

PRIORITIES FOR THE HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

WHO'S ON YOUR SIDE?

Ask Your Candidates About These Five Priorities:

1. INFRASTRUCTURE

Citizens depend on local governments to build and maintain infrastructure (water, roads, garbage, etc.) as well as social infrastructure, such as libraries, parks, community centres, etc. Municipalities are responsible for the majority of all infrastructure in our communities.

Our priorities related to infrastructure are:

- Say "No" to Public-Private Partnerships (P3s), as they cost more to taxpayers.
- Adopt a "Buy Local, Buy Canadian" policy for municipal purchases of goods and services. Let's create jobs at home in our communities.
- Ensure no contracting out of publicly delivered services.

2. TRANSPORTATION

In the growing community of the Halifax region, transportation decisions made at the municipal level are increasingly important. Citizens need accessible and environmentally sustainable transportation solutions.

Our priorities related to transportation are:

- Increase the number of public transit bus routes and the number of buses running on busier routes, and increase overall funding to the public transit system.
- Increase the number of bicycle lanes throughout the city to make biking a safer and more viable form of transportation.
- Increase the popular FRED bus service in the downtown by adding more buses and routes, as well as extending the length of time FRED operates.
- Develop a community bicycle program for public access to bikes.
- Ensure that future ferries and transit buses are purchased and built in Canada, and locally where possible.

3. SOCIAL WELFARE

The Halifax Regional Municipality is home for people with different levels of income. Our economic decisions should benefit all citizens.

Our priorities related to social welfare are:

- Implement a living wage policy for all work contracted by the city.
- Adopt a plan in which HRM will play a direct role in building and providing new affordable housing programs, including support for housing cooperatives and other forms of non-profit housing.
- Ensure fair settlement and closure for former Africville residents and their families who were displaced.
- Strengthen employment equity programs for municipal hiring.
- Increase funding to arts and culture programs.
- Develop strategies for community economic development in rural areas within the municipality, as well as within the downtown areas.

* these community priorities for the Halifax Regional Municipality were developed in consultation with local groups and community members at a visioning forum on January 26th, 2008.

4. DEMOCRACY

Increased transparency and accountability, along with increased citizen involvement in setting community priorities and decision making, will benefit all residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Our priorities for municipal democracy are:

- Ensure there is broad public engagement and appropriate community forums so that citizens can be involved from start to finish in policy decisions.
- Support citizen stakeholder involvement in all development decisions
- Ensure that Halifax Regional Council practices full transparency of all decision making processes.
- Build diversity into community decision making processes to ensure input from a large and diverse range of voices.
- Increase citizen participation in developing budget priorities, which reflect the needs and values of our communities across the Halifax region.

5. ENVIRONMENT

Decisions we make today will have an impact on the Earth and on the quality of life for ourselves and our children and grandchildren.

Our priorities related to the environment are:

- Improve and enhance our public transit system and develop and support green alternatives (bike lanes, walking trails, etc.)
- Make changes to building codes and zoning bylaws to maximize energy efficiency and utilization of solar energy and sustainable technology.
- Support and encourage the use of clotheslines and other methods of improving energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Encourage the use of cycling through public education, and develop educational programs on safe cycling for youth and others.
- Create and encourage the use of community gardens.

GET OUT AND VOTE: OCTOBER 18, 2008

Going to an “All Candidates” Meeting? Ideas for questions

When you are attending “All Candidates” meetings in your community or meeting your local candidates, you may want to use these sample questions to find out what their positions are on important community issues.

1. As an elected Councillor, what actions would you take to address sustainability and the environment?
2. What would you do to address affordable housing issues in the Halifax Regional Municipality? Do you feel that the Municipality has a direct role to play in supporting the development and construction of new housing cooperatives, non-profit and transitional housing?
3. How would you improve the public transit system?
4. What is your position on “Public-Private Partnerships” (P3s) and the privatization of our municipal resources and infrastructure? Would you oppose contracting out public services?
5. Do you agree the Municipality needs to adopt a “Buy Local, Buy Canadian” policy for all municipal purchases of goods, services and infrastructure, to keep jobs at home?



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