

2020 Jason Blanch - for Mayor

Cumberland and Colchester Counties have just signed a \$60.1-Million project with Xplornet. What additional infrastructure would you work with councillors for Cumberland to provide, within the broadband program, to maximize benefits?

As infrastructure is being developed, we will identify residences that are unable to receive a signal because they are not in direct line of sight and resolve those problems. The current success is to be celebrated; tweaking it to perfection is one of the next steps. We need to develop community and tourist-site WiFi and accept Xplornet's offer to provide back-up satellite communications for all our fire stations.



Jason Blanch

What do you believe is the most important issue(s) facing the municipality?

Economic Security, Food Security, Energy Security and enhanced inter-municipal cooperation with Amherst, Oxford and Colchester County.

Since tourism is a major industry for the municipality what type of investments should the municipality make to grow the tourism sector?

We need to attract tourists and new residents through tourism efforts. We can draw in physicians, entrepreneurs, artists, teachers and trades people.

Some investment examples include signage for the newly appointed UNESCO Geopark, road and bridge repair and better signage for tourist-related sites. Tourism marketing in partnership with neighbouring municipalities must be expanded including establishing a mobile tourism centre (converted bus or Recreational Vehicle) that can bring tourism guides and promotional material (including free admission tickets) to the tourists as they gather for festivals and events.

Chignecto Park is a major asset for the area. What should the municipality do to ensure continued improvement of the park so it becomes an even larger contributor to the local economy?

The historic Eatonville community should be developed with a campsite for Sea Kayak tourists and should be celebrated with signage telling the history of the active community that once flourished there. The municipality should partner with a zip lining company like Tree Go and the province to develop a premier zip lining course somewhere in the vicinity of Eatonville.

How can the Eatonville site be converted to a useful tool and what should it become?

Eatonville Centre should be redeveloped as a camper's lodge, staffed seasonally by young people to accommodate hikers, kayakers and back country campers. There are several models, such as a site in New Hampshire operated by the Appalachian Mountain Club, that provide good examples.

With real estate costs in urban centres and other provinces soaring to new heights, what should Cumberland do to increase population densities and encourage investments to expand the residential and commercial tax base?

We must market ourselves as the most beautiful and welcoming community in Canada, our inclusive nature is our greatest selling feature. We need to build on our maritime love and hospitality - so valuable in an ever more divisive world. Welcoming new businesses and new ideas must be a priority. We will provide information packages for potential businesses listing available properties, services and workforce information. Many young people settling here are getting into farming and they need support.

Over the next three years the entire municipality will have broadband service equal to or better than what is available elsewhere in Canada. Home-based businesses or working from home continues to grow at a rapid pace. What opportunities do you visualize for all areas of the municipality?

The opportunities are endless for new and existing businesses as we will see the reversal of the rural to urban migration, particularly compounded with High Speed internet and the impact of COVID 19 and the relative safety of living inside the maritime bubble.

Cumberland has many world renown attractions, including Fundy Geological Museum, Joggins Fossil Centre and now is headquarters for the Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark, which is expected to be an economic engine for tourism and sustainability growth over the next decade and far beyond. What leading role do you suggest Cumberland should play to maximize benefits from the UNESCO designation for the GeoPark?

The designation of the Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished through collaboration. This collaborative effort is just beginning and the next steps should be developed as a team.

What approach to municipal governance will you take to ensure council is united and working hard to increase economic develop, yet maintain quality of life?

I will encourage councillors to work as a team for the betterment of the whole county. Although councillors have specific electoral districts, they must also represent the entire county to the benefit of all. I will strive to have a strategic planning session with all members of council and senior staff before Christmas that will provide an opportunity to form a team and develop a shared vision for leading the county. I will encourage our team to consider what can be accomplished, understanding that often a 4-year term is too limiting to provide any real improvement in the lives of residents. I will promote open, honest and meaningful dialogue. For my part I will openly listen with an ear to understanding and finding agreement with respect for all members of council and staff.

What attitudinal changes by residents, business owners and municipal staff and council are required to meet the needs of today's society?

We need to believe in ourselves and proudly talk about why we love it here, why we love our neighbours and why we would never want to live anywhere else!

What professional or personal experience do you bring to the table to lead council and staff where they need to go?

I bring a wealth of recent municipal experience as Councillor in Amherst Town. With an academic career in Community Development and overseas work leading project teams, I have the needed leadership skills. I am particularly proud of the projects that garnered support from youth.

The common theme that unites my diverse professional experience is my desire to serve and assist people. In twenty plus years of experience, I have shown the ability to respect and connect with people. I am a team builder with strong presentation skills, great listening skills, and an ability to form human connections. I am a tenacious, creative, detail orientated, problem solver dedicated to collaboration.

Jason Blanch, Candidate for Mayor Cumberland County can be reached at: 902 694-0961, or JasonBlanch70@gmail.com

2020 Murray Scott - for Mayor

1. Cumberland and Colchester Counties have just signed a \$60.1 Million project with Xplornet. What additional infrastructure would you work with councillors for Cumberland to provide, within the broadband program, to maximize benefits?

This project will further lead to people seeking to live and work, especially at home, within Cumberland County. It has been said that internet and cell phone coverage is as basic in our world as is running water. As Xplornet continues to expand its coverage under its agreement we will need to be aware of any areas of shortfall of coverage and work with them to ensure coverage is expanded as wide as possible. The next area where I see a tremendous need is in providing cell phone coverage. It will be possible to attract more people to live here as well with additional and better service. We will need to identify and work with providers to expand that coverage.



Murray Scott

2. What do you believe is the most important issue (s) facing the municipality?

One of the most important issues facing the municipality today is the shortage of workers. I have heard from one end of Cumberland County to the other from various businesses that they are not able to find and hire workers. We will need to explore the Provincial Nomination program to identify possibilities with our business community. As well, we may be able to work with and or partner with local businesses and the Nova Scotia Community college to help identify and fill needs our business community has in the work force.

3. Since, tourism is a major industry for the municipality what type of investments should the municipality make to grow the tourism sector?

We presently have a shared tourism strategy with other units in Cumberland and we need to continue to support and expand upon that. We need those involved in tourism to provide feed back as to where they see needs and shortfalls and to work with them to fill those voids. As well we should continue to dialogue with the Provincial government to ensure their related departments know of our needs and work with them to address those as well.

4. Chignecto Park is a major asset for the area. What should the municipality do to ensure continued improvement of the park so it becomes an even larger contributor to the local economy?

Our tourism strategy needs to involve Chignecto Park and we should impress upon the operator how important it is to be able to book at the park locally, and also to be able to sell brand items such as shirts, hats and other items that advertise the park. The marketing and advertising part of the park has to be increased so we reach the potential of this wonderful tourism gem. Advertising has to be done locally, provincially and nationally to reach the masses.

5. How can Eatonville site be converted to a useful tool and what should it become?

The building at Eatonville was built and designed to be an information center. It was closed several years ago. The Municipality should ask the Provincial government to provide capital funds to bring the building back up to a usable state and then determine if there is an opportunity to turn it over to a group or organization to operate. It was a great area for day travel and could be once again with the right joint effort.

6. With real estate costs in urban centres and other provinces soaring to new heights, what should Cumberland do to increase population densities and encourage investments to expand the residential and commercial tax base?

Because of property prices, our location being central to Atlantic Canada, our proximity to water properties, the addition of services such as internet and the fact our community is viewed as a safe and healthy place to live and work, I believe we are on the right track to increase our population. Reports are that many properties are being purchased by individuals and families who are now moving here. We need to continue to improve upon that aspect of our vision. A real challenge is to create an environment which is business friendly with appropriate tax rates that make it even more desirable to live and operate a business here.

7 Over the next three years the entire municipality will have broadband service equal to or better than what is available elsewhere in Canada. Home-based businesses or working from home continues to grow at a rapid pace. What opportunities do you visualize for all areas of the municipality?

As a result of the above fact, Cumberland County will be able to offer services to attract individuals and businesses alike. Businesses such as marketing, wholesaling, retailing and many others will be able to work from anywhere including home.

8. Cumberland has many world renown attractions, including Fundy Geological Museum, Joggins Fossil Centre and now is headquarters for the Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark, which is expected to be an economic engine for tourism and sustainable growth over the next decade and far beyond. What leading role do you suggest Cumberland should play to maximize benefits from the UNESCO designation for the GeoPark?

As I believe this GeoPark will attract people from around the globe we need to be prepared for an influx of tourists. We should conduct an inventory and assessment of tourist related services such as accommodations, retail, and eating establishments to ensure we can meet the demand and need. Certain areas within our municipality may be better equipped to provide these services while other areas may need to improve these services to meet the demand of increased numbers of tourists.

9. What approach to municipal governance will you take to ensure council is united and working hard to increase economic development, yet maintain quality of life?

We need to form a team of elected officials who are prepared to work for the collective good of Cumberland County. We should understand that when something good happens for one part of our county we all benefit. Great work has been done in many areas and we need to continue to support those initiatives and expand upon them. Because there are so many reasons for people to want to come here our continued strategy should be to capitalize upon those opportunities.

10. What attitudinal changes by residents, business owners and municipal staff and council are required to meet the needs of today's society?

There is a definite need for a team approach for staff and elected officials working together with residents and business owners. A team approach leads to positive attitudes by being inclusive. We should continue to pursue joint opportunities with other municipal units in Cumberland County and with Colchester County.

11. What professional or personal experience do you bring to the table to lead council and staff where they need to go?

Having been a career police officer and as well having served as the MLA for Cumberland South for 12 years I believe I understand the needs of our communities and the people. I held various government portfolios and including being the Speaker. This gave me first-hand experience in leading the Provincial Legislature and also in formulating legislation that led to laws for our Province. I believe I have the ability to form a team approach with council and staff to ensure we are working towards the same goal of providing strong governance for the residents of Cumberland County. I also believe communication, which is one of my strengths, is key to success for municipal council.



“Murray Scott for Mayor”

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