. Jim Watson says he will champion bicycle infrastructure based on affordability. The other four respondents oppose accelerating construction of bike paths. This stands in sharp contrast to the 77 percent of council candidates who favour accelerated implementation of new bike paths and lanes.

On transportation, only Darren Wood would give preference to non-automobile infrastructure and would extend the Complete Streets concept to all road renewal projects. Syed and Watson support extending the Complete Streets model, but say they would seek a balance of modes of transportation, while Maguire and White oppose both measures. Favouring non-automobile infrastructure is supported by 76 percent of council candidates; 82 percent of them back extending Complete Streets to all road projects.

On water conservation, Syed, Watson and Wood endorse the goal of reducing Ottawa's water consumption by 3 percent annually, while Maguire and White do not, saying they need more information. Eighty-two percent of council candidates support the conservation goal.

Candidates' attitudes toward climate change and the Energy East

Pipeline are the most revealing of differences. On the climate, Maguire and White do not believe climate change is happening and oppose city action to address it. Wood doubts it is happening and sees no additional role for the city. Candidates Syed and Watson, meanwhile, say they take the issue seriously and want aggressive city action. Eighty-six percent of council candidates see a role for the city and 76 percent want to surpass the greenhouse-gas reduction goals in the current plan.

On the Energy East Pipeline, only Syed supports an independent assessment of the risks and city intervention at the National Energy Board hearings. Maguire says the city has no jurisdiction over the matter, Watson says the city lacks the expertise and funding to do a proper assessment or intervention at the NEB, and Wood points to lack of resources and influence. White declares his full support for the pipeline and his confidence that the federal government will address any concerns.

Among council candidates, 80 percent want an independent assessment and 75 percent want the city to intervene at the National Energy Board. All five mayoral respondents, along with 87 percent of council candidates, say they would oppose the pipeline if it were demonstrated to threaten the health of Ottawa's environment.

Candidates Bernard Couchman, Rebecca Pyrah and Michael St. Arnaud did not respond to the questionnaire.

Highlights of Responses

Mike Maguire answered NO to all but four questions. He supports a new Water Environment Strategy, but expresses doubt as to its purpose. He offers absolute support for planting a million trees and for replacing trees killed by the emerald ash-borer, as well as for a Forest Management Strategy. And he would oppose the Energy East Pipeline if it were demonstrated to threaten our collective health. To all other questions he answered NO.

Anwar Syed answered YES to all but one question. He said NO to accelerating implementation of cycling infrastructure, saying he needed to see the details. On nine of his thirteen YES answers, Syed offered no explanation of his reasoning.

Jim Watson answered YES to all but four questions. He opposes an independent risk assessment of the Energy East pipeline, saying that the city does not have the expertise or the funding; and he opposes intervening at the National Energy Board hearings on the pipeline,

again because the city does not have the required expertise. Regarding prioritizing non-automobile infrastructure, he noted that he supports making active transportation and public transit safe and affordable; regarding accelerating cycling infrastructure, he pledged to champion cycling initiatives based on affordability.

Robert White answered NO to all questions except two. He supports planting a million trees, and he would oppose the Energy East Pipeline if it were demonstrated to threaten the health of Ottawa's environment, although on the latter question he noted that he fully supports the pipeline. He answered NO to all other questions.

Darren Wood answered YES to all but five questions. He opposes accelerating plans for building cycling infrastructure, saying that the current approach to bike lanes is not safe and that proper bike lanes are expensive. He would not push for surpassing the goals of city's Climate Change Management Plan. He opposes an independent risk assessment for the Energy East Pipeline due to costs, and he feels the city has no resources to effect change on the pipeline issue.

Healthy Watersheds

Regarding water management, Mike Maguire expressed interest in flood mitigation, and voiced reservations about permeable surfaces and green roofs as solutions to storm-water management. He stated that we have abundant water and that users pay for their water usage, so that they can manage their own conservation.

Anwar Syed supports action to ensure effluents are not dumped into rivers without proper treatment, and to monitor water quality.

Jim Watson answered simply YES, adding only that measures to reduce water consumption should be cost-effective.

Regarding water management, Robert White derided climate change as "junk science" and a ruse to invoke taxation schemes.

Darren Wood answered YES to all three questions about water without further explanation.

Urban Forest

Regarding trees, Mike Maguire affirmed his support for the goal of planting a million trees by 2017, and his support for a new Forest Management Strategy that evaluates investments for efficiency.

Anwar Syed answered YES to both questions without further explanation.

Jim Watson affirmed his support for the million-trees goal and a new Forest Management Strategy, adding that he would announce more specific plans during the campaign.

Robert White supports the million-trees goal without comment, and opposes a new Forest Management Strategy because of a lack of scientific evidence.

Darren Wood backs the million-trees goal as long as it is achievable and affordable. He said YES to a new Forest Management Strategy without comment.

Transportation

Mike Maguire said the Complete Streets model is producing unnecessary congestion for automobiles, especially given the size of Ottawa and its unpleasant weather. He is absolutely opposed extending the Complete Streets concept, saying the cost is prohibitive and the purpose dubious. Regarding cycling infrastructure, he said other infrastructure issues should be funded first.

Anwar Syed would seek a balance between the automobile and other modes of transportation. He supported extending Complete Streets without comment. And he does not support accelerating cycling infrastructure because he has not seen the details.

Jim Watson said he wants active transportation and public transit to be safe and affordable throughout the city. He noted that Complete Streets will look different in different parts of the city. And he said he will champion cycling initiatives based on affordability.

Robert White opposes favouring non-automobile infrastructure, opposes extending Complete Streets, and opposes accelerating cycling infrastructure, insisting that Ecology Ottawa is a lobby group incapable of carrying out a valid survey.

Darren Wood supports favouring non-automobile infrastructure and he called for enforcement of traffic rules on cyclists. He supports green fuels for public transportation and the extension of the Complete Streets concept to all road projects. He opposes accelerating plans for building cycling infrastructure, saying that the current approach is not safe and that proper bike lanes are expensive.

Climate Change

Mike Maguire is unequivocal on the issue of climate change. He does not believe the city has a role to play and would not spend tax dollars to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

Anwar Syed answered YES to all three questions without further explanation.

Jim Watson sees a role for the city and says he takes it seriously. He cites light rapid transit as a measure that will significantly reduce the city's GHG emissions. He would like to see the city exceed its GHG-reduction goal, but new initiatives need to be affordable and make economic sense.

Robert White believes climate change is “junk science” and is not supported by any evidence whatsoever. He opposes city action to reduce GHG emissions.

Darren Wood believes no global warming is taking place, but favours action to ensure clean air. He hopes the city's goals can be surpassed, but believes they are based on realistic data and cost.

Pipeline

Regarding the Energy East Pipeline proposal, Mike Maguire said the city has no legislative or statutory authority to influence the process.

Anwar Syed answered YES to all three questions without further explanation.

Jim Watson does not believe the city has the expertise or the funds to carry out an independent risk assessment or to intervene at the National Energy Board. He does, however, support the province of Ontario having intervenor status, and would consider getting an observer status for the city.

Robert White fully supports the pipeline. He believes the federal government has studied the issue sufficiently to determine safety and therefore would not have the city intervene at the federal hearings.

Darren Wood believes the city does not have the money to do a proper risk assessment, and cannot effect any real change on this issue.

All of the respondents would oppose the pipeline if it were demonstrated to threaten the health of Ottawa's environment.

The Survey

As part of a general survey ahead of the October municipal elections, Ecology Ottawa asked all candidates for mayor and city council to answer 14 questions regarding five key environmental challenges facing the city: water management, trees, transportation, climate change, and the oil pipeline.

Of the eight candidates for mayor, five chose to take part. Their full responses can be found in the issue tables that follow. Ecology Ottawa will update the results on its website should additional responses come in.

HEALTHY WATERSHEDS

	<p>The City of Ottawa is developing a Water Environment Strategy that will provide a framework for action to promote clean drinking water, reduce the toxins going into our rivers, and protect communities and streams from flooding associated with severe weather. If elected, will you support the development of a strong strategy and prioritize the investments necessary to realize the strategy's goals?</p>	<p>The April 2014 Ontario Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) instructs planning authorities to promote green infrastructure measures (such as parklands, storm-water systems, wetlands, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs) in order to reduce costs, protect ecosystems and adapt to extreme weather events. If elected, will you prioritize green infrastructure in addressing the City of Ottawa's water management needs?</p>	<p>The production of clean water for public consumption has been falling over the past decade in Ottawa (i.e., we are using less water). Between 2004 and 2013, the amount of clean water produced and used inside Ottawa fell from over 125,000 million litres to about 100,000 million litres (not including private wells). If elected will you commit to continuing this trend by prioritizing water conservation measures that reduce usage by 3 percent per year?</p>
Compare to city council candidates	96% of respondents answered YES	92% of respondents answered YES	82% of respondents answered YES
Bernard Couchman			
Mike Maguire	<p>YES - I like the idea of a strategy but this question was confusing: Ottawa has the cleanest drinking water in the world, I'm not sure what purpose is being proposed by a new framework. I live on a floodplain and am quite interested in flooding mitigation.</p>	<p>NO - I don't know how to answer this. I'm familiar with the non-binding PPS but it doesn't take into account the engineering difficulties in permeable surfaces and the questionable claims about "green roofs". I like the focus on the other measures however. I'd need a better understanding of what is meant by "water management needs".</p>	<p>NO - The question contains a logical inconsistency. As the City grows the overall usage of water will grow too - for this to make any sense you'd have to ask for a commitment to reduce per capita consumption by 3%/annum - it seems a bit unrealistic. More importantly, we have abundant water and it's paid for by the user. Surely they're managing themselves already.</p>
Rebecca Pyrah			
Michael St. Arnaud			

Anwar Syed	YES - Work actively to commission engineering studies & action to ensure that sewage/sanitary/Industrial effluents do not mix with storm drainage systems and dump in to rivers without proper treatment and elimination of pollutants.	YES	YES - I will make it mandatory for City to monitor water quality for consumption meet minimum standards in all areas of Ottawa.
Jim Watson	YES	YES	YES - as long as they are cost effective.
Robert White	NO - I am 54 years old and have not witnessed 'severe weather' changes that would support the general thesis that 'climate change' is empirically verified by the data we have on weather evolution. Furthermore, everyone in biology supports the concept of Evolution outlined by Charles Darwin. The concept of 'climate change' is not supported by the orthodoxy of Evolution or empiricism proper. In brief, 'climate change' is junk science supported by biased lobby groups such as Ecology Ottawa.	NO - I do not support junk science or Agenda 21. The green movement is simply another ruse to invoke 'carbon credit trading' and 'cap an trade' taxation schemes. I was raised by the tax-man who worked for National Revenue in Senior Rulings within the Oil, Mines, and Resource Tax Division CANADA. I was raised on empiricism and I do not support junk science.	NO - I have not been given enough 'informed consent' to determine that the general thesis outlined on this survey is supported empirically by peer-reviewed scientific research. The assertions on this survey are biased and skewed towards the policy objectives Ecology Ottawa wants instituted.
Darren Wood	YES	YES	YES

URBAN FORESTS

	The Emerald Ash Borer infestation is killing millions of trees across Ottawa, including about 25 percent of the trees in the urban area. In response, organizations and individuals are coming together to set the collective goal of planting a million trees in our nation's capital as part of our contribution to Canada's 150th birthday celebration in 2017. If elected, will you support and prioritize investments towards this goal?	The City of Ottawa has announced its intention to develop a new Forest Management Strategy. If elected, will you support the development of a strong strategy and the investments necessary to realize the strategy's goals?
Compare to city council candidates	92% of respondents answered YES	90% of respondents answered YES
Bernard Couchman		
Mike Maguire	YES - Absolutely committed to reforestation in Ottawa to replace the canopy lost to EAB.	YES - I'm in favour of developing a new Forest Management Strategy and examining the proposed investments for efficiency.
Rebecca Pyrah		
Michael St. Arnaud		
Anwar Syed	YES	YES
Jim Watson	YES - I will announce more specific plans over the course of the campaign.	YES
Robert White	YES	NO - I do not see scientifically supporting evidence to support this objective as it stands here on the Ecology Ottawa survey. This is misleading and skewed towards the objectives that Ecology Ottawa wants instituted. Again, junk science supported by nothing but partisan zealotry on the part of Ecology Ottawa.
Darren Wood	YES - So long as the goal is obtainable and affordable.	YES

TRANSPORTATION

	If elected, will you commit to prioritizing pedestrian, cycling and affordable public transit infrastructure over automobile infrastructure in meeting the future growth in travel demands in urban areas?	If elected, will you work to ensure that all new roads and road renewal projects integrate Complete Streets principles?	The City's new Transportation Master Plan increases funding for cycling infrastructure but delays many investments for over 15 years. If elected, will you work to increase the overall level of investment and accelerate the pace of implementation?
Compare to city council candidates	76% of respondents answered YES	82% of respondents answered YES	77% of respondents answered YES
Bernard Couchman			
Mike Maguire	NO - No, the Complete Streets model of urban re-design is a producing unnecessary congestion for automobile traffic. We live in a vast City with unpleasant weather for almost 7 months of the year, re-prioritizing the purpose of streets will result in an unworkable transit model.	NO - Absolutely not. The cost is prohibitive, the purpose is dubious and the result is traffic congestion leading to gridlock and failed economic opportunities.	NO - Nope. We have real problems in this City that require solutions much sooner than the current fixation with cycling. We have critical infrastructure issues that need funding as a priority.
Rebecca Pyrah			
Michael St. Arnaud			
Anwar Syed	YES - I will strike the a good balance between the two modes of transports so that each type of user has a healthy and affordable routes to commute, enjoy and experience.	YES	NO - I cannot answer this question without looking in to details.

Jim Watson	I believe we need to continue making active transportation and public transit safe, affordable options through the city. I was proud to support the first complete streets proposal for Main St. and Churchill Ave.	YES - as outlined in our most recent Transportation Master Plan and as seen in the redevelopment of Churchill Avenue and soon, Main Street. Not every street would be appropriate for a complete streets implementation; and complete streets would often look significantly different in different parts of the city. In other words, one size doesn't always fit all.	Our Council has invested more in cycling than any Council in the history of the City of Ottawa. I will continue to champion cycling initiatives, but will do so based on what we can afford and balance all of the competing requests for funding.
Robert White	NO - Ottawa transit was designed by a Civil Engineer and not a lobby group that puts out biased non-scientific surveys that support their junk science and propaganda campaigns. I am a scientist and not a lobby group bent on promulgating an agenda above and beyond real science and empiricism.	NO - You have not defined what 'Complete Streets principles' are. There is not operational definition to work with on this junk science survey that is not methodologically valid, or efficacious.	NO - I am dismayed by this junk science survey that completely lacks validity and efficacy. Please return to university and become educated before sending me unscientific surveys that undergraduates in first year courses must understand before receiving a passing grade. This propaganda being espoused by Ecology Ottawa is embarrassing to say the least. You would not pass first year statistics/methodology in the Social Sciences at the worst universities in CANADA. Ecology Ottawa gets a failing grade.
Darren Wood	YES - In order to prioritize biking, law enforcement must ensure they will treat bikes the same as cars as mandated by MTO. Affordable public transit run on green fuels is our best bet to reducing the number of cars.	YES	NO - Our current roads are not bike friendly, nor are they safe for the current style of bike lanes being used by the city. Proper bike lanes are expensive and would need city-wide voter support in order to get built.

CLIMATE CHANGE

	Do you agree that human-induced climate change is an urgent issue and all levels of government have a role to play in helping to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions?	If elected, will you push for the full implementation of the City of Ottawa's Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan, including items identified in the plan for the 2015 budget?	The Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan establishes the modest goal of reducing Ottawa's greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent per capita by 2024, but leaves open a lot of space for new initiatives to emerge in the coming years. If elected, will you push for actions aimed at surpassing the current goal?
Compare to city council candidates	86% of respondents answered YES	79% of respondents answered YES	76% of respondents answered YES
Bernard Couchman			
Mike Maguire	NO - Sorry but this question is just so out of touch with our current understanding of the science that I can't help you here.	NO - Sorry again, in light of our real problems I just can't commit to spending tax dollars on this.	NO - This is both unrealistic, unenforceable and a waste of precious tax dollars. I can't support any such initiative in good conscience.
Rebecca Pyrah			
Michael St. Arnaud			
Anwar Syed	YES	YES	YES
Jim Watson	YES - the City does have a role to play, and it is one I take seriously. One of the many reasons why I support light rapid transit for Ottawa is that it will reduce the number of buses and cars from our streets and their emissions from our air. The Confederation Line alone will mean a reduction of 94,000T of GHGs in 2031 and phase 2 of LRT will reduce GHGs even more.	YES	YES - I would like to see the City meet and exceed its goal. However, new initiatives towards that end need to be affordable and make economic sense for Ottawa.

Robert White	NO - 'Climate Change' is not supported by real scientists whatsoever.	NO - 'Climate Change' is junk science and not supported by any evidence whatsoever. Please stop wasting my time with this junk science survey that would not pass an Ethics Review Board in any scientifically oriented University programme in CANADA.	NO - Again, this is a biased and skewed unprofessional and unscientific survey that has no meaningful data to be derived to extrapolate from. You are wasting my time with this propaganda as I am a formally trained scientist.
Darren Wood	YES - All though the most recent studies released show there is in fact no global warming taking place, I am all for clean air that I and my children breath.	YES	NO - Goals are set based on current data and cost. IF however in the process a natural surpassing of the numbers happens (and it is possible) than I am all for it.

ENERGY EAST PIPELINE

	Do you think the City of Ottawa should conduct a thorough and independent assessment of the risks and costs that the proposed Energy East pipeline poses to the health of Ottawa's communities and water?	Would you oppose the Energy East Pipeline if it was demonstrated that it threatened the health of Ottawa's water, climate and communities?	Should the City of Ottawa intervene in the National Energy Board review of the proposed Energy East pipeline in order to ensure that the interests of the people of Ottawa are well represented?
Compare to city council candidates	80% of respondents answered YES	87% of respondents answered YES	75% of respondents answered YES
Bernard Couchman			
Mike Maguire	NO - The City plays no role in this initiative - we have no legislative or statutory authority to influence this process.	YES - I hope everyone would oppose any threat to our collective health.	NO - Nonsensical question - anyone can make application to address the NEB. See answer #1.
Rebecca Pyrah			
Michael St. Arnaud			
Anwar Syed	YES	YES	YES
Jim Watson	NO - I do not. Other levels of government have both the expertise and the funds to do this and I do not think tax dollars should be spent twice on something that is the responsibility of other levels of government. I do support the Province of Ontario having intervenor status.	YES	NO - As with question 1, we do not have the expertise to make that case. Something I would consider exploring is getting Special Observer Status for the City of Ottawa at the National Energy Board for this review, if that is possible.
Robert White	NO - The Government of CANADA has already conducted enough study to determine safety. I fully support the Energy East Pipeline and the Federal Government of Canada objectives to get it installed.	YES - Empiricism and science is beyond the scope of Ecology Ottawa and this unscientific survey is proof that you do not know what you are doing when it comes to collecting scientific data.	NO
Darren Wood	NO - Different level of government and we do not have the money to do a risk assessment properly.	YES	NO - Again we do not have the money or resources to effect any real change in this particular matter.