

Mayor Blair provided this comment when completing the Election Questionnaire on the needs of Colchester County.

First, I want to commend you on your continued focus on local government. Our Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) is the voice of municipal government in Nova Scotia and you may have seen the NSFM has named accessibility, climate change and representation for municipalities on the housing issue as three priorities.



Mayor Christine Blair

Considering the needs of the Municipality of the County of Colchester, what is the most important election promise made, to date, and must be fulfilled delivered by government formed following August 17th election?

Timing is everything. As we all know, this election was called very quickly. Platforms are just now being revealed and as Mayor, to date, I have had no opportunity to speak with Council to secure a position on any of the issues for our municipality. Of course, the NSFM priorities affect all of us. Those include climate change and initiatives to address it; accessibility; affordable housing and being part of the decision-making process; physician recruitment; extended producer responsibility, economic development and jobs, all are important.

What item in the election platforms, indicated so far, which one is the least beneficial to businesses and residents of the Municipality of the County of Colchester?

Again, platforms are just now being revealed. However, there is considerable concern about climate change recognition. In Colchester County, we have been working on a cleaner, sustainable environment with fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Our Solar Colchester program, as an example, is very successful. Colchester County would want programs such as this to continue and to grow with support of the provincial government.

If you could specify what the Municipality of the County of Colchester needs as a priority from the next government, what would that be?

Work with us. As a rural municipality, Colchester's needs, while similar in the more populated areas of the County, are not the same as in urban areas. But being on the front lines of government, closest to the people, municipalities understand the services required by their residents and businesses. Working with municipalities such as Colchester County, that recognizes the needs of its residents, listening, giving support whether financial or otherwise, is crucial to the well being of our mutual constituents. When a rural municipality such as Colchester initiates projects that benefit the rural communities as well as the province, those projects should be supported. An example of provincial support is the Cumberland-Colchester broadband internet project which, over three years, will bring internet service to 24,400 residences. Another example is the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark, one of five in Canada, internationally and nationally recognized.

What can you, councillors and municipal staff do to encourage a higher voter turnout?

As the NS Elections Act states and allows, it is the responsibility of Elections Nova Scotia in a provincial election to provide electors with opportunities to vote and to encourage electors to get out to vote. The political parties and their candidates also encourage electors to vote. One must remember that municipalities are non-partisan. Mayors and Councillors put their own names on a municipal ballot and in Nova Scotia there is no party name attached to that person. The party that forms the provincial government following an election will be the government that municipalities will be working with for the next four to five years. As Mayor, I am pleased to talk with any candidate about our municipality and at the same time, maintain my non-partisan position.

However, having said that, should a Councillor support a provincial candidate of any political party, that is the Councillor's personal decision. The Councillor is not representing the Municipality in any way.

During the almost 18 months of the pandemic what actions by your municipality most contributed to a low rate of infections, severe sickness and deaths in Municipality of the County of Colchester while still serving business and taxpayer needs?

The Municipality of the County of Colchester followed all the health protocols and directives issued through Dr. Robert Strang and the provincial government while maintaining essential services and keeping our offices open to serve the public. Colchester County will continue to follow all health directive updates in the best interests of our staff and the public.

The Deadline for the September issue of **Shoreline Journal** is August 24

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Sean Foley, NDP Candidate Colchester North

What topic is raised most frequently while campaigning "door to door"?

Health care is the dominant concern, especially with seniors who don't feel comfortable with virtual care or the telehealth approach. The need for local doctors and nurse practitioners is critical.



Sean Foley

What did Nova Scotians do to contribute to Nova Scotia being Canada's "per capita" leader to fight the Co-Vid pandemic?

As a frontline health care worker, I was witness to the efforts made by many as we fought Covid 19. The people of Colchester North and Nova Scotia followed the department of Health's directives. When the pandemic started and restrictions were ordered Colchester North residents listened to the rules, understood them and followed them because they put others before themselves, which is what Nova Scotians do. Those restrictions prevented many more potential cases in our region while the cities had more clusters and even deaths.

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?

Our hospitality and tourism industries were hit hard and will take time to return to pre-pandemic levels. I believe that restrictions imposed by the government were strict enough.

What is the most promising asset / resource to achieve economic growth or population growth for Colchester North?

The decency, resilience, caring and spirit of cooperation in Colchester North is steeped in history, but was also displayed nation wide more recently in the response to the unspeakable Portapique massacre. Colchester North is not immune to hardship but each time we face hardships we do it as a family

Please, Please VOTE

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Early Voting Options - Vote Early, Vote Safely!

Before election day voters can vote safely at any returning office or early voting location in the province.

Returning Offices are open: Mondays to Saturdays - Closed Sundays - 9am to 6pm - or until 8pm Thursday, August 12, and Friday, August 13
Community Polls

Saturday, July 31 to Saturday, August 14 - 9am to 6pm, or until 8pm Thursday, August 12 and Friday, August 13. Closed Sundays
Advance Poll
Saturday, August 7 to Saturday, August 14 - 9am to 6pm, or until 8pm Thursday, August 12 and Friday, August 13. Closed Sunday August 8.

You can vote safely at any early voting location in Nova Scotia.

Write-In Ballots

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Elections Nova Scotia anticipates more voters than ever before may choose to vote by mail using a write-in ballot during the 41st Provincial General Election.

All eligible voters in Nova Scotia can vote by mail using a write-in ballot. Voting by mail using a write-in ballot is safe and easy.

Here are the procedures to obtain a "write-in" ballot:

- You must first apply in order to vote by write-in ballot. Please see application information below.

- Once your application has been processed by Elections Nova Scotia, you will receive your write-in ballot kit with instructions on how to fill it out and return it.

You must vote by write-in ballot (instead of at an in-person voting location) once your kit has been issued.

- The deadline to apply on-line or by mail for a write-in ballot is Saturday, August 7 at 6pm.

If you need assistance applying for a write-in ballot, you can contact your local returning office.

All write-in ballots must be returned by 8 pm on election day.

For more information visit: <https://electionsnovascotia.ca/41> ProvincialGeneralElection

and we rally to support those in need. For instance, when the pandemic forced many seniors into isolation the local firemen organized grocery deliveries.

I think that this quality, the ability to support each other, rise and change to meet our challenges is the most promising asset that the area has. Recognition of this resource will attract more immigration in rural Nova Scotia and lead to a strong, diverse population growth.

Is "racism" a basic and systemic problem in Colchester North?

It's ingrained in all of us who have grown up in the world of white privilege whether we acknowledge it or not.

What steps should be taken and how will you assist in making Colchester North among the "least racist" constituency in Nova Scotia?

Educating our young people is crucial and I will encourage and support the programs in our schools helping students to understand the shocking trauma of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation report, the research on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, the Black Lives Matter campaign and history of African peoples enslavement in Nova Scotia. We all need to set the example of how to work toward true equality.

In which sectors in Colchester North should government prioritize its efforts of leadership and funding assistance to achieve a high rate of economic and population growth?

For economic growth through tourism it would help to provide appropriate infrastructure to attract visitors to the Cliffs of Fundy highlights and particularly the Mi'kmaq history centre in Debert. There are many attractions on the north shore and the Fundy side but they could be made more productive with support for building trails, camping and washroom facilities, sources of local food. Population growth would be likelier if we had investment in community health centres. To attract and keep young people we need more employment possibilities and one good move would be creating new jobs in the development of green energy sources, solar and wind and tidal power. Internet service is not secure through all areas of Colchester North and needs to be stronger, and affordable housing is a big issue.

What existing provincial government program or planned policy is least beneficial to businesses and general population in Colchester North?

The centralization of education and health care authorities was a huge mistake. And closing of rural schools kills small communities, making it harder to attract and retain young families, new Canadians and badly needed professionals, most notably family doctors.

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?

Get lawmakers out to rural areas more often than just in time for pre-election funding announcements. Local MLAs could sponsor gatherings in their own areas and highlight the talents and possibilities not recognized in the city.

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 am a very strong believer that everybody has an individual voice and deserves to be heard. I believe that if elected I am the voice for Colchester North, the voice of the people. So any decision or answer I would make would be based on the wishes of constituents of Colchester North.

If you are elected on August 17th what actions will you immediately undertake to achieve economic growth and lifestyle enhancements for the constituency of Colchester North?

I would be solid in advocating for NDP policies like \$15 minimum wage, more availability of home care, and focus on community building. Part of that focus includes more support for start-up small businesses, farmers' markets and sustainable local food production.

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