

## Competitiveness/Open for Business

**What is the most important thing that the next Mayor and Council can do to support economic growth in our city?**

**Response from: Tom Martin**

Small business makes for a strong economy. Small businesses and local businesses benefit the community – more of the money stays in our community – they provide more quality jobs to the community – they don't send their profits out of the municipality to their head office – they reinvest so they can grow their businesses and strengthen our community. If we want to create a strong business climate – we have to begin by making it a fair business climate. When the heart of the HRM grows strong the whole of HRM becomes healthier. Creating that fair business climate is captured in my answer to question 6 of this questionnaire.

**Response from: Mike Savage**

If elected Mayor, I will champion our community and all of its assets at home and on the road. We will get things done, and achieve our potential.

**Response from: Aaron Eisses**

Handle the growth that is coming to our city in a sustainable and responsible manner.

**Response from: Fred Connors**

The most important thing the next Mayor and Council can do to support economic growth is-within the municipal context-create a supportive environment for growth, ensure moderate taxation, act like we care about our city-cleanliness, enhanced quality of life, maintenance of HRM assets like parks and greenways, and last but not least implement the economic strategy.

**Response from: Steve Mackie**

No Response

**Response from: Robert McCormack**

No Response

## How are you going to ensure that Halifax is open for business?

### **Response from: Tom Martin**

In my Business Platform I clearly state I want HRM to go beyond encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit and I believe we as a municipality must actually facilitate business within the municipality. In my opinion there are 3 main barriers to business today in our municipality; red tape, commercial taxes and clear concise communication with understanding. I essentially want to address these issues by establishing an Ombudsman for business to act as an advocate, to assist in facilitating start ups and finding ways to cut through the red tape for new and existing businesses. I also support 3 solutions for unfair taxes being paid by business especially small and locally owned ( 1- adjust mill rate, 2- taxes based on size of the lot and location of the business, 3- Tax Rate similar to Provincial and Federal tax rates for locally owned small business in the urban core that own their own premises). I would also support more scheduled open forum meetings between council, the mayor and members of the business community.

### **Response from: Mike Savage**

I will take the message directly to business here and to those that might move here or do business here. We need to roll out the red carpet for new business and new people. I also intend to work toward a clear international brand for our community to show that we are open for business and have much to offer. There is a need for focused investment to build on our many assets that exist across HRM.

I want to support entrepreneurs and build on our strong entrepreneurial spirit to move our community forward. I want municipal staff to feel empowered to find better ways of serving citizens and customers. I would offer municipal resources such as buildings or land to support collaborative initiatives that benefit the whole community.

### **Response from: Aaron Eisses**

I have been too many different cities around the world. Those that left the greatest impression on me were the cities that presented themselves as a living, active, community. If the city is vibrant and alive, people want to live there. If people want to live there, then businesses will follow and the economy will grow. By showing a progressive, modern city that puts the citizens first, Canada and world will know that Halifax is open for business.

### **Response from: Fred Connors**

To ensure that HRM is open for business, we need to make it easy to own and operate a business. Small business owners represent 97% of the business community. It is currently a daunting task to open a business in HRM. As a long-time business owner I

have experienced this first-hand. I would appoint a task force within one year whose sole focus would be to advise Council on how to make it easier for business owners.

**Response from: Steve Mackie**

No Response

**Response from: Robert McCormack**

No Response