

Federal Election Candidate Written Forum

1. The Town of Stratford has an exciting Community Campus project underway with plans for a multi-purpose wellness facility, sports fields, and cultural spaces to be included on the site, along with the under construction high school and a future junior high school. One of the final pieces required is a commitment of funding between all three levels of government to get the wellness facility under construction. The Town of Stratford and Province of PEI have both committed funds to this project, as well as an active community fundraising component underway, however support from the Federal Government is also required.

Will your government commit to providing the funds required to develop the Community Campus project in Stratford?

I have spoken with Mayor Ogden and Town officials and my commitment is to work alongside them, and the province, to find a path forward for the planned multi-purpose wellness facility. Since 2015, the federal Liberal government has been a reliable partner, leading to record investments in Stratford – from housing to the waterfront boardwalk and event space.

2. Housing is of serious concern in Stratford, as it is across PEI and Canada. From affordability to general inventory, to variety of housing stock, it is challenge for many residents to afford to stay in their existing housing, let alone to consider trying to move and find something. The Town of Stratford was one of a number of successful municipalities to receive Housing Accelerator Funding (HAF) through Canada Mortgage and Housing (CMHC).

Will your government commit to honouring the signed contracts between CMHC and Canadian municipalities including Stratford? And what further tangible commitments are you prepared to make to help address the housing issue over the next four years?

A re-elected Liberal Government will honour the contracts that have already been signed, including Stratford's Housing Accelerator Fund agreement, which is worth nearly \$5M and on track to build almost 180 housing units over the next three years and support the construction of more than 2,000 homes over the next decade. Access to safe and affordable housing is vital for families, seniors, and young adults looking to purchase their first home. Under the leadership of Mark Carney, we have a real plan that will double the pace of construction to almost 500,000 new homes a year, get the federal government back into the business of building homes, and make serious investments in prefabricated home building. We will also eliminate the GST for first-time home buyers on homes under \$1M. Everyone deserves a place to call home, and I'll work to ensure we keep building more affordable homes, including right here in Stratford.

3. As housing supply is increased it is widely recognized that infrastructure gaps exist under the current funding streams available.

What programs and funding models will your government commit to providing to municipalities to help address both aging and new infrastructure needs? How quickly will you deliver on these funding programs?

Driving around Stratford, you can see the impact that federal funding dollars have had when it comes to upgrading critical infrastructure, from wastewater to sewage upgrades. In February of this year, the federal Liberal government signed an agreement with the province to provide long-term predictable funding over the next 10 years under the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund, directing close to \$86.2 million towards housing enabling infrastructure across the province. This funding will help communities, like Stratford, fund either capital or planning projects aimed at building new, or expanding or rehabilitating existing, drinking water, wastewater, stormwater or solid waste infrastructure to keep up with growth. Building on the work of the Housing Accelerator Fund, I'm committed to working with the Town of Stratford to reduce housing bureaucracy, zoning restrictions, and other red tape to have builders navigate one housing market, instead of thirteen across the country.

4. The Town of Stratford has long recognized that our community is made better through diversity, equity and inclusion. We believe that all residents deserve to feel safe, included and respected regardless of their race, sexual identity, gender, religion, socioeconomic background, or any other differentiator.

Does your government support maintaining the rights of all Canadians through diversity, equity and inclusion programs, supports and practices?

Firstly, I commend the Town of Stratford for the leadership they have shown when it comes to building a community that is safe and where all residents can feel welcome. I grew up in a large family, where we would sit around the kitchen table sharing our thoughts on the issues of the day. We still do that today, along with my son and my nieces and nephews, and I've always valued hearing from people who have different opinions or experiences than my own. In a place like Canada, our diversity is what makes us a beacon of hope to the world. A re-elected Liberal Government will continue to make investments that bring people together – from all backgrounds – to strengthen the fabric that unites all of us as Canadians.

5. The Town of Stratford recognizes that immigration has been a contributor to our town's growth and success to date, while also understanding that it can strain resources such as housing in times of growth. A balanced approach to immigration policy is necessary, however Canada has a long history of welcoming new Canadians which also leads to our success as a country, an opportunity to fill much needed job vacancies, and financial growth.

Please explain your government's approach to immigration and what immigration policy will look like under your party if they form government.

Immigration has certainly contributed to Canada's success over the years, but in order to make sure that our system works, and our province can keep up with the growth, we need to strengthen our housing supply, health care system, and support services so they can accommodate the newcomers we welcome to Canada. Our position is to cap immigration until it returns to a more sustainable rate so that everyone – whether they were born here or chose to come to Canada – has access to a good job, an affordable home, and supports they need to lead a successful life.

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6. Federation of Municipalities (FCM) recently estimated that municipalities procure more than \$30 billion worth of goods and services every year, the highest collective share other than provincial and territorial governments. Based on an analysis done for FCM by Export Action Global and NorthStar Public Affairs and Government Relations, it is estimated local governments procure over \$3 billion annually from the United States, some of which are essential to the operation and maintenance of critical public infrastructure or the delivery of essential municipal services. If dollar-for-dollar countervailing tariffs are imposed in response to 25 per cent tariffs from the United States on Canadian exports, it is estimated that this will contribute to an additional expenditure by municipalities of over \$900 million to procure the same quantity of products from the United States. Over a four-year period, this additional cost could be up to \$3.7 billion. Municipalities, including Stratford, are supportive of the Team Canada approach.

What is your government's position on, and plan, to resolve the existing trade war with the USA? How will your government support municipalities, local businesses and Islanders should this continue for an extended period of time?

I'm a dairy farmer and President Trump has set his sights on my sector – and on our other Island industries, so this fight is personal for me and I fully understand the uncertainty people are feeling right now. Under the leadership of Mark Carney, we are standing up to President Trump and standing with Canadian workers and businesses to defend Canada's economy. The federal government has announced a range of supports and countermeasures, including a pledge to use every single dollar raised from our reciprocal tariffs to support our auto workers who have been hit by the most recent round of tariffs. The federal government has also put in place other measures, including:

- Temporarily waiving the one-week EI waiting period.

- Suspending rules around separation for a six-month period, so workers don't have to exhaust severance pay before collecting EI.
- Making it easier to access EI by increasing regional unemployment rate percentages.
- Deferring corporate income tax payments and GST/HST remittances from April 2 to June 30, 2025, providing up to \$40 billion in liquidity to businesses.
- Deploying a new financing facility for businesses.
- Providing more funding to Canada's regional development agencies, including ACOA, so they can better support businesses.

We are focused on building the strongest economy in the G7 and strengthening our trading relationships with reliable partners. A re-elected Liberal government will protect our economy and make sure that our relationship with the United States is based on mutual respect – including for our sovereignty. Should President Trump move forward with further tariffs, we will be there to support Canadians and help them weather the storm.

7. In no more than 500 words (word count extending beyond this will be deleted with no opportunity for edits), what would you like residents of the Town of Stratford to know?

I may be from the order side of the Cardigan riding, but I've done business in Stratford and I have family and friends who live here. When I'm knocking on doors or meeting with residents, it's clear that people love living here. I want to be a strong voice for the Cardigan riding – from Stratford to East Point and everywhere in between. Stratford is one of the fastest-growing municipalities on the Island, and if you put your trust in me on April 28, I will push for federal investments that support that growth, stand up for the programs that people depend on, and give Stratford a strong partner in Ottawa who will get things done.