

**Guelph Community for Active Transportation
2026 Board Candidate Profiles**

Dear GCAT Members:

At this year's Annual Meeting, we will elect the next set of Directors to serve on the GCAT Board of Directors.

Our organization is blessed to have a group of talented, passionate Directors who serve with great dedication to the GCAT organization and mission. This volunteer Board manages the business affairs of GCAT including its annual programming and events, its multifaceted advocacy work and its internal administrative and policy work.

This year GCAT members will elect **up to six** Directors to the Board, including one person who is seeking re-election.

In order to help you make informed choices, we are providing a statement from the person seeking re-election and a summary of the four candidates' questionnaire responses.

We look forward to seeing you, either in person or online, at our Annual Meeting on **March 13th at 7 pm at the Red Chevron Club.**

Thank you,
Andre Hueniken and Adam Bonnycastle
Co-Chairs, GCAT Governance and Administration Committee

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Director Seeking Re-election:

Virginia Andersen

As a Guelphite since 2018, Virginia Andersen lives in St. Patrick's ward but has also lived in Onward Willow and north of downtown. She has a master's degree in public policy, and brings experience working in nonprofits, organizational development, and evaluating policies and programs to the GCAT Board.

A member of the GCAT Board for nearly four years, Virginia recently was elected to the Chair role for the Board of Directors in August last year. In addition to serving as Chair, Virginia has served on both the Advocacy and Governance and Administration Committees. She has delegated before Council, met with City staff and other stakeholders, rolled out the new membership system, among other projects. She is looking forward to advocating for the City to improve year-round maintenance of bike lanes, to incorporate good land-use planning, and to develop a robust signed residential cycling network similar to the one in Kitchener-Waterloo.

She believes that having robust options for active transportation will make our community in Guelph more vibrant and inclusive. She also believes that increasing the amount of active transportation is important as Guelph prepares locally to address climate change. She wants everyone to be able to live in a place where everything is 15 minutes or less away by either transit or walking, biking, or rolling.

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New Candidates to the Board:

Rick Costanzo

Occupation: **Past President of Bang & Olufsen Americas - Recently Retired**

Location: **Ward 6**

Do you identify as a member of groups with historical and/or current barriers to equity?

Prefer not to say

Do you have any known potential conflicts of interest with the work of GCAT?

No

Why would you like to become a GCAT Director?

I believe in the health benefits to individuals and the financial benefits to local businesses associated with safe and easy to access active transportation. Having recently retired, I would welcome the opportunity to meaningfully contribute to our community.

In which GCAT committee would you be interested to serve?

I believe I could add value to the Programming and Events Committee as well as the Governance and Administration Committee. I led the financial planning and budgeting process for Bang & Olufsen Americas and was a key contributor to the financial planning process at SAP and RIM/BlackBerry. Additionally, I have led Marketing teams for several years and had special focus on event activations.

| Communications | Fundraising and Grant Writing | Financial Management and Accounting | Social Media |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Highly Skilled | Some skill or knowledge | Highly Skilled | Skilled or knowledgeable |

Please provide details on your skill and experience with the four areas above:

35 + Years of Budget Planning and Management. Company Spokesperson for media interviews at RIM/BlackBerry, SAP, Kodak Alaris and Bang & Olufsen. Go-To-Market leader for 35+ years with strong experience in event planning and execution.

Please provide details of any skills, knowledge or experience that you feel would benefit the GCAT Board.

I have 35+ years experience in leading the financial planning & budgeting process for large organizations such as Bang & Olufsen Americas, Global Sales and Marketing at Research In Motion / BlackBerry and Kodak Alaris. Additionally, I led the Regional Marketing efforts at Research In Motion on a global basis and the Marketing plan for Bang & Olufsen Americas. Event planning and activations we key focus areas for me in these roles.

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Caden Hebb

Occupation: **Wildlife Biologist**

Location: **Ward 3**

Do you identify as a member of groups with historical and/or current barriers to equity?

Yes

Do you have any known potential conflicts of interest with the work of GCAT?

No

Why would you like to become a GCAT Director?

I am interested in becoming a GCAT Director so I can contribute to positive change within my community and to offer up my skills and knowledge on active transportation policy to the GCAT Board of Directors and membership. I am most passionate about safe and accessible bike lanes and decentralizing automotive use in our society.

In which GCAT committee would you be interested to serve?

I would be interested in serving on the Advocacy Committee. I have spent over half my life in grassroots activist spaces, learning about building community while preventing burnout and engaging with the public by meeting them where they are. Equity is especially important to me, and I would love to help GCAT advocate for safe and accessible transportation for everyone. I have advocated for myself throughout my life as a member of historically marginalized communities, but am also aware of my privilege, and strive to balance these aspects of myself in my activism.

| Communications | Fundraising and Grant Writing | Financial Management and Accounting | Social Media |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Highly Skilled | Some skill or knowledge | Some skill or knowledge | Highly Skilled |

Please provide details on your skill and experience with the four areas above:

I have managed social media accounts and email newsletters for universities, research institutes and non-profit organizations. I grew up during the rise of social media and consider myself to be well-versed in all mainstream platforms. During my master's degree and my employment, I studied knowledge translation and strive to help bridge the knowledge gap between scientists, governments, and the public.

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Please provide details of any skills, knowledge or experience that you feel would benefit the GCAT Board.

I've spent years engaged in community advocacy and governance, from delivering a petition to Halifax City Council to serving on the Boards of the Halifax Youth Project and the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group, including NSPIRG's HR Committee. I've worked on political campaigns, navigated bureaucratic systems, and contributed to research on active transportation at Dalhousie University's Healthy Populations Institute. As a car owner who chooses walking, cycling, and transit whenever possible, I bring both lived experience and professional insight to the table.

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Alexander Johnston

Occupation: **GIS Technician** Location: **Ward 3**

Do you identify as a member of groups with historical and/or current barriers to equity? **No**

Do you have any known potential conflicts of interest with the work of GCAT? **No**

Why would you like to become a GCAT Director?

I have been part of Guelph cycling/active transportation community for 8 years. During which I have come to know both the lovely things about Guelph for active and the many ways in which our infrastructure and bylaws could be improved to make streets safer for everybody. The main project I would be interested in would be advocating for more leading pedestrian and bike signals (especially around the university and the new bike signals along Gordon, and along College). These would require no new infrastructure and have been demonstrated to reduce conflict for vulnerable road users.

In which GCAT committee would you be interested to serve?

I would be interested in the advocacy committee. I'm a strong advocate for bikes, and active transportation. I was the president and later an exec on the University of Guelph Cycling club where I used my platform to advocate on both local and provincial active transportation issues.

| Communications | Fundraising and Grant Writing | Financial Management and Accounting | Social Media |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Some skill or knowledge | Some skill or knowledge | No knowledge or experience | Limited knowledge or experience |

Please provide details on your skill and experience with the four areas above:

I've written grants for my lab during my masters and for my workplace (OALA), which we used to purchase a drone. I managed the social media for the UGC (Cycling Club) but it stressed me out too much. I am comfortable writing reports and policy documents. For my graduate thesis I had to distill my research and analysis into a manuscript so I've got the ability to synthesize complex information.

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Please provide details of any skills, knowledge or experience that you feel would benefit the GCAT Board.

I was a CSA bike shop volunteer for many years before the CSA banned volunteers :(, so I've got bike mechanics skills. I'm a GIS technician and can make maps, or perform spatial analysis (I did my GIS capstone for GCAT where we looked at how road closures might impact the active transportation network).

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John Vanderheide

Occupation: **Business Manager (retired), Residential Energy Advisor (part-time)**

Location: **Ward 3**

Do you identify as a member of groups with historical and/or current barriers to equity?

No

Do you have any known potential conflicts of interest with the work of GCAT?

No

Why would you like to become a GCAT Director?

For years I have been interested in active transportation as a way to promote both physical and mental health, and reduce carbon emissions. Project possibilities include .. 1) signed connector routes that utilize mostly calm streets suitable for biking without the need for additional infrastructure such as bike lanes, 2) issue-based and general advocacy through meetings and correspondence with city councilors, city staff, schools, businesses, employers, other cycling, walking and transit organizations.

In which GCAT committee would you be interested to serve?

See above regarding Advocacy. Secondly, I'd be happy to start assisting with events, including possibly working on related promotion.

| Communications | Fundraising and Grant Writing | Financial Management and Accounting | Social Media |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Skilled or knowledgeable | Limited knowledge or experience | Limited knowledge or experience | No knowledge or experience |

Please provide details on your skill and experience with the four areas above:

Significant experience in developing and presenting commercial proposals. Extensive problem-solving, including those involving client relationships, internal relationships, logistical and product quality issues. Effective use of communication methods, including - email, telephone discussion and in-person meetings.

Please provide details of any skills, knowledge or experience that you feel would benefit the GCAT Board.

My education background is in Chemistry and Business. Primary career included periods leading a Customer Service group, followed by leading a Sales group in a commodity business-to-business setting. Both vendor (competitor) and consumer (client) groups were few and well-defined. Accordingly, developing strong personal relationships and creating/ leveraging small but significant areas of differentiation were important for success.