

thescope's

2013 ST. JOHN'S MUNICIPAL ELECTION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Lionel West, At-Large Candidate

Please describe yourself in a few words.

A person who enjoys life. I want to challenge and be challenged. Always in search of an alternative solution to life's questions.

What is your present occupation?

Community activist.

Why are you running in this election?

Passion of civic issues. Want to be one of the leaders shaping the solutions to St. John's challenges.

What should be the city's top three priorities?

Planning - Finalize Municipal plan with emphasis on solutions to Urban Sprawl
Revenue Options - Continue discussions with the Provincial Government for alternate means of raising revenue for the city.
Infrastructure - Liaise with Federal and Provincial governments to upgrade infrastructure needs

What has been the present council's biggest blunder?

Supporting management in the Metrobus dispute. Council should have acted as a mediator

What has been the present council's biggest achievement?

Rectifying its pension scheme thus ensuring the non-contributory entitlement they enjoyed, finally came to an end.

What other candidates running in this election do you think you would work best with?

I will work with them all. I am a team player and will make every effort to engage with all councilors to ensure a productive and effective council.

Opinions & Issues

Please rate the importance of each subject on a scale of 0 to 10, and then add your comments.

Heritage building regulations - 9

Heritage is important and our planning decisions have to take into account the value heritage adds to our city and society.

City support for the arts - 9

The arts are an important aspect of city and social life. I would continue the support and grants that the city currently funds. I would also look at alternate means of funding the arts.

Downtown parking - 8

With the current construction and near completion of new parking buildings in the downtown, parking issues should ease. However, parking has to be considered within a public transit system and initiatives such as park-and-ride or shuttle services assessed.

Public transit - 9

Continue to support Metrobus and GoBus. Look to regional co-operation for providing alternate means of commuting into the city.

Urban density - 9

Urban density will be looked at within the Municipal Plan. I am a promoter of reducing urban sprawl and building up. Let's be creative with our space while maintaining a healthy and high quality of life.

Full-time council positions - 5

I have been a proponent of this for several years and would encourage a public debate on the issue. Full time councilors may mean better informed councilors and this can only be a positive thing for the city. Full time councilors may mean less councilors.

Amalgamation - 0

Not important. Regional co-operation is more important and besides, the current provincial government will not force amalgamation onto any community.

Height restriction for buildings - 9

The city must define a definition for “storey”. Currently there isn’t one so a storey can be 8 feet or 12 feet. As for height restriction, this must be part of the Municipal Plan. Planning zones should be clearly defined and I would be promoting the current restrictions in the Downtown.

Sidewalk snow clearing - 8

Continue with the current city policy of sidewalk snow clearing (schools/hospitals etc) and endeavour to increase the number of sidewalks cleared as financing permits.

Affordable housing - 9

An important issue that has to be addressed by all levels of government and the private sector. With smart planning, encourage developers to include a quota of “affordable housing” within all housing developments.