

VANCOUVER
SUN

NEW FOX DOCUMENTARY
'What it means to be Canadian' **A8**





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The role of
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Greens promise sustainable growth

Tourism, clean energy are priorities as NDP, Tories focus on businesses

ALEC LAZENBY

In an election shaping up to be all about the economy and affordability, the B.C. NDP and the Conservatives seem to be singing from similar song-sheets on making life easier for entrepreneurs, while the Greens focus on shifting toward tourism and clean energy.

At campaign stops in Surrey on Wednesday, NDP Leader David Eby

and Conservative Leader Lorne Doerksen provided more details about how they plan to help businesses.

Eby said that, if re-elected, his government would create a \$500 million small business tariff and wildfire relief fund that would provide interest-free loans of up to \$1 million per business to help them with diversification away from U.S. markets or recovery from a recent wildfire.

He said a new youth hiring tax credit would also provide a \$5,000 refundable credit to businesses that hire someone between the ages of 18 and 30 for their first full-time job.

“These interest-free loans will provide the support that the small- and medium-sized business leaders have come to us and said they need to be able to get through this period, and our commitment is that we will deliver that for them,” said Eby. “This money will help small businesses bring on employees, and will provide an opportunity for a young person to get that first job, to get into the job market, to

get that experience.”

Doerksen, meanwhile, promised during his own event in Surrey to create a Regulatory Excellence and Red Tape Reduction Ministry, last in place under the former B.C. Liberal government, and remove the PST from machinery, equipment and business software.

He said that as premier he would require his cabinet to cut two regulatory requirements for every one they bring in and reduce the regulatory burden back to 2017 levels by the end of his first term as part of his efforts to supercharge the economy.

SEE ECONOMICS ON **A2**



East Vancouver resident Tom Siracusa is concerned about traffic calming barriers installed by the City of Vancouver that he says have made navigating his neighbourhood by car an exercise in futility. JASON PAYNE

East Van residents are railing against traffic barriers that just create ‘chaos’

JOHN MACKIE

Generally speaking, Tom Siracusa isn’t opposed to the traffic-calming measures that have been introduced in his east Vancouver neighbourhood over the years.

“If you want to slow traffic at certain spots, certain intersections, I don’t think anyone has an issue with that,” he said.

“You can certainly put in a few speed bumps, a few stop signs. That solves the problem.”

But he thinks the city has gone overboard lately with what he calls “banana barriers.” The yellow concrete barricades seem to crop up every other block in his Hastings-Sunrise neighbourhood.

Taking a reporter for a short drive,

Siracusa constantly has to turn when he comes upon the yellow barriers diverting traffic. Some are large and completely block an intersection, others are smaller and divert traffic this way or that.

Two-way streets turn into one-ways, street parking has been reduced, and many diversions are beside neighbourhood schools and churches, which he said can make for traffic “chaos.”

“Every single road has one, two, three or more road closures, traffic diversions, right-turn only, or some sort of traffic diverter or bike lane access only,” said Siracusa. “Literally every single road, and they’ve got plans for more.”

He is so angry that he started an online petition, Remove The Barriers, that has accumulated 2,735 signatures

as of Wednesday morning. It calls on the city to “immediately remove the traffic barriers and road closures that residents say are restricting access to their neighbourhood.”

Candidates for two civic parties, ABC Vancouver and TEAM, toured the area to check out the barriers. On Wednesday, ABC issued a statement echoing many of Siracusa’s concerns, and said it “would commit to removing banana barriers.”

“What has changed is the scale of the concrete ‘banana barriers’ recently installed as traffic calming measures across Vancouver,” the statement read.

“They were meant to slow vehicles, (but) in practice, they have gone too far.”

SEE BARRIERS ON **A4**

Leger poll shows municipal voters want someone to get behind

GLENDA LUYMES

Complex, weighty issues have pushed their way forward in the lead-up to B.C.’s municipal elections, with a new poll suggesting cost of living and housing affordability are on the minds of many Metro Vancouver voters.

The poll, conducted in late September by Leger, shows that while 51 per cent of people feel their city is on the “wrong track” and 57 per cent want change on their city council, a large number remain undecided about who to vote for, particularly in the suburbs outside Vancouver and Surrey.

“Municipal voters are hard on their leaders,” said Steve Mossop, executive vice-president with Leger.

But he warned that a restless electorate doesn’t always lead to sweeping change.

Lack of awareness and low voter turnout mean results often come down to who is best-known. At the same time, expectations for local governments are “off the charts,” he said.

When asked if municipalities should be more or less involved in a series of issues, respondents said they want their city council to address issues like homelessness, poverty, drug use and climate change, as well as what they identify as the top three issues facing cities: Cost of living, housing affordability, and property taxes and spending.

Apart from taxes, voters appear to care less about some of the issues where municipal governments have the most power, such as managing the pace of residential development, the condition of roads and sidewalks, zoning changes and municipal red tape.

Mossop said this has been a common feature of local elections since COVID-19.

Mayors and councils must be sensitive to broader issues and define themselves by their ability to collaborate to address problems that reach beyond city budgets.

SEE LEGER POLL ON **A2**



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PALMER

Doerksen faces his campaign's first speed bump **A3**

CANADA

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MINING

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LIONS

Team one win away from a playoff spot **NP11**