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NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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## YOUR VOTE ON OCTOBER 20 REALLY DOES MATTER

We had a few political discussions around the family dinner table while we were all home for Thanksgiving last week. But when I tried to engage my daughters on the upcoming municipal election, their interest quickly waned. “The issues aren’t very interesting or relevant to us” one explained. “Oh really?” I replied. “So transportation and housing affordability issues aren’t relevant to you?”

My daughter isn’t alone. Many of us think that municipal issues are not sufficiently relevant or important enough to warrant taking the time to vote. Or, some of us are immobilized by the challenge of just trying to figure out who to vote for.

Did you know that on average in the last 3 municipal elections, only 1 in 4 eligible voters in the City and 1 in 5 in the District actually made it out to vote?

Without question, the current system doesn’t make it easy. With no neighbourhood ward system, voters must contend with lengthy ballots with many names they simply do not recognize. There are also no political parties to assist us in helping to more clearly understand candidate positions.

However, this does not obviate the fact that decisions made at the municipal level matter – they matter very, very much.

### **Transportation & Housing**

When I go door to door in North Vancouver to ask for input and perspectives, the two most significant issues consistently on people’s minds are transportation and housing.

Decisions made in the municipal halls of the City and the District impact both of these issues. Municipalities have a significant say in transportation policies through their participation in Translink and their role in municipal transportation infrastructure. They also play a key role in identifying larger transportation opportunities and lobbying for improvements.

Here’s one example: Just prior to the 2015 federal election campaign, I spoke to District officials, including Mayor Walton, about how we might make a significant difference in easing the transportation challenges on Highway #1 near the Iron Workers Memorial Bridge. Mayor Walton and his staff brought forward the idea that to effectively begin to address

the highway congestion, we first had to address the Lynn Creek Bridge bottleneck.

I took this on as an issue during the federal election campaign. Post-election, the federal government committed funding, that was then matched by the province and the District, which has enabled the Lynn Creek Bridge project to move forward. Once completed, this investment will have a significant positive impact on traffic congestion on the North Shore. This is important, and is something that was initiated by your municipal leaders.

Similarly, decisions related to zoning and housing construction, which are very much the purview of local municipalities, are extremely important to our community livability. We need to ensure that our transportation systems can function properly, while creating housing supply such that our children can legitimately contemplate living here with their families in the future.

Thoughtful transportation policy and thoughtful housing policy are inextricably linked. Bringing forward local considerations and local strategies for both of these critical issues is very much the job of our local Mayors and your local Councils.

### **Time to Vote**

So – if traffic and transportation matter to you, and if housing affordability and density matter to you, I urge you to consider the opportunity you have this coming Saturday to influence how your municipality will deal with these critical issues.

Yes, it takes some time to research candidates, but fortunately there is a wealth of information available online to assist you.

A healthy community is an engaged community. This coming Saturday we each have the opportunity to be part of deciding what kind of North Vancouver we want for the future. Let’s take this opportunity and be active in the decisions that are so important to all of us who love the North Shore.

I hope to see you at the polling station.

## **CONTACT INFO:**

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