

SPRING 2013



Fin^{MP} DONNELLY

NEW WESTMINSTER - COQUITLAM & PORT MOODY



TOWN HALL REPORT

SPECIAL FEATURE
DIAMOND JUBILEE RECIPIENTS

Ottawa Office
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
613-947-4455
fin.donnelly@parl.gc.ca

Community Office
1116 Austin Avenue
Coquitlam, BC V3K 3P5
604-664-9229
www.FinDonnelly.ca



DEAR NEIGHBOURS

This Town Hall Report brings you the results of my fourth annual town hall meetings.

This series of consultations included four town hall meetings—one in Port Moody, one in Coquitlam, one in New Westminster, and a final one by telephone. I also sent a survey to every household in the riding, asking for input on spending priorities and economic concerns.

Thousands of constituents from New Westminster, Coquitlam and Port Moody took up the challenge and responded by mail, phone or in person at one of my town hall meetings. I also met with the three mayors and councils in the riding, as I believe it's important to hear their priorities and concerns.

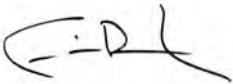
Based on your responses, we divided this report into four categories:

- building healthy, sustainable communities
- creating a vibrant economy
- protecting the environment
- good governance & accountability

Thank you to all those who participated in this year's consultations. I encourage everyone in the riding to participate again next year, as these consultations shape my work plan as your federal representative.

Let's continue working together to build a fairer, greener and more prosperous community and country.

Sincerely,



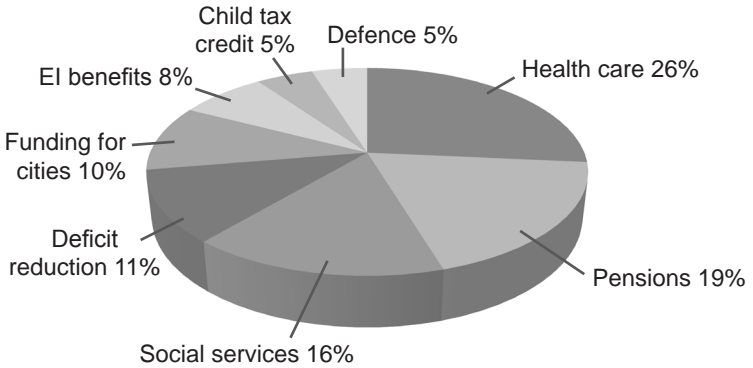
Fin Donnelly
Member of Parliament
New Westminster—Coquitlam & Port Moody



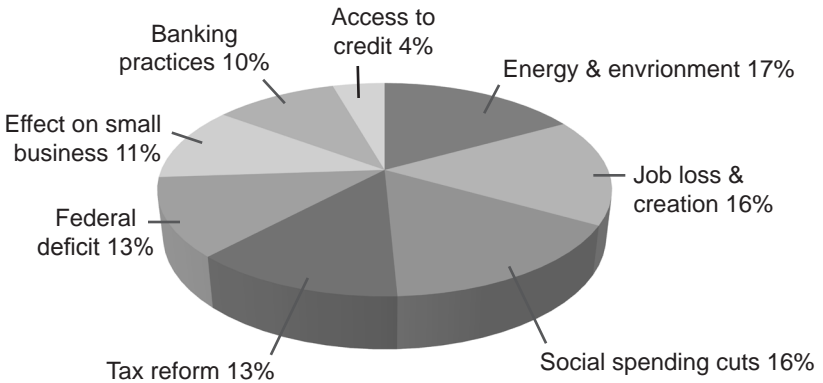
OVERVIEW

Earlier this year, I sent every household in the riding a survey asking people to prioritize the following issues and economic concerns. Here are the results:

Most Important Issues



Most Important Economic Concerns



SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The following issues were raised at the three town hall meetings, by phone and by mail.

Building Healthy, Sustainable Communities

- accessibility of social services
- access to natural health products
- affordable housing
- Bailey bridge
- child care costs
- community policing
- corporate profits
- Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- education
- Evergreen Line
- expand medical benefits coverage (dental, eye glasses)
- fraudulent immigration consultants
- high cost of living
- homelessness
- immigration reform
- infrastructure for cities
- judicial reform
- legal aid
- housing prices
- mental health services
- national health care strategy
- OAS pension cuts
- pension security
- personal & community safety
- poverty among seniors, children & families
- prescription costs
- preventative health care
- public transit and pedestrian routes
- recreation opportunities for kids
- seniors' housing and care
- services for veterans
- stop health care privatization
- train noise
- wait times for specialists & surgeries
- working poor

Creating a Vibrant Economy

- Canadian job security
- create green jobs
- EI for seasonal workers
- high tuition fees
- improve infrastructure to relieve traffic and congestion
- job creation for university graduates
- keep value-added jobs in Canada
- limit export of natural resources
- pay down the deficit
- reduce taxes on basic items like groceries
- reign in excessive bank profits
- robocalls/electoral fraud scandal
- science and technology
- skills training
- student debt loads
- tax relief for BC film industry

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Protecting the Environment

- climate change
- fish farms
- fisheries
- fracking
- healthy rivers & ocean
- Keystone XL
- Kinder Morgan
- national parks
- need to blend environmental and economic perspectives
- north coast tanker moratorium
- Northern Gateway pipeline project
- oil sands development
- pipelines
- seal hunt
- shark conservation
- tsunami debris
- water pollution
- wild salmon

Good Governance & Accountability

- abolish the Senate
- cooperation among political parties
- costs of government advertising
- electoral reform
- electoral riding redistribution
- F-35 fighter jet costs
- Kitsilano Coast Guard station closure
- muzzling of government scientists
- national unity
- protection of personal privacy
- power of the PMO
- proportional representation
- reduce wasteful government spending
- relationship with the crown
- responsibility to invest tax dollars wisely
- Senate spending scandals
- tax fairness
- white collar crime



Town hall meeting at Poirier Library in Coquitlam

BUILDING HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Healthcare: your #1 priority

The top issue identified in this year's town hall consultations was once again health care. In fact, 61% of survey respondents identified health care as their number one priority.

This year's federal budget contained no significant improvements to Canada's health care system.

I believe Canadians are proud of our public health care system, which is the envy of countries around the world. Canadians recognize the importance of ensuring our health care system remains universally accessible and properly funded.

The Conservative government's hands-off approach to health care is unacceptable. Instead of working with the provinces and territories to address challenges facing our health care system, they unilaterally imposed a new funding scheme that will see federal health care transfers decrease in the long-term by \$36 billion.

Practical NDP Solutions

- Make a clear commitment to the single-payer system
- Make progress on primary care
- Take steps to replace fee-for-service delivery
- Take steps to reduce the costs of prescription medicines for Canadians, employers and governments
- Extend coverage to out-of-hospital services like home care and long-term care

Canada's New Democrats have launched a series of public consultations and are making public health care their top priority.

BUILDING HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Securing Pensions

This year's budget locks in the Conservative government's plan to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67. That means Canadians will have to work two years longer and will receive about \$13,000 less in OAS benefits.

The budget contained no commitment to expand CPP benefits despite high levels of support from the provinces and territories, and an increasing level of retirement insecurity.

Investing in Public Transit

Cities are asking for a long-term funding arrangement so they can plan for the needs of our growing regions. Improved transit infrastructure is one of the greatest needs in the Lower Mainland.

In December, MP Olivia Chow's private member's bill calling for a national transit strategy was voted down in Parliament by the Conservatives.

Addressing Homelessness

Before the budget was announced, many feared the federal government would fail to renew the homelessness partnering strategy. Thankfully it was renewed, but unfortunately funding will be reduced by \$15 million a year starting in 2014.

What's Important to You?

"Old Age Pension, assisted living, and affordable housing & care for seniors."
Katherine, Port Moody

"My number one issue is better public transit."
Jonathan, New West

"Everyone should be able to have a family doctor. Also the shocking lack of cleanliness in our hospitals."
Jean, Coquitlam

"More federal funding for childcare, education, cities."
Wendy, New West

"Proper labeling on food and that includes restaurants."
Lucien, Coquitlam

"Early childhood: daycare services and the lack of a national plan."
Tara, Coquitlam

"Saving the Riverview lands and using them appropriately."
Karen, Coquitlam

"Having Evergreen Line completed."
Sue, Port Moody

"I am concerned about crime and proliferation of organized crime in BC."
Shelby, Coquitlam

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal Recipients

As Member of Parliament, I had the honour of awarding thirty Diamond Jubilee medals to significant Canadians in my riding. To ensure a fair and thorough process, I struck a community panel to help with the selection process. The medals were awarded in ceremonies earlier this year. For more photos and to read about the recipients, visit www.FinDonnelly.ca/diamondjubilee.



Al Boire
COQUITLAM



Leo Braniff
NEW WESTMINSTER



Mary Brown
COQUITLAM



Cathy Burpee
COQUITLAM



John Cafe
PORT MOODY



Rick Carswell
NEW WESTMINSTER



John Cashore
COQUITLAM



Laura Cuthbert
NEW WESTMINSTER



Dave Driscoll
PORT MOODY



Norbert Ryan Ferrer
NEW WESTMINSTER



Donnie Forester
COQUITLAM



Mona Forsyth
NEW WESTMINSTER



Gordon Fulton
COQUITLAM



Elaine Golds
PORT MOODY



Herb Hamm
NEW WESTMINSTER



Russ Hellard
COQUITLAM



Peter Howard
COQUITLAM



Terry Leith
NEW WESTMINSTER



Alana McIntyre
NEW WESTMINSTER



John Meneghelo
COQUITLAM



Ceilidh Millar
NEW WESTMINSTER



Nsibe (Nancy) Puri
NEW WESTMINSTER



Robert Siddons
COQUITLAM



Bob Sutherland
COQUITLAM



Natalie Thomas
COQUITLAM



Elizabeth Thunstrom
COQUITLAM



Anna Tremere
COQUITLAM



Ted Usher
NEW WESTMINSTER



Tom Warwick
COQUITLAM



Kathy Wood
COQUITLAM

CREATING A VIBRANT ECONOMY

What's Important to You?

"Protecting Canadian worker rights."

Clark, Coquitlam

"I see the working poor struggling to make ends meet."

Sandra, Port Moody

"We now have the lowest corporate tax rate in the western world and this may bankrupt our government."

Shelby, Coquitlam

"I am very concerned about the lack of full-time jobs and government harassment of EI recipients."

Tom, Coquitlam

"EI changes. I work in the trades and have gaps between jobs that is out of my control."

Rodney, New West

"Re-training for people on partial disability."

Dan, Coquitlam

"Need more medium income jobs in Coquitlam—not just minimum wage jobs."

John, Coquitlam

Job Creation & Skills Training

This year's budget reverses the decision Conservatives made in 2007 to hand over responsibility for skills training to the provinces, but provides no new money for education and training.

In my consultations, I heard from many who are concerned by the loss of quality, well-paying jobs due to threats such as foreign takeovers of Canadian companies and the export of raw resources like bitumen and logs.

Let's not forget youth unemployment remains unacceptably high at 13.5% for those under 25, compared to 7% for those over 25.

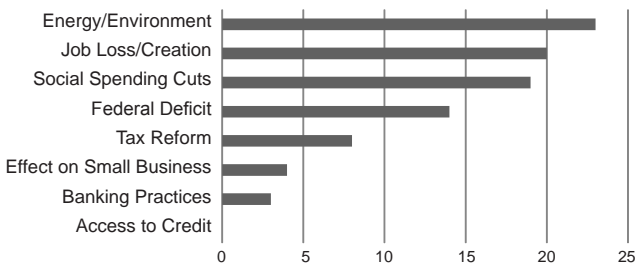
I believe the government needs to focus its attention on creating quality, well-paying jobs. Education and training are critical to making this happen.

When it was said this budget would focus on skills training, I was hopeful the federal government would tackle these major challenges facing our economy.

However, I was disappointed to find their \$2 billion skills training plan is really just an attempt to reverse previous mistakes by reshuffling existing funds.

CREATING A VIBRANT ECONOMY

SURVEY RESPONSES Top-Ranked Economic Concerns



Temporary Foreign Workers

Nearly 1.4 million Canadians are out of work, and in March alone the Canadian economy lost 54,000 full-time jobs—the biggest drop in four years. Over the past decade the number of temporary foreign workers in Canada has tripled. The Conservatives have also introduced highly controversial reforms to allow businesses to pay Temporary Foreign Workers 15% less than Canadians for the same job. To protect Canadian jobs, New Democrats are calling for an urgent overhaul of this program.

Tax Havens

Independent estimates suggest Canada could be losing up to \$7.8 billion annually in tax revenue as a consequence of the illegal use of tax havens. Despite repeated demands from the NDP, Conservatives refuse to even measure the cost of tax cheats to Canada.

“Creation of jobs, especially for university grads who have a huge student loan to pay when they are taking minimum paying jobs and cannot pay them back.”

Evelyn, New West

“As a small business owner, I’m struggling with a lack of customers because of cross-border shopping.”

Asghar, Coquitlam

“Why are arts and culture overlooked?”

Katherine, Coquitlam

“We need to reduce our unemployment rate.”

Veronica, Coquitlam

“We should stop the short-sighted selling of natural resources when we should refine resources in Canada.”

Erich, New West

“Keeping the film tax credit. The film industry is way too important to the economy to let them leave.”

Brian, New West

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

What's Important to You?

"Canada must present a strong, clear commitment to decreasing global warming."

Myrna, Coquitlam

"That the Northern Gateway pipeline not be allowed to pollute our pristine coastal waters."

Ellen, Coquitlam

"Environmental protections must be strengthened."

Wendy, New West

"We need to preserve our natural resources and environment for generations to come."

Susan, New West

"I'm especially worried about the obvious moves to reduce environmental protection for aquatic systems and the marine environment."

Brett, Coquitlam

Attack on Science

Canadians have a right know about—and benefit from—the findings of government-funded research. But a troubling new report reveals that Canadian scientists and world-class researchers are being muzzled by the federal government from speaking to the public or media— especially when it comes to climate change.

It comes as no surprise that the Conservatives don't want you to know the truth about their record on the environment, which includes:

- abandoning Canada's climate change commitments by pulling out of Kyoto
- deleting habitat protection from the Fisheries Act
- dismantling the world-renowned Experimental Lakes Area Research Facility (ELA)
- gutting environmental protections that keep your air and water clean

In March, the NDP introduced a motion to encourage the Conservatives to stop their attacks on science. Unfortunately, the government voted against the motion.

Canada's New Democrats believe the best way to build a balanced, 21st century economy is to make Canada a world leader in clean energy and sustainable development.

Future of the Senate

Canada's Senate was originally supposed to be a place where wise women and men could give legislation a "sober second thought." Instead it's become a place where political insiders and influence peddlers raise party funds on the taxpayer's dime.

Most Canadians agree: this institution is archaic and undemocratic. And it's expensive as well—costing taxpayers \$92 million a year. New Democrats are clear: it's time to abolish the Senate.

Misplaced Priorities

- *\$45 billion for proposed F-35 fighter jets*
- *\$9 billion to expand prisons and their populations*
- *\$6 billion for additional corporate tax cuts*
- *\$21 million for one year of Economic Action Plan ads (2011-12)*

Government is about priorities. Most agree that leaving a huge deficit for future generations is irresponsible. That's why it's frustrating to see the government continue to spend so recklessly, while cutting essential services like the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station. An independent PBO report found that contrary to government claims, cuts were negatively impacting front-line services across the board. I will continue to speak up in Parliament to challenge the government on its spending priorities.

What's Important to You?

"The abuses of our democratic system—proroguing Parliament, omnibus 'budget' bills and the current issues surrounding the Senate."

Brett, Coquitlam

"What's important to me is the government spend my money like it came out of their personal pocket."

Erich, New West

"The lack of respect by current government for public input, e.g. Vancouver Coast Guard Station and pipelines." **Elizabeth, Coquitlam**

"Reform or abolish the Senate now." **Wendy, New West**

"Banks and corporations are making obscene profits while hospitals and health care are going downhill." **Jane, Port Moody**

LOOKING AHEAD IN PARLIAMENT

Another Omnibus Budget Bill?

Last year, the government was harshly criticized for its use of omnibus budget bills like C-38 (452 pages) and C-45 (430 pages). These massive omnibus bills, which include many measures completely unrelated to the budget, prevent Parliamentarians from doing their job of properly studying and debating proposed legislation. Canada's New Democrats will continue to call on the government to stop its abuse of undemocratic omnibus bills.

PBO: Keeping Ottawa Honest

Canada's first Parliamentary Budget Officer, Kevin Page, exposed Conservative mismanagement on many vital issues—from the botched F-35 procurement to unjustifiable cuts to Old Age Security. But what happens now that Mr. Page's term has ended? Will Canada's independent budget watchdog be replaced by a Conservative lapdog? Or will the PBO be cut? In response to the government's attacks on the mandate of the PBO, the NDP has introduced legislation to make the PBO an independent officer appointed by Parliament.

Veterans & the Last Post Fund

There have long been calls for fairer benefits for CF and RCMP veterans and their families, including improvements to the veterans' funeral and burial program. On a positive note, this year's budget will increase the current funeral services reimbursement rate from the Last Post Fund. However, there is still a need to expand eligibility criteria.

Veterans' advocates are celebrating a recent court ruling that sided with veterans over the government's unfair deductions from the Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP)—pension clawbacks long decried by the NDP.