



**FREDERICTON  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**  
— The Voice of Business —

364 York Street, Suite 200  
Fredericton, NB  
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**Luke Randall – Green Party of New Brunswick**

**Fredericton North**

**Fredericton Chamber of Commerce *Questions that Count* for the 2020 New Brunswick Election**

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

Covid-19 recovery including support for small business. I realize the need for employers to have the financial resources to pay employees who need a living income. I also understand that businesses need help right now. We will raise minimum wage to \$15.00/hour and provide a wage subsidy to small businesses that need help. This will provide much needed support to workers who are more likely to spend their dollars locally.

Increasing access to doctors and healthcare. We need to improve recruitment now and support nurses, doctors, allied health workers, and other health professionals. Lack of healthcare in our city is leading to reduced retention across populations and professions which adds significant costs for business.

Housing. No matter where I am in our riding, and no matter the demographics, housing has been a huge challenge. I will be focused on finding solutions from stakeholders. A lot of the challenges that I'm hearing about involve all three levels of government and the private sector. I'm eager to work with municipal, provincial and federal counterparts to get approvals done faster for housing that reflects the needs of everyone in the community.

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

As a business owner, the greatest opportunity my company has seen has been how our business model works. We've quickly transitioned more business online and have increased efficiencies. Our consumer base is now national. Whereas, a year ago it was almost exclusively Fredericton based.

We have new models emerging in almost every sector, health care in particular. Some models have worked well, some are leaving people behind. We need leadership that can work with stakeholders quickly to take the best of the opportunities that have presented themselves, while working hard to help those that are struggling.

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?

In our business, we have felt that impact in many ways. Many of us have used the Workforce Expansion Program to hire new employees in the past. I recently called Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour about the program and found out there are no dollars to access. Yet, a press release from earlier in the year says that the money is still there. I want to get those dollars out to small businesses to support existing employees, not just new hires. I also want to advocate for an all in one stop solution for business owners



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where they can access all provincial services in one place, with legal and accounting help to get their business started and to support existing businesses.

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 government help labour force participation in the province?

Raising the minimum wage will help with participation. We can also work with the business community to see what their training needs are. Too many programs are aimed at training individuals without consulting business to find out what skills they need to help their business grow. Changing the rules of the PNP program to retain graduates from UNB and STU by better responding to the needs of local businesses would also go a long way towards resolving skilled labour shortages.

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

Developing solar and wind are two important natural resources that will create jobs and help New Brunswick hit its legislated carbon emission reduction targets. Government can help by offering homeowners and small business owners interest-free loans to help with upfront costs. The loans would then be paid off using the savings on monthly power bills.

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, so a Green government would work with the sector to ensure it is well supported and that there are people educated and trained for the jobs that will be available.

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?

This should be determined by the Chief Medical Officer and public health department, but all efforts would be made to avoid another full shutdown as there was in the spring.

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 plans. The education system needs stability, not massive changes everytime the government changes.



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I agree with the Green Paper focus of moving more support to teachers . There should be more definition on what the Green Paper means by giving more control principles, especially with the consideration of minority groups. I fully support initiatives to give students the tools to speak fluently in both official languages upon graduation. I fully support that First Nation realities, experiences and contributions to Canadian society, and language will be embedded throughout the K-12 educational system. Too many New Brunswick kids are left behind who don't attend school, while there is value to "building on the Integrated Service Delivery model that today brings four departments together to help students in crisis" we also need to look beyond this model to be sure that we're connecting with children who are being left out. I fully support removing restrictions on teachers speaking publicly about their work. While there is a commitment to use alternate learning environments in the Green Paper, I'd like to see students have a diversity of models available at younger ages as well. The paper takes tentative steps to improve early childhood education, I would like to see faster and more aggressive action taken to improve the current system.

\*Responses can be returned to Morgan Peters at [advocacy@frederictonchamber.ca](mailto:advocacy@frederictonchamber.ca). As noted in my email, we plan to have all of the responses posted by 8 September 2020, which will give about a week before the election. We may send out a short press release on this date as we will be starting our Leaders' Series that day as well.