

# CBA Chamber of Commerce Questions and Answers

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## 1. How will you help support the business community and reduce red tape in your municipality?

This is a two part question.

As mayor, I will ensure that the current support provided by the Town to the Chamber of Commerce continues. The Chamber of Commerce is an important organization that offers opportunities for networking, seminars and information sessions for business owners, and serves as an advocate and unified voice of the business community in Conception Bay South. As I see it, the Town has to be more than just tax incentives and financial and in-kind support for the Chamber and its members. The right approach is to make smart investment in facilities and infrastructure that benefit the MOST people, like a community centre. We also need to ensure that we have adequate services, like firefighting and snow clearing, which benefit both residents and businesses. By making our community the most desirable place to live on the Northeast Avalon, we will grow the population in our community. More people means greater demands for products and services. More customers means more revenue and profits, which translates into viable, vibrant businesses. As a Town Council, we need to work on growing the DEMAND for services. Tax incentives help with keeping costs lower, but the key to successful business is consumer demand, and that requires more people.

With respect to cutting red tape, I am fully supportive of reviewing the policies and regulations that apply to businesses and developers, to ensure they remain necessary. Regulations are needed to provide the public, including businesses. Those regulations that provide no additional protection to the public, compared to existing provincial or federal laws and regulations, should be eliminated. We should also demand consistency in approach from staff at Town Hall. Lower regulatory burdens also result in lower administration costs at town hall, which reduces the necessity for tax increases.

## 2. As we continue to see the impacts of the pandemic, what can the municipality do to help businesses recover and grow?

The pandemic hit many businesses hard. I saw this firsthand myself as a business owner, and as a service provider to businesses across the province. As a town, we can encourage people to shop locally, to ensure as much economic activity as possible directly benefits local business owners. For small purchases that do not require competitive tenders, we need to ensure that local suppliers are given the first opportunity to supply to the Town.

## 3. What are you, as an elected official going to do to help attract investors and new businesses to the area?

As a 13 year commercial and corporate banker, and a 6 year business owner, I will bring a unique perspective to the council chamber. I have worked with over 400 businesses across the province, getting to understand their business so that I could understand the risks they faced, prior to lending them money to assist with their growth plans. Many people talk about the need for more businesses in the town, so we can increase taxes collected from businesses, and I agree with that 100%.

The role of the elected official in attracting business is to work to create the market conditions in which a business can be successful. Ultimately, investors put their money where they have the highest and best chance of getting a return on their investment. As I mentioned in question 1, if we can make this a more attractive place for families to live, and we increase the population, investors will follow. If getting investors into Conception Bay South was as simple as building a business park, and offering tax incentives, we would have been successful by now. Despite having Gateway, despite having expert real estate brokers promoting Gateway, despite having an external marketing consultant create a marketing strategy for the Economic development department, we've seen essentially no progress. Because the one thing we haven't given investors is a market of sufficient size. Let's work with developers to open up more land for more housing, and activity in itself that creates employment and generates economic activity.

Like all of us in our daily lives, or even those of us who play sports, what investors want in predictability, stability and consistency in the approach taken by their government. And as Mayor, that will be one of my goals.

## 4. If elected, what specific infrastructure changes, policies or strategies would you propose implementing to mitigate the impacts of climate change in the next four years?

Climate change is a concern to all of us. We see greater coastal erosion as sea levels rise, and we encounter more frequent storms (like hurricane Larry). We see weather events where there is large amounts of rainfall that causes flooding and damage to infrastructure. Better infrastructure benefits everyone, including businesses. We need to invest in upgrading storm sewers and culverts throughout the town to deal with these events, so as to protect homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Reinforcement of barachois beaches along the shoreline of the town to ensure that the coastline is protected from large storms. We can all do our part by recycling, using fuel efficient vehicles (and even looking at electric vehicles) in the town's fleet.

## 5. What value do you see in supporting an active Chamber of Commerce for the area?

As I said in answering question 1, the Chamber provides a unified voice for the business community in Conception Bay South, speaking on issues that matter to its members. It's important that the business community have a forum to come together to discuss common interests and priorities, and speak with one voice to the municipal government.

**About Brad Suter.** I have been a lifelong resident of the town, residing in Manuels with my two sons, Matthew (18) and Ryan (12). I am President of Martin's Fire Safety Ltd. (since 2015) and Total Coverage Fire Protection (since 2018), and I understand firsthand the challenges facing small and medium-sized businesses. Previously, I was a Commercial Banker at BDC for 8 years, and a Corporate Finance professional at Scotiabank Group for 4 years, helping over 400 businesses get the financing and advice they needed to start-up, grow and prosper. I am a graduate of Queen Elizabeth Regional High (1992), and Memorial University (B.Comm. and MBA). I have been involved in local sports, as a minor hockey coach, and player of hockey, soccer and rugby. I am an avid ATVer and snowmobiler, and I was a founding member Avalon Trailway Corporation (AVTRAC). I am an innovative problem-solver, and jack-of-all-trades.

**My Commitment to You.** I will be readily available to answer your questions and concerns - including on social media. I will work diligently to explain my decisions, and I will be transparent. We may respectfully disagree, but your input will always be considered. We must always strive to be better; to do better. Let get Back to Better.

## ELECT

# Brad Suter

for **MAYOR**

## CONCEPTION BAY SOUTH

**INTEGRITY.  
ACCOUNTABILITY.  
COLLABORATION.  
TRANSPARENCY.**

