

**Dave Ritcey, PC Candidate  
Truro-BibleHill-Salmon River-Millbrook**

**What topic is raised most frequently while campaigning “door to door”?**

Healthcare. Finding a family doctor, wait times for surgeries, and wait times at emergency rooms.

**What did Nova Scotians do to contribute to Nova Scotia being Canada’s “per capita” leader to fight the Co-Vid pandemic?**

We are in the position we are in today because of the hard work of Nova Scotians. Despite Iain Rankin taking our province back by opening up too early during the Spring, causing a surge of cases, Nova Scotians did the work to reduce our case count. On a per-capita basis, Nova Scotia was not in fact leaders in COVID-19. Nova Scotia is behind Manitoba, Ontario, and New Brunswick for per cent of two-dose vaccinations for their eligible population. Nova Scotia had the highest cases and deaths per-capita in Atlantic Canada.



Dave Ritcey

**Co-Vid restrictions / lockdowns were difficult on all sectors, but primarily the hospitality and tourism sectors. Were the restrictions imposed by government’s strict enough? If not, why not?**

Restrictions were difficult for many, but they were necessary to keep us safe. There will be a time to look back and evaluate the response to the pandemic, but Nova Scotians did a great job of stepping up to keep their neighbours safe.

**What is the most promising asset / resource to achieve economic growth or population growth for Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook?**

We have friendly, hardworking people and a beautiful environment. Our communities are well positioned for economic and population growth as we have the quality of life that many are seeking.

**Is “racism” a basic and systemic problem in Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook?**

Like many communities, there is more to do to overcome racism and systemic issues in our communities. As MLA, I am committed to continuing to listen, learning, and taking action where we can - whether that is in our education system, our health system or across any aspect of government.

**What steps should be taken and how will you assist in making Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook among the “least racist” constituency in Nova Scotia?**

It starts with listening to our diverse communities and respecting those of different backgrounds. The PC Party platform commits to equipping our teachers with the resources they need to better understand and recognize unconscious bias and students of diverse backgrounds.

**In which sectors in Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook should government prioritize its efforts of leadership and funding assistance to achieve a high rate of economic and population growth?**

It’s not up to government to pick winners and losers in business; it’s government’s job to create the conditions for businesses to grow. The PC is putting forward innovative economic solutions such as our Better Pay Check Guarantee and Nova Scotia Loyal programs to bring better wages and incentivise people to buy local.

**What existing provincial government program or planned policy is least beneficial to businesses and general population in Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook?**

There is too much red tape in Nova Scotia and a PC government will reduce red tape so that business can continue to grow.

**Many people are of the opinion the provincial government is directing too much attention to HRM and larger urban areas. What would you do to change the pendulum to place more emphasis on rural Nova Scotia?**

Halifax doesn’t always know what’s best for communities across the province. A PC government is committed to more local decision making in healthcare, education, and the economy. One way we will achieve this is by providing community tourism funding to each region and let each community decide how they want to spend their tourism dollars.

**If you are elected on August 17th will you “toe the party line” on all decisions, or will you consult with and abide by the wishes of taxpayers throughout the constituency?**

I’m proud to be a member of the PC Party, and if re-elected, I will continue to act as your voice both within the PC Party and your voice in the legislature. My community will always come first.

**If you are elected on August 17th what actions will you immediately undertake to achieve economic growth and lifestyle enhancements for the constituency of Truro Bible Hill Salmon River Millbrook?**

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## Affordable Housing Needs and Supply Study

By Maurice Rees

During Colchester’s April monthly meeting, a report was received from the Truro and Colchester Housing Needs Project Team who had issued a Request for Proposals in October 2020 for consulting team to undertake a process that will produce a detailed Affordable Housing Needs and Supply Study for Truro - Colchester.

Affordable housing is a subject which has gained prominence in recent months with many saying a booming real estate market is driving prices to levels which are unaffordable to the average Nova Scotia family, particularly those who want to establish their own path in life which would include possibility of being a property owner.

An important component to the Study involves an investigation into the “state” of homelessness in the Region which will be crucial to developing baseline data that contributes to the ongoing development of programs aimed at providing housing and support services for those most at risk. The Study is intended to provide a comprehensive assessment of current housing conditions with a view to providing recommendations on affordable housing solutions that contribute to long-term community sustainability and improved health.

Councillor Taggart, District 10 councillor since 2008 and through his experience as a



realtor and serving several years as one of four Nova Scotia representatives to the national board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been advocating for local action to address homelessness and affordability has been speaking frequently on the subject.

In several discussions with him as the local District 10 councillor, Taggart has alluded to placing greater and consistent emphasis on the matter, but other pressing priorities needing more immediate attention kept cropping up, such as the Covid pandemic; the provincial Bio-diversity legislation and dealing with matters pertaining to local events and needs concerning April 2020 mass murders.

Turner Drake, a Halifax based real estate company, was retained in December 2020 to complete the housing study. The company has completed several similar studies across Canada and have partnered with Upland Planning and Design who will coordinate public engagement activities, that will involve a public survey, stakeholder interviews and coordinating a homelessness assessment. The consultant team will also investigate the extent to which energy poverty contributes to

affordable housing.

The study is at the 80% mark with a completion date targeted for mid-June 2021. An online presentation of the consultant’s findings is part of the contract and it is expected this will occur shortly after the final report is submitted. Staff will ensure Colchester Council is notified of this and are able to participate.

Many housing affordable housing advocates feel a meaningful discussion on affordable housing supply and demand in this region would benefit from quantitative / qualitative data, options and recommended solutions once the study is completed. Much of what has been observed to date is antidotal in nature making it impossible to understand the pervasiveness of affordable housing issues and determining the most effective approaches.

Even though many, including councillors wanted to press forward, the update submitted to council suggested it would be appropriate for Council to delay its discussion on affordable housing until the study is complete which will help illustrate the Municipality’s roles and responsibilities in regard to potential housing solutions.

# Tom TAGGART

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