

Dear (CANDIDATE),

I'm writing to you with a question concerning the upcoming Municipal election - however, first I'd like to thank you for offering to stand. I understand what a commitment it is to run for office, and I want you to know you have my admiration and respect for this! At the public meeting last week I particularly appreciated (PERSONAL REFLECTION).

Background

As I'm sure you know, I've been running a business caring for trees in the region for the last 15 years. One of the positive aspects of Sackville, appreciated both by visitors and residents, is its streetscape with the many mature trees planted by our forward-thinking forebears. I conducted a survey of street trees for the Town in 2002, and have worked with a series of Town staff and citizens since then.

I made a presentation to Town Council two years ago pointing out a concern that I'm sure many others share. Upon conducting a follow up of the 2002 survey I could demonstrate that an alarming number of trees have been lost to dutch elm disease, old-age, storms, civic improvements (sidewalk and street widening, sewage upgrades) and development. I've attached photos of several streetscapes changed by tree-loss, some so recently you may not have noticed.

The remedy to urban forest in decline is twofold - firstly, work to preserve the trees we have and secondly, to replant, with a vision to the future.

Since my presentation, the Town did obtain some one-time grant money and managed to put in a decent number of street trees the following year - a good beginning! However, as my friend and mentor, Fredericton City Forester Don Murray puts it - "every year you're tempted to spend money on other important things, but you can't ever stop your tree planting program, not for a single year".

Thus far my email has been background, and perhaps a bit of education of a future Councillor! But, to my question.

As councillor, how would you work together with someone like myself and others to

a) better inform yourself of the situation and

b) have Council and Staff actively working towards renewing and improving our urban forest?

In addition

c) would you, as councillor, support a yearly budget earmarked for tree planting, to allow us to maintain and improve our immediate local environment for the future?

I thank you for your consideration of these questions prior to the vote on Dec 10.

Best Regards,

Kevin Stearns-Anderson