

## Candidate Responses from West Nova

- COOK, Gloria Jane (VCP)
- D'ENTREMONT, Chris (Conservative)
- DEVEAU, Jason (Liberal)
- DUBOIS, Matthew (NDP-New Democratic Party)
- GREEN, Judy N (Green Party)

1. **Internet/Cellular Connectivity:** Communities need internet and cell service to attract residents and businesses. The federal government committed \$1.7 billion to internet funding in the 2019 budget. While a good start, this is not enough money, and municipal governments can't afford what is needed.

### ***What are you prepared to do to connect Nova Scotia's communities?***

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** Conservatives understand that reliable internet access is essential for rural and remote communities across the country. Unfortunately, for four years Justin Trudeau's Liberal government has taken rural Canadians for granted and failed to make high speed internet a priority. A Conservative government led by Prime Minister Andrew Scheer will make ensuring rural Canadians have high speed internet a priority.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** I consider internet connectivity as necessary infrastructure. Along with the funding needed to bring it to the door of everyone, especially in rural areas like West Nova. The NDP will also cap phone and internet charges.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** Connecting rural communities to fast affordable high-speed Internet is a priority. Ensuring that the pricing for these services are reasonable and fair is a necessity. Additional Federal funding will be made available to address these concerns.

2. **Program Design:** The Gas Tax Fund (GTF) is a great federal-municipal partnership. Other federal programs aren't as straightforward, requiring provincial matching funds or administrative approvals.

### **Do you support more programs designed like the GTF, to ensure that Nova Scotian municipalities with limited resources are able to partner directly with the federal government to respond to local needs?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** It was our previous Conservative government that understood the importance of the Gas Tax Fund and extended it, doubled it from \$1 billion to \$2 billion annually, and legislated it as a permanent source of federal infrastructure funding for municipalities and communities.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** The municipalities have been starved from adequate funds for years by both the Province and Fed of the funds to keep up infrastructure. A different formula is needed to get projects going quickly.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** We Greens believe in decentralized services. This provides more resilience and stability while ensuring profits remain in the communities they are generated in.

Putting more control into the hands of municipalities and allowing them to make decisions as to how best to allocate funds in their communities.

3. **Infrastructure Funding:** Municipalities own close to 60% of public infrastructure but receive just ten cents of every tax dollar collected. Many federal infrastructure funding programs are available, but applying to them requires staff capacity that many small municipalities lack.

**Would you commit to funding staff and program resources at NSFAM to support small and rural municipalities to access much-needed infrastructure funding?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** Canada's Conservatives are the only party fighting for rural Canadians. After completely ignoring rural Canadians and their communities for three years, Justin Trudeau appointed a Rural Economic Development Minister in an election year in a desperate ploy to hold onto seats. With our plan to support rural communities, a Conservative government will ensure that all regions receive their fair share of infrastructure funding with a budget specifically for them.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** Honestly, I would have to answer that I would have to look into that question to see if funding is the best approach to solving that problem. Better applications process or connecting with a central staff pool may offer better routes.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** Lack of staffing should never be a barrier to applying for funding. We will put supports in place to streamline the process and ensure equitable distribution of funds.

4. **Cannabis:** The federal government promised a significant portion of cannabis tax revenues would be shared with municipalities. Despite multiple requests for revenue-sharing arrangements, no long-term commitment has been achieved here in Nova Scotia.

**What will you do to work with municipalities to ensure they are delivered a portion of cannabis-related excise tax?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** I'll work to engage stakeholders to continue the conversation.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** There's a lot of factors in play here especially with the first year of start up costs. But at least a profit sharing formula should be attainable quickly.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** We are committed to many improvements in the growing and sale of Cannabis. Medical Cannabis will come under the same legislation as prescription drugs and be eligible for Universal Medicaid. The distribution of revenue needs to be reviewed and improved.

5. **Affordable Housing:** If elected, what would you and your party do to increase the supply of affordable housing in your communities?

**Would your government honour the commitments made under the \$40-billion National Housing Strategy?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** Affordable housing is an important issue for communities across our province. I will work with our stakeholders on the ground in communities across West Nova to determine ways to best support efforts to expand affordable housing.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** The NDP is committed to producing 500,000 affordable housing units. Also a special tax on foreign ownership to suppress speculation in the housing market.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** We absolutely require a national housing strategy. In West Nova we have a large stock of older homes that desperately require energy upgrades to ensure their owners and residents can afford to heat them. We are committed to energy upgrades, co-housing and co-op housing initiatives. We will also put rules in place for Air B&B operators who are offering equivalent services to hotels and motels.

6. **Immigration:** Immigration must play a key part in helping our communities remain viable, but numbers show that many immigrants to Nova Scotia forge westward in search of healthier economies.

**What will you and your party do to help Nova Scotian communities, especially rural communities, attract - and more importantly, retain - immigrants?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** We need higher levels of immigration in West Nova. Our Party has made numerous commitments to better attract immigrants, including:

- Safeguard and emphasize economic immigration.
- Stand up for families and ensure that spouses and children can be reunited.
- Improve language training to ensure greater proficiency in English and French and newcomers' ability to succeed economically and socially.
- Improve credential recognition and make it easier for new Canadians who have existing skills that meet our standards to work here. We all lose out when doctors and engineers are not able to practice their profession.
- Ensure that our system prioritizes people facing persecution
- Focus government sponsorship on the victims of the four atrocity crimes – and restore integrity to our system by supporting the consistent application of fair rules.
- Work to reunite survivors of genocide who have already resettled in Canada more expeditiously.
- Do more to promote private sponsorships of refugees.
- Put an end to illegal border crossings crisis by closing the loophole in the Safe-Third Country Agreement that allows some people to skip the line and avoid the queue.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** It's important that new settlers have a support system in place. Fast tracking bringing in family members is a priority. Recognizing their work qualifications so they can practice their professions will help.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** We need to create clean energy jobs in a decentralized fashion. Keeping good paying challenging jobs in our communities will give our children and immigrants options. We need to create an efficient and stringent process to fast track vetting of international qualifications in jobs that we need filled in west Nova. Notably doctors, nurses and medical equipment technicians.

7. **Climate Change:** The aftermath of Hurricane Dorian has exposed Nova Scotians to the costs of new weather extremes. Federal representatives from all parties need to commit to long-term tools that will empower our municipal leaders to protect Canadians from these changing conditions.

**How will your government ensure municipalities are helped to make their communities more resilient and to green our economies?**

**Chris d'Entremont, Conservative:** The carbon tax implemented by the Trudeau Liberals hasn't worked. The Conservative Party has introduced "A Real Plan to Protect Our Environment" that will actually make a difference and help protect our environment. Municipalities are important partners to ensure programs are properly designed and implemented.

**Matthew Dubois, NDP:** We expect 300,000 new jobs under a green economy. Funding and partnerships to retro fit infrastructure and offer solutions that are tailored to the local situations.

**Judy Green, Green Party:** Mission Possible details our plan to reduce GHG emissions by 60% by 2030 and to help Canadians transition to a post carbon Green Energy world.