



### David Coon Response - Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

#### 1. What are your top three priorities that you will make happen during your term if elected?

- Navigate the pandemic safely, ensuring people and our small businesses are supported when they are in need.
- Ensure people have rapid access to primary health care.
- Decentralize decision-making and management of public service delivery, particularly for health, education, and economic development focussed on transitioning to a net zero carbon economy.

#### 2. What opportunities do you see arising for the Fredericton Region as a result of the pandemic? How can we capitalize on these opportunities?

Fredericton is one of the safest cities in Canada to live and work in the midst of the pandemic, as was the case before the arrival of the coronavirus. This needs to be part of our story in attracting immigrants and people from across Canada.

#### 3. The private sector, especially small business which is the engine of the economy was severely impacted by the pandemic, how will your government support the recovery of our economy?

There are two costs for small businesses, that we could readily address. Property taxes and energy costs. We would institute a property tax relief program that would enable tax deferrals or forgiveness during the pandemic, depending on the merits of the case. A Green government would also institute a major program for residential and commercial retrofits that would provide upfront loans to invest in building envelopes, and lighting, heating and ventilation technology to cut energy bills by 20 to 30%.

#### 4. Prior to the pandemic, an aging and declining labour force was a top concern of businesses in our region. Immigration will be more challenging in the short-term – how can the government help labour force participation in the province?

A Green government would negotiate an accord with Ottawa to give us greater autonomy over immigration to ensure we can effectively recruit and integrate newcomers to Fredericton and New Brunswick.

#### 5. What natural resource development opportunities are most important to growing the New Brunswick economy? How can government help move these industries forward?

We see real opportunities for development in three natural resource sectors: renewable power and fuel, diversified forest products, and agriculture. A Green government would establish a supportive policy environment in these three sectors, and remove legislative barriers that are hindering progress in them.



**6. The Fredericton Region has been building expertise and capacity in cyber security over the course of several decades. What role can government play in ensuring we remain a global leader in this sector?**

Cyber security is an important part of the Green economy. Its application to the roll out of the smart grid is essential. We need to fully implement the smart grid and the distributed renewable power generation, storage technologies, and smart buildings it is designed to support in order to develop and demonstrate the cyber security measures necessary to safeguard it.

**7. How should New Brunswick handle a second wave of COVID-19 in New Brunswick? What are the appropriate metrics to trigger another public health shutdown?**

The metrics should be determined by the chief medical officer and her public health experts, but the COVID-19 cabinet committee should be re-established following the election. We need to adopt COVID-19 legislation so that we can manage the pandemic for the long-term without having to continually rely on executive orders signed under the Emergency Measures Act.

**8. What are your views on the New Brunswick's 10-year education plan and Green Paper? How do you intend to ensure consistency in the province's education plans?**

A Green government would follow through on the 10 year education plan. The education system needs stability, not massive changes every time the government changes. We would return the school districts to their former configuration to decentralize decision-making, while increasing the authority of District Education Councils.