



Municipal Candidate Questionnaire
Nova Scotia Municipal Election 2008
Age Friendly Communities
Results

Members of the HRM (Halifax Regional Municipality) Preventing Falls Together Coalition want to know your plans and opinions on how to make our community more age friendly and fall proof.

Please complete this questionnaire by October 3 and return it to us by
FAX 902-422-9322
or email to: election2008@preventingfallstogether.ca

List of candidates who completed the survey:

Name of Candidate:	Candidate for District:
Barry Dalrymple Krista Snow	2-Waverley-Fall River-Beaverbank
Barry Smith	4-Cole Harbour
Brian LeBlanc Wayne Sitland	9 Albro Lake-Harbourview
Cameron Ells Dawn Marie Sloane	12-Halifax Downtown
Beverly Miller	13-Northwest Arm-South End
Katie Campbell Glenn Dodge Ross McLaren Sean Phillips Jennifer Watts	14-Connaught-Quinpool
Steve Adams David Sampson	18-Spryfield-Herring Cove
Tim Holsford	19-Middle and Upper Sackville-Lucasville
Shawn Lahey John Stoddard	22-Timberlea-Prospect
Deborah Brunt Gina Byrne	23-Hammonds Plains-St Margarets

- 1. Seniors represent a significant and growing segment of the municipal population. In your opinion, what are the three most important issues of concern to seniors in your district?**

Responses:

Top three responses were:

1. Affordable Housing:
2. Transportation:
3. Safety

Other concerns included:
-supporting seniors independence

-health care
-taxes
-infrastructure/unsafe sidewalks, etc
-rising costs of food and heat
-recreational facilities, programs and other meeting spaces for seniors, especially in terms of access to these (transportation again!)

Comments included:

Move HRM forward to ensure that all new residential construction allocate 5% of the units to affordable housing. (14-Katie Campbell)

Many seniors who purchased their homes 40 to 60 years ago are now faced with tax bills that are threatening their ability to stay in their homes. Tax reform would lower their tax burden in this area by anywhere from \$500 to \$3500 per year.(14-Glenn Dodge)

Health Care – Many seniors are finding their doctor's are retiring and it is a scramble to find a new doctor they feel comfortable with. Most seniors would prefer to stay in their homes and community regardless of whether they rent or own but access to in-home care is a problem.(23-Deborah Brunt)

There is sporadic bus service on the Beaver Bank Road that serves maybe 1/4 of the Seniors in District 2, there is zero bus or transit service in Fall River, Waverley and all of our smaller communities. Taxi's cost a fortune out here so they rely on friends and neighbours (2-Barry Dalrymple)

2. Access to safe, reliable and affordable transportation was a key concern of seniors in the World Health Organization Age Friendly Communities Project. How does your district rate in providing such access? What is being done in your district to improve access to transportation among seniors?

Responses:

Access to transportation for seniors (and others) was mentioned by virtually all candidates who responded. 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 Districts 2 (Beaverbank/Fall River), 22 (Timberlea-Prospect) and 23 (Hammonds Plains-St. Margarets) were particularly critical of the current state of public transit.

Comments included:

The urban and suburban part of District 18 has Metro Transit and Access-A-Bus. However, the rural areas do not. I am working with a local group the bring transit to the Sambro Loop in '09. (18-Steve Adams)

We had a transit study completed which will bring park and ride service to 102 corridor from Enfield to Fall River. This has been approved by Council but I do not believe this will address the issues related to transit for seniors. Much more has to be done to ensure connectivity with respect to local communities. This is something I will focus on after the Park and Ride service is installed (2-Krista Snow)

We could be doing more such as more frequent bus services and expanded routes. Safety around bus

shelters also needs to be taken into consideration – good lighting, safe crosswalks, and benches for people to rest or place parcels or bags. Kneel down buses are also very important for people with walkers so more of these types of buses would be good. (14-Jennifer Watts)

My commitment specific to this issue includes securing more transit that is reliable, on time, comfortable, frequent and accessible. As Councillor, I will also work with HRM to support public transportation options using the WHO's Age-Friendly Transportation Guide. (14-Ross McLaren)

Next year we will be introducing 6 free hybrid buses for the downtown which will be free to everyone. The route is still to be announced but it will have the hospitals as part of its destinations. 12-(Dawn Sloane)

- 3. Maintaining physical fitness (bone and muscle strength and balance) has been identified as an important factor in preventing fall-related injuries hospitalizations, and deaths among seniors. What fitness/recreational facilities and programs exist for seniors in your district? Do you have suggestions or plans to increase such opportunities?**

Responses

Although candidates offered several comments on existing opportunities and planned improvements to recreational facilities in their districts, and the need for more safe meeting places for seniors, many candidates saw the problem as not so much a lack of recreational facilities and other services for seniors, as the lack of transportation to get to them. See questions 1 and 2.

- 4. Do you support the idea of courtesy parking spaces for seniors at retail outlets and other facilities frequented by seniors? Why or why not? (These are similar to the “mother and child” spaces and are in addition to the handicapped spaces. A number of these spaces have been installed at MicMac Mall and Halifax Shopping Centre.)**

Responses

18 out of the 20 candidates who responded supported the idea of designated parking spaces for seniors.

Steve Adams (18-Spryfield herring Cove felt that “*Courtesy parking should be reserved for those who have mobility issues, not based on age.*”

Krista Snow (2-Waverley Fall River-Beaverbank) responded that “*This has never been brought forth by any of my residents. If it is brought forth, then I will work with the seniors at that time to address any concerns that they have. I will support the position of my residents.*”

Several candidates suggested that this should be enforced, perhaps through a bylaw.

- 5. Please share with us your ideas for making our municipality more age friendly, and any other general comments you wish to make.**

Responses: Individual comments from candidates are detailed below:

Stephan Adams (18): Again, age is not the issue. Residents who need assistance, regardless of age, should have their special needs accommodated. The OSC (Osteoporosis Society of Canada) is a very valuable resource to utilize for information on fall prevention. Local pharmacies are also helpful.

Barry Dalrymple (2): I'm 55 and recently retired after 32 years in the RCMP and I love volunteering and most of all I love kids sports and Seniors, I have always felt a deep need to re-pay the Seniors in our area for making this such a wonderful place to grow up. I serve on the local Lions Club where we put on the Annual Christmas Parade mostly for kids and seniors, we do a number of Seniors appreciation Dinners where we prepare food all day, set up fancy dinnerware in one of our old Halls and serve close to 120 Seniors and I love being there with them. We put in a wheelchair accessible ramp into the old Community Hall I serve on as a Board member to provide easier access to those with canes, walking problems with steps etc.

I could go on all day in this regard because I feel a strong obligation to serve our Seniors that have done so much for us but I think you can see that.

The only other thing I would like to add is that we have terrific seniors here and they make up most of our volunteer Boards and groups and we'd be lost without them, we have many great initiatives we will do if we are successful in our election bid. Re-energizing our old Halls, putting in Archives Centres, Computer learning centres and the like are all being discussed. I'd love this to be one of the most vibrant seniors areas in the country.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you this, I have a strong passion for our Seniors and would love the opportunity to work with them in a meaningful way.

Krista Snow(2): I work for the residents of District 2. I think we are a very age-friendly district and am happy to say that none of my senior residents with whom I am in contact with daily, have ever expressed any concern with age-friendly issues in our communities.

Jennifer Watts (14): I would like to ensure help for seniors in District 14 who struggle with snow shovelling. I would like to see an organization maintain a roster of affordable (and bonded) resources for home repair and yard work for seniors. I would like to promote better linkages between students and seniors for volunteer opportunities - this kind of give and take goes two ways, and is key in building community. Pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods and great public transit are important and well as neighbourhoods designed with mixed-use so that people living in a community have close access to the resources they need – shops, community facilities, etc. Public resources like libraries are also very important

Glenn Dodge (14): The great thing about our district, Connaught/Quinpool is its wide demographic profile. People of all ages live here and that is what makes it the vibrant community that it is.

Ross McLaren(14): The province's positive aging strategy and its nine key goals include the following: the importance of celebrating seniors; issues regarding financial security; the value of health and well-being; the importance of maximizing independence; the need for more housing options; transportation; respecting diversity; issues of employment and life transitions; and supportive communities.

With over 190 actions aimed at addressing these key goals, there is significant potential for collaboration across government and, as Councillor, I will be a part of that collaboration.

In my policy plan (www.voterossmlaren.ca/policy), I have identified my role in helping to build a more livable city. Creating an environment in which our city can truly thrive and grow – and be more livable – is the reason I decided to run. I will commit to reviewing the World Health Organization's

guides for age-friendly cities and will continue to support increased programs and recreational activities for all ages.

In this survey I have identified issues like independence, mobility and safety as well as health as being among the most significant to our senior population. I have also outlined several commitments in my policy section that I invite you to review, www.voterossmclaren.ca . Please contact me with any questions. Below, I have highlighted a few of my policies that may be of interest.

Policy Commitments

As Councillor, I will work to secure safer sidewalks and streets, better lighting and more community policing. A livable city means having sidewalks that are safe day and night. We deserve to move throughout our community, whether wheeling or walking, without fear or incident.

As Councillor, I will work with residents to build a transportation solution that makes sense for our needs. Having a voice in how your community grows is essential. Being able to get around our community safely with accessible transportation that is frequent and on time is my commitment to you.

As Councillor, I will work to make a new and thriving library a reality. Regardless of age, a new central library helps meet needs either through literacy or in assisting with residents seeking information and new opportunities to learn.

As Councillor, I will work with local business owners to ensure HRM is providing the environment necessary to help local businesses thrive. Support for local businesses means goods and services close to home that are convenient and safe.

As Councillor, I will work with HRM Council and HRM by Design to promote the arts and community cultural events.

As Councillor, I will work with HRM Council and staff to retrofit buildings and make our community more energy efficient and I will support community gardens.

Above all, as Councillor, I will work with you to help make our City more livable.

Thank you for your interest in my comments. I hope I can count on your support on October 18th.

Gina Byrne (23): Input from the seniors in district 23 would be extremely valuable to me as explained earlier we have a beautiful district that has been ignored for far too long we have to bring the issues forth and demand change. I believe in working together with everyone.

Together Everyone Achieves More – T.E.A.M.

Deborah (Deb) Brunt (23): I would like to see some development of smaller homes suitable for seniors, wanting to step down from the larger home, empty nesters or for that matter people who just don't want to carry a large mortgage instead of having to leave the community.

With a little effort we could be making our communities more inclusive for Seniors. Seniors have for many years have volunteered at places like the IWK very successfully but we do not see them in the schools or community as much. Perhaps we should be taking a lesson from organizations that have fostered good relations with Seniors.

Wayne Sitland (9): More drop-in service centers for seniors to give them a place to socialize and maybe to obtain a light meal to combat the loneliness many seniors experience when they are on their own.

Seniors are the backbone of my community and anything I can do to enhance their quality of life, I will.

Brian LeBlanc (9): My ideas are irrelevant. To find out what would make our municipality more age friendly we need to open a dialogue with seniors and organizations that help seniors. That way we

can ensure that any attempt that is used to make HRM more age friendly is done through the voices of those who require it.

Beverly Miller (13): More affordable housing on the Peninsula where seniors can walk, rather than having to drive, for most activities and basic shopping.

Dawn Marie Sloane (12): More accessible buses, safe and unbroken sidewalks for easier walking, seating at bus stops, better snow clearing so seniors can walk without fear of slipping and falling

Cameron Ells, P.Eng. (12): A few suggestions for making our municipality more age friendly include:

- seeking more involvement by seniors as volunteers in HRM policy development, cultural activities (ie. Winter Canada Games), mentors, and welcoming visitors
- seek more justifications to expand the recreation program in senior specific ways
- increasing development in Downtown Halifax should also increase opportunities with respect to housing, safety, financial, transportation, and recreation options.

Shawn Lahey (22): It is important to create inclusive communities which allow all residents an opportunity to be active and involved.

John Stoddard (22): Our district needs more extended care facilities that would allow seniors who have lived their whole life in the region enjoy staying close to home. A healthy community contains people of all ages and interaction among all groups. St. Mary's elementary school off Morris street is a good example. It has a daycare with young children, an elementary school and a senior's drop in center. Add some middle age parents and it's an almost perfect example of what a community should look like. They have a grand friends program that benefits both the seniors and the young. This is the type of development we should be aiming for.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your responses will be compiled and shared with our Preventing Falls Coalition members, senior groups and individuals in the community, and the media.

Please direct questions to:

Halifax Regional Municipality Preventing Falls Together Coalition

902-422-0914

info@preventingfallstogether.ca