

Dave Ritcey

Truro-Bible Hill- Millbrook-Salmon River – PC Candidate

(EDITOR'S NOTE: All candidates in Truro-Bible Hill- Millbrook-Salmon River were asked to complete a questionnaire unique to the constituency. This reply is from Dave Ritcey, PC Candidate).



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

The most frequently raised topics while campaigning door-to-door are the cost of living, healthcare, and road infrastructure needs.

2. The electorate is demanding a higher rate of accountability to their concerns. Nation-wide there is a significant increase of complaints that elected officials (staff do not return calls promptly. Will you change your office policy to increase accountability? Do you promise "you personally" or "a senior member of your staff" will return a call to constituents within 24 hours?

I want to be honest about how things work behind the scenes. As your MLA, I'm deeply committed to our community, but it's a role that requires juggling many tasks. With just one dedicated assistant handling calls and emails, my days are filled with meetings, legislative sessions, and finance discussions—all to advocate for our constituency.

I'm also constantly on the road, traveling between Halifax and our community, fighting to make sure your concerns are front and center. While I can't promise a 24-hour response every single time due to the volume and the workload, I do commit to acknowledging concerns as soon as we receive them and responding as quickly as possible. You deserve representation that's active, engaged, and working hard for you, and that's exactly what I'll continue doing every day.

3. The lack of suitable affordable housing has become a major problem. Remote rural areas face even greater challenges with lack of infrastructure such as: conditions of roads, cellphone, acceptable internet and government service. Being in a quasi-urban constituency you face different types of challenges. What will you do to ensure infrastructure in your constituency is equal to larger urban areas in order to retain current populations or to attract new families to the area? Making sure our community has the infrastructure it needs to thrive is my top priority. I spend countless hours meeting with departments, showing them why our community matters, why we're growing, and why we need more support to keep up.

Since I took office, I've secured over \$25 million from the Department of Public Works for projects that matter to us—roads, better transportation, improved sewer systems, you name it.

But it's not just about basic infrastructure. I've been just as focused on making our community a better place to live and raise a family. We got \$2.67 million for major renovations and accessibility upgrades at the historic Truro Amateur Athletic Club grounds and \$1 million to fix the Colchester Legion Stadium after Hurricane Fiona hit. Plus, \$1.4 million went into building the new Resilience Centre in Millbrook First Nation. These investments are more than just numbers; they mean better facilities, stronger communities, and a place where families want to stay and new ones want to move to. I'll keep pushing to make sure we don't get left behind, because our community deserves the same opportunities and growth as the big urban centers.

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

Our biggest asset for economic and population growth is hands down our prime location. We're right in the heart of the Maritimes, which puts us in the perfect spot for both business and lifestyle.

We've got a growing tourism sector with attractions like Victoria Park, the Truro Farmers Market, and top-notch walking and bike trails. Pair that with our unique accommodations, and it's no wonder people come here and don't want to leave. Add in our new and improved recreation and event facilities, and we're set up for year-round activity.

Our community is also home to innovative post-secondary and college institutions, which draw in students and young professionals—exactly what we need for long-term growth. And let's not forget the backbone of our economy: our thriving small businesses that bring jobs and keep money flowing locally.

We've got land available for housing development, which is key as more people choose our area to settle down. Plus, our active and accessible business park, with nearly 70 businesses already operating, shows that we're open for business and ready to expand.

All these elements come together to make our community a magnet for growth!

5. With changes in the labour supply market, there is a visible increase in service sector employees from other countries. How extensive is "racism and bigotry" a basic and systemic problem in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River? How will you help change it?

The vast majority of folks here in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River are good, hardworking, and welcoming. But I won't pretend that racism and bigotry don't exist—it's still an issue, even if it's just a small number who don't share the values we hold as a community. Whenever I see it, I'll call it out and use my position to push for equality.

I'm proud that our government passed the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act, the first of its kind in Canada. This legislation isn't just words—it's action. It allows the government to require public bodies, like municipalities and colleges, to come up with their own anti-racism strategies. I'll keep working with local partners and marginalized groups to make sure we set real standards that stamp out racism and bigotry in our community.

On top of that, we've teamed up with the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia to help municipalities build equity and anti-racism plans, backed by a \$1.8 million investment. This kind of support ensures that our entire region, from our institutions to our neighborhoods, reflects the values of respect and inclusion that we're known for.

6. What steps should be taken and how will you assist in making Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River among the "least racist" and "most welcoming" constituency in Nova Scotia?

It starts with community conversations and education. I'll support initiatives that bring people together, whether through cultural events, workshops, or discussions led by local leaders and voices from marginalized communities. This kind of grassroots engagement builds understanding, unity and empathy.

In 2022, we proudly hosted the first Anti-Racism in Sport and Recreation Week. These events included anti-racism e-modules for parents and athletes, created by the Canadian Sport Institute Atlantic. These resources are valuable for helping Nova Scotians recognize their role in eradicating

racism and ensuring that sports remain spaces where everyone can participate equally. As a coach, I see firsthand how sports and team activities can break down racial barriers and build connections, as we all share the common goal of teamwork and winning. I'll continue to seek ways for our community to come together, share experiences, and break down barriers.

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

Here's where I believe we should focus our efforts to drive both economic and population growth:

Healthcare: People need access to good healthcare, and that's top priority. We've got to make sure our hospitals, clinics, and family doctors are properly funded and supported.

Tourism & Hospitality: We've got the beauty and the history. Victoria Park, our farmers' market, and the surrounding countryside are already major draws. With some smart investment in tourism infrastructure, and support for our local hospitality businesses, we can bring in more visitors.

Clean Renewable Energy: Clean energy is the future, and it's something we can lead in. By investing in wind, solar, and other green technologies, we can create jobs and attract businesses to the area, all while keeping our environment protected.

Home Building & Industrial Sector: There's land here, and there's a real need for affordable housing. We need continued government support to get more homes built and grow the local industries that provide those jobs.

Active Lifestyle, Recreation & Transportation: People want to live in a place that's connected and offers a good quality of life. We need better recreation options, more walking and biking trails, and a focus on making our transportation infrastructure stronger.

By doubling down on these key areas, we can grow our economy, build a community that people want to move to, and keep the ones we have here for the long haul.

8. ScotiaPort projects 4,600 jobs within a 20-year development period. Proponents of the project insist a new Highway 104 / 102 interchange, costing upwards of \$50-million, is essential. How hard will you work to ensure the new interchange is built as soon as possible? How soon might you be able to announce progress on the interchange?

From my understanding, the proponents of the ScotiaPort project are requesting federal funding for the new Highway 104/102 interchange, which is crucial for the success of the project and the economic growth of our region. As we all know, one of the key reasons we are having this election is because the federal government has been unwilling to act on behalf of Nova Scotians.

As Vice Chair of the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee, I've seen firsthand how the feds consistently fail to act when it matters most—whether it's their refusal to intervene in unlawful fishing activities in Southwestern Nova Scotia and St. Peter's or their inaction on protecting the Chignecto Isthmus. Time and time again, Ottawa has failed to take our concerns seriously, and it's hurting Nova Scotia.

This interchange is a prime example of why we need strong, local leadership that will fight for our community's needs. I will continue to use my voice in every forum to push Ottawa to step up and invest in our future. It's critical we get the support we need from the federal government so this project can move forward.

9. How can you assist all three levels of government to ensure the best decisions will be made regarding expanding the "green energy" footprint and possible production of hydrogen from "wind and emptying landfills sites"?

We've already made great strides with our Clean Power Plan 2030, focusing on expanding wind and solar energy and integrating battery storage. By 2030, we'll increase onshore wind to 50% of our electricity and add 1,000 MW of new wind energy, plus we're bringing more solar into communities across the province. We're also working hard to position Nova Scotia as a leader in green hydrogen production, especially with our offshore wind resources and potential for export to Europe.

But it's not just about big projects; it's about making sure every community has the chance to benefit. Our government will continue to work closely with municipalities, band councils and villages to ensure they have the tools and resources they need to take part in this clean energy transition. Whether it's local clean energy projects or supporting small businesses, we need everyone at the table as we move forward. It's all hands-on deck

if we want a sustainable, prosperous future for Nova Scotia.

10. What existing provincial government program or planned policy is least beneficial to businesses and general population in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River? Should more scheduled public transportation service be a priority?

The Liberal platform's plan to impose a nearly 30 cent per litre carbon price will harm the people of our community. You can't tax gas, tax farmers, and tax food distribution and still claim to be making life more affordable for Nova Scotians. This policy will hit families, businesses, and our agricultural community hard, and I believe it will make life even more difficult for everyday people in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River. The proposed cuts, which could amount to nearly \$1 billion, would only make things worse, especially given the track record of Zach Churchill and his history of imposing cuts, which have already impacted our students and the most vulnerable in our province.

As for scheduled public transportation, that is primarily a decision for the municipality, as they have the planners and the data needed to determine if more service is necessary. What I can say is that as your MLA, I've already worked hard to secure over \$500,000 in funding for our transportation system over the last three years. If there is a need for expanded service, I will be more than happy to advocate on your behalf to ensure our community gets the support it needs.

11. 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 and quasi-urban Nova Scotia?

The best way to shift the pendulum back to rural and quasi-urban Nova Scotia is by electing people who actually come from and understand these communities. My NDP opponent, Cailen Pygott, is from the South End of Halifax—how can someone who has no connection to our rural way of life understand the issues we face here? You can't represent the needs of rural Nova Scotians if you don't live here, work here, or raise a family here. I've lived, worked, and raised my family in this community. I've built a business here and coached local youth. I'm deeply invested in seeing our communities thrive, and I'll be a voice that fights to ensure rural issues are front and center. To make real change, we need more people in office who live the life we do, who know the challenges and the opportunities that exist outside of Halifax. That's the only way we'll get the attention our rural communities deserve.

12. Normally MLAs are expected to "toe" the party line. If you are elected on November 26th do you promise to place a higher priority on "constituents wishes / needs" ahead of "party policy" except in "non-confidence" situations? My constituents will always come first. They are the reason I got into politics in the first place—to improve the lives of the people around me. When it comes to making decisions, I'm focused on what's best for our community.

As for toeing the party line, as caucus chair, I lead many of our discussions within the party, and on the issues that matter most to my constituents, we're usually in agreement. What's good for my community is also good for the province, and I always keep that in mind when making decisions.

13. If you are elected on November 26th what actions will you immediately undertake to maximize economic growth and lifestyle enhancements for the constituency of Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River?

If re-elected on November 26th, my focus will be on what truly matters to the people of Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River—improving lives and enhancing our community's growth. Politics is about people, and I will continue to listen closely to your needs and work hard to be responsive and active in making things happen.

I will build on the work I've already started over the past 4.5 years. This includes pushing for more healthcare initiatives and improvements to our local facilities, continuing the necessary upgrades to our roads and infrastructure to support our growing population, and advocating for affordable housing solutions. I'll keep collaborating with our municipal partners and other key stakeholders to ensure our community's needs are met and that we are on the right path for long-term prosperity.

Together, we can maximize economic growth and improve the quality of life for everyone in our constituency.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

In Person Open Houses

Date	Time	Location	Address
Tuesday, Nov 19	6:30-8:30 PM	Economy Recreation Centre (West Entrance)	3315 Nova Scotia Trunk 2, Economy
Wednesday, Nov 20	6:30-8:30 PM	Knox United Church Hall	53 NS-289, Brookfield, NS
Thursday, Nov 21	6:30-8:30 PM	H. Douglas Boyce Village Hall	67 Pictou Road, Bible Hill
Tuesday, Nov 26	6:30-8:30 PM	The Grace Arts Centre Theatre	1 Creamery Rd, Tatamagouche,
Wednesday, Nov 27	6:30-8:30 PM	Debert Legion Branch 106	1252 Masstown Road, Debert
Thursday, Nov 28	6:30-8:30 PM	Old Barns United Church	Rte 236, Old Barns

Online Engagement

Stay tuned for the release of the online interactive map where you can learn more about the proposed zoning for your property. An online feedback form will be available on the project website if you want to contact the project team to ask a question or share your feedback.

Visit colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester or scan the QR code to participate!

We want to hear your feedback on the draft Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) for the Municipality of Colchester! The draft planning documents will soon be available on the project website, along with an interactive map where you can see the proposed zoning for your property and learn more about what that means for future development. We will be hosting a series of Community Workshops to introduce the draft MPS and LUB, hear feedback from residents and answer questions.

This phase of engagement is an important opportunity to share your input and results from the engagement will inform edits to the documents before they move through the formal adoption process in 2025.

New to the project? Check out the Plan It Colchester website to get up to speed!