

## Alberta NDP-Kathleen Ganley Calgary-Buffalo

### CRCAG Election Questionnaire to Candidates

**To the candidates of Calgary-Elbow, Calgary-Buffalo, Calgary-Mountain View, Calgary-Bow and Calgary-Fort:**

Please find below a questionnaire from the Calgary River Communities Action Group (CRCAG). CRCAG is a non-partisan organization that has been advocating for upstream flood mitigation since the 2013 flood. We believe that flood mitigation should continue to be priority in this province so that our great city has a comprehensive plan to not only protect against the financial cost that will result from the next flood, but most importantly, the human cost. Implementing upstream mitigation is a matter of public safety and therefore cannot be ignored. As we approach the second anniversary of the 2013 flood, implementing upstream mitigation strategies and infrastructure must be pursued with a sense of determination so that Calgary will be more able to withstand the next inevitable flood.

**We ask that your responses be sent to us no later than 5PM May 1, 2014 at [info@crcactiongroup.com](mailto:info@crcactiongroup.com).** Your answers will be posted on our website and emailed to our membership for them to review.

Thank you,

CRCAG Board

#### ELBOW RIVER MITIGATION

- 1) Are you supportive of building upstream flood mitigation infrastructure for the Elbow River? If yes, what is your understanding of the infrastructure projects for the Elbow River and their current status? As an elected MLA, what do you intend to do to ensure that these projects are completed as soon as possible?

Yes – the NDP supports upstream flood mitigation on both the bow and the elbow. On the elbow we support two projects - the Glenmore reservoir diversion tunnel and the McLean Creek dry dam.

We think that current PC efforts have not been sufficient to protect Calgary from major flood events and with likely increases in extreme weather events this ought to be being addressed now. As a general rule, Alberta's NDP is proposing a capital plan that frontloads capital funding in the five-year plan in order to fund necessary projects in a shorter time frame than that produced by the PCs in their March 2015 budget document. This has two immediate impacts: first, these projects will get built faster, and the costs will be lower given more favourable market and other conditions, and it will provide economic opportunities at a time when the province is in need of employment opportunities.

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I would push to have these projects constructed as soon as possible – the longer we wait the greater the risk of another extreme flood event prior to completion, then both government and individuals are in a position of paying to repairs damage that could have been prevented by timely intervention.

- 2) Do you believe that more than one upstream mitigation infrastructure project is needed for the Elbow River? If so, which ones? If not, why not?

Yes we believe that two projects are necessary to protect communities and would support two projects:

- a. Glenmore Reservoir Diversion Tunnel

The Alberta NDP agrees with the Expert Management Panel on River Flood Mitigation's assessment that there is a need to increase the capacity of the Glenmore reservoir in order to make sure that there is more storage available in the event of a large flood. Seeing the results of the City of Calgary's feasibility study on the diversion tunnel, this appears to be a project that an NDP government would work with municipal partners to explore further.

- b. The McLean Creek dry dam;

The Alberta NDP would support this project, and work with municipal partners to get the job done. Though it would likely take longer to complete, it would work to protect more communities than the Springbank project (including Bragg Creek, Redwood Meadows, and Tsuu T'ina), for a price that some community groups suggest is in line with what the Springbank project would cost.

## BOW RIVER MITIGATION

- 1) Are you supportive of leveraging existing infrastructure along the Bow River system for flood mitigation? If yes, what is your understanding of how the existing infrastructure can be leveraged and the current status of such an endeavor? As an elected MLA, what do you intend to do to ensure that a timely agreement is put into place to utilize existing infrastructure along the Bow River system for flood mitigation?

An NDP government would also work to support the City of Calgary in the bolstering of in-city flood barriers on the Bow, and would ensure that future provincial dollars would only be spent on infrastructure that does not obstruct the river, which would ease flow and decrease the chances of a flood event. While this presents a good start, upstream mitigation and storage options would certainly be explored in order to ensure Calgary's protection from flood events of serious magnitude. We would also put in place an integrated land use and watershed management plan. In and overall sense, our party

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believes that the government of Alberta needs to aid in the development of watershed-scale, city-scale, and community-scale mitigation measures that accommodate the natural hydrology of the province and region.

- 2) Do you believe that additional upstream mitigation measures need to be pursued for the Bow River? If so, what additional measures should be considered? If not, why not?

We believe that the best course to properly protect communities we should be prepared beyond the 1:100 standard. We believe that the Bow Rivers projects should include upstream mitigation, bolstering of in-city flood barriers, and an integrated land use and watershed plan. Alberta's NDP will work with municipal partners to more fully investigate the possibilities presented by bolstering the Ghost River dam owned by TransAlta to provide upstream mitigation on the Bow River.

### FLOOD POLICY

- 1) What is your current understanding of the status of the Provincial Floodway Development Policy?

Not being in the current government I can't really speak to the status of a current policy of theirs or how they have been implementing it. What I am hearing in the community is that they aren't doing a great job of it and people are concerned and frustrated – I would work to do a much better job of addressing these concerns.

- 2) Considering the current revisions to the Provincial flood hazard maps and the impact upstream flood mitigation will have on reducing inundation, how do you propose that the Provincial Floodway Development Policy take these two items into account?

I think we need to listen to the experts on what mitigation needs to be implemented, implement it, then update any policy based on the impact those measures have. Again, not being in government I can't really speak with great authority on what their policy is. My policy would be evidence based decision making.

### BUY-OUT POLICY

- 1) Do you believe that the buy-out policy achieved its stated goal? What should be done with the vacant lots that have resulted from this policy?

I am not really sure what the government's goals were with the buyout policy, so I can't say whether they think they achieved them.

What I am hearing that people are frustrated and unhappy with 1) the implementation, 2) the speed, 3) the administrative hoops they have to jump through, and 4) the lack of information

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(generally, there are also a lot of specific concerns). I think we should look into uses for vacant lots. It will likely vary in the individual cases – what is really important is to consult with local communities, and with experts to determine what is best for the community in terms of protecting surrounding properties and maintaining vibrant communities.