

March 24, 2023

Dear District 16 and 17 PEI Provincial Election Candidate,

I am writing on behalf of the Rural Municipality of West River. I want to commend you for stepping up and being a part of PEI's democratic process by running as a candidate in the provincial election. Your service to the community is significant and very important.

I would like to introduce you to the Rural Municipality of West River. The Rural Municipality is:

- Part of Provincial Electoral Districts 16 and 17.
- It was formed in 2020 following the amalgamation of the former Rural Municipalities of Afton, Bonshaw, New Haven-Riverdale, Meadowbank, and West River.
- The amalgamation was partially in response to the Provincial government's Municipal Government Act (MGA).
- The Rural Municipality has a mayor and six councillors. The Committee of Council meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month and Council Meetings are on the 4th Thursday of the month.
- Information about our community can be found at <https://www.westriverpe.ca/>

The Rural Municipality of West River has a number of concerns that candidates should be aware of. The major of these is the Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw.

1. West River has recently developed and completed its first Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw. This was started in 2021 and completed in May 2022. There was a significant financial investment made by the community. The Planning Committee followed the Provincial Planning Act to prepare the Official Plan and interacted with residents in a number of ways, including at least five public engagements.
2. The Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw was passed by the 2020-2022 Council in October of 2022. The Plan was then sent to the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Land Use for approval. In January, the province finished its review of the Official Plan but there was a delay from the Province in approving the plan. With the

call of the election, the Provincial Government is in 'caretaker' mode, and there has been a further delay in the approval of the plan.

3. Until the Official Plan is approved, change of land use and approval of development permits in the Municipality is stalled.
4. It is pertinent to West River that the Official Plan and Land Use Plan be approved so that West River can be in charge of the land use and development within the municipality.
5. West River has made a significant financial investment in its Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw. We have done everything within our power to move this file along. All of the required procedures were followed within reasonable timelines. It has been very frustrating to have the work of West River tied up in bureaucratic red tape.
6. Residents of West River deserve to have this issue resolved by the newly elected government immediately after the election is held. The Rural Municipality has been patiently waiting since October 2022 for the Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw to be approved. We hope that this can be achieved immediately following the election.
7. Information on West River's Official Plan and Land Use Bylaw can be found at <https://www.westriverpe.ca/planning/draft-official-plan-land-use-bylaw>

The Rural Municipality of West River is supporting the Federation of PEI Municipalities in its election priorities. A link to those priorities can be found at <https://fpeim.ca/fpeim-2023-provincial-election-priorities/>

The Rural Municipality of West River looks forward to working with whoever is elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Districts 16 and 17 in the Provincial Legislature.

Thank you again for participating in this very important democratic process, and best of luck on election day.

Sincerely,

Helen Smith-MacPhail

Mayor of the Rural Municipality of West River