

**News Release** For Immediate Release October 10, 2008

**Municipal Candidates Surveyed About Age Friendly Communities**

Affordable housing, access to transportation, and safety for seniors topped the list of concerns expressed by HRM candidates in the upcoming municipal election. These results came from the Age Friendly Candidate survey conducted by the Halifax Regional Municipality Preventing Falls Together Coalition. Preventing Falls Together is a program of Community Links, funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection. Community Links is a provincial organization that promotes healthy communities and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors through community development and volunteer action.

“We were impressed with the thoughtful responses by candidates who took the time to complete the survey” says Alex Handyside, HRM Coalition member. Twenty candidates responded to the five-question survey.

Many candidates talked about the importance of allowing seniors to remain in their homes as they age. Rising property taxes were cited as one of the barriers to this, as well as lack of access to transportation for seniors and others without cars. The high cost of heating and home repairs is another barrier. Several solutions to these issues were offered by candidates, including setting aside at least 5% of new housing designated as affordable housing, incentives to encourage the building and retrofitting of senior friendly housing, and reliable, affordable assistance for such things as snow shoveling, yard work and repairs.

Transportation was another issue that came up many times. As might be expected, concerns about poor access to transportation increased as the districts responding moved away from the Halifax-Dartmouth downtown areas. Candidates for District 2 (Beaverbank/Fall River) 22 (Timberlea-Prospect) and 23 (Hammonds Plains-St. Margarets) were particularly critical of the current state of public transit. As several candidates pointed out, the problem is not so much a lack of recreational facilities and other services for seniors, as the lack of transportation to get to them. Making our streets pedestrian friendly and safe for all was another wish echoed by many candidates.

“We were pleased that 18 of the 20 responding candidates support the idea of designated parking spaces for seniors”, said Valerie Connors, another member of HRM Falls Preventing Falls Together Coalition. “We have partnered with MicMac Mall and Halifax Shopping Centre on this initiative, and are working to bring other retailers on board.”

Many candidates for council pointed out that seniors are the backbone of our communities: they make up the majority of volunteer Boards and other volunteer efforts.

For further information, contact

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Candidates who completed the survey to date are listed on the following page:

**Candidates who Responded to  
Age Friendly Community Survey  
NS Municipal Election, 2008**

**District 2 Waverley-Fall River-Beaverbank**

Barry Dalrymple  
Krista Snow

**District 4 Cole Harbour**

Barry Smith

**District 9 Albro lake-Harbourview**

Brian LeBlanc  
Wayne Sitland

**District 12 Halifax Downtown**

Cameron Ells  
Dawn Marie Sloane

**District 13 Northwest Arm-South End**

Beverly Miller

**District 14 Connaught-Quinpool**

Katie Campbell  
Glenn Dodge  
Ross McLaren  
Sean Phillips  
Jennifer Watts

**District 18 Spryfield-Herring Cove**

Stephan Adams

**District 19 Middle and Upper Sackville, Lucasville**

Tim Holsford

**District 22 Timberlea-Prospect**

Shawn Lahey  
John Stoddard

**District 23 Hammonds Plains-St. Margarets**

Deborah Brunt  
Gina Byrne