

thescope's

2013 ST. JOHN'S MUNICIPAL ELECTION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Lorne Loder, At-large Candidate

What is your present occupation?

I own and operate Ballistic Skate and Snow, an independent retail store on Water Street that I opened 18 years ago.

Why are you running in this election?

I am incredibly endeared to this City, I love it's history and I am passionate about its future. Being a longtime business owner and resident, I've interacted with the City on many levels, and have often recognized areas that need improvement. I consider myself a problem solver and I want to get more actively involved in the creative and effective solving of these problems. This is the community we live in, and it should be the most important forms of government we take part in.

In short, I want to make St. John's a better place to live by introducing fresh ideas and a new approach!

What should be the city's top three priorities?

Financial responsibility- we must work within the budget and be careful of spending. The City should not increase taxes, but the tax base.

Traffic and Parking – I believe there are creative solutions to the downtown parking dilemma and traffic congestion at targeted bottleneck areas.

Intelligent Development- This refers to residential, commercial and community spaces. We need to move forward in a fashion that addresses our urban sprawl concerns while maintaining the character of our downtown.

What has been the present council's biggest blunder?

Increasing the tax rate too rapidly, especially without sufficiently engaging the public in decisions on how the funds were spent.

What has been the present council's biggest achievement?

I think the council's biggest achievement by far has been the commencement of the curbside recycling program and the improvements at the Robin Hood Bay facility. Secondly would be the expansion of the Convention Centre, which It's now almost a pleasure to go to the is really going to put St. John's on the 'convention map' and bring a lot of trade to the City.

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

I think the best city council has many different perspectives from people who can nevertheless respect each other and work together.

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 - We MUST preserve St. John's unique character (with regard to ascetics and community) without over-encumbering progressive development. Achieving the right balance is crucial.

City support for the arts

9 - St. John's has a fantastically rich arts community that contributes greatly to our identity. I feel it is important that council recognizes the arts community is part of the fabric of the City.

Downtown parking

10 - It's not just frustrating, it's detrimental to business and residents' use and enjoyment of the area. We MUST develop creative solutions to address the downtown parking dilemma. For every problem, there is a solution.

Public transit

10 - Improving the practicality and the perception of public transit would help increase ridership, Metrobus profitability and traffic flow.

Urban density

9- I think it's important to avoid the financial burden of urban sprawl through sustainable and intelligent development of the city core.

Full-time council positions

6- An effective, efficient part-time council can provide the leadership the city requires. The cost of full-time council would be an unnecessary burden on the taxpayers.

Amalgamation

7- If it makes economic sense, it should be up for consideration. But increasing co-operation for services, especially an expanded regional transit system, is necessary now.

Height restriction for buildings

9- Preserving the character and enjoyment of our City is a priority, but we must be open to smart, sustainable development.

Sidewalk snow clearing

10- This is a huge safety issue. I feel the City should do a better job clearing sidewalks downtown and in other areas with high pedestrian traffic.

Affordable housing

8 - We must look to other cities for successful solutions to ensure sufficient housing for all income levels, and that fixed-income seniors are not overburdened by rising property taxes.