

From: Michael Ormston-Holloway

Date: February 27, 2025

Subject: Council Vacancy Application – For appointment to the position of Councillor for the Town of Collingwood for the balance of the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council

Dear Council, Elections Committee, and Town Clerk,

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this application to express my interest in working alongside you in the position of Councillor for the Town of Collingwood for the recently vacated seat. With a strong passion for our community and an aspiration to contribute to its growth and development, I am eager to bring my unique perspective and experience to this role.

Throughout my career, I have been fortunate to engage in a variety of professionally diverse and personally fulfilling endeavours which have prepared me with a broad skillset and a comprehensive understanding with regard to how municipalities should grow, and how to leverage that growth toward economic benefit while ensuring sustainable development. And while I do not have direct experience as a municipal councillor, I have worked beside them throughout my career; delicately balancing municipal needs and council ambitions, with stakeholder obligations and financial realities, to ensure municipalities have a strong framework with which to realize their growth targets and development potential.

I was born in Ottawa and raised in Kitchener-Waterloo. I studied at the University of Guelph and the University of Toronto. I worked first in childhood development through nature interpretation and outdoor education, and from there I worked in forest ecology and soil science, before supporting my first master planning effort as an ecological designer and certified arborist, advocating for natural heritage systems and environmentally sensitive areas. This taught me to embrace ideas of urbanism through design and planning and develop a passion to steer urban development in a more resilient manner. I worked for years across Ontario and the United States, developing my multidisciplinary craft at the intersection of urban design, landscape architecture, and ecology, before moving to Toronto where I became an owner and director of one of the largest urban planning and design firms in the country. I worked in municipalities all over Ontario and beyond, and my company supported a large amount of important and meaningful work right here in Collingwood, working to ensure the Town grew in the right ways, at the right times, with a detailed understanding of the growth plan, economic conditions, and municipal budgets.

I have three children under 13, and my wife and I targeted the Town of Collingwood as the place to raise our family. I couldn't be happier with the decision we've made, and it is my strong desire to be fortunate enough to help steer municipal politics here. I feel that I am a uniquely qualified applicant with a good understanding of the municipal process and who will hit the ground running for the remainder of this Council's term, while providing a useful expertise and range of skillsets which I believe would result in a helpful and balanced voice in the council chambers.

I always lead my work with a strong commitment to place making, as well as revealing both economic and cultural potential, acknowledging all places are fundamentally different, and that some initiatives make more sense than others. Understanding how to speak to all levels of government, to the public, to local businesses, and to potential investors, and then navigating successful conversations between engineers, economists, planners, architects, and designers, is an art I have been honing throughout my career, because successful collaboration can result in appropriately measured design responses and properly gauged community expectations, and ultimately better places in which we live.

This is what I have done for other municipalities, and this is what I can do for Collingwood.

I am committed to steering the future of Collingwood with proven dedication, persistent integrity, and a collaborative spirit. I believe that my background, combined with my passion for our community, positions me well to contribute effectively as a Town Councillor.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to the continued success and prosperity of Collingwood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.A. Ormston-Holloway' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Ormston-Holloway

ISA, ASLA, OALA, CSLA
Urban Designer + Landscape Architect + Certified Arborist