



HARRISON JOHNSTON

**Candidate - North Vancouver-Seymour
BC GREENS**

Harrison Johnston is a post-secondary student, renter and climate activist. He was a lead organizer of the September 2019 Climate Strike which brought more than 100,000 people to the streets from across Metro Vancouver. Until the snap election was called, Harrison was studying to become a high school teacher. He has lived in North Vancouver his entire life and is committed to serving the community that he loves.

QUESTION 1. *Impacts of COVID.* *The availability of rapid COVID testing is a critical issue for local business as they work to ensure a safe work environment for their staff and customers. Staff/kids are back...Businesses need their staff back at work, staff need to get back to work. Given the economic impact of uncertainty around COVID in the workplace, what would you do to address the ongoing availability of rapid COVID testing?*

HJ Response: We will continue to work to ensure that COVID testing is as accessible as possible and that the turnaround is as quick as possible. We will help support small businesses if their workers do have to quarantine.

QUESTION 2. *Costs on Business.* *Many small businesses are desperately trying to get their customers back. They are struggling to find ways to get the revenue they need to survive through COVID. We see the increasing burden on business related to costs that government can control such as Property Tax Assessments and the Employee Health Tax. What would you do to help keep the costs for business down so they can maintain the jobs they provide and survive this tremendous downturn?*

HJ Response: This unnecessary election is delaying provincial support for small businesses, just as federal support is coming to an end. Instead of debating support for small businesses on the campaign trail, the BC Greens want to be legislating these supports. We will allocate \$300 million to support one of the biggest costs for small businesses, by creating a 6 month rent subsidy program. We will continue investing in communities so that people have money to spend at their local small businesses.

QUESTION 3. *Transportation & Housing.* *Employees working in North Vancouver are not able to find reasonable transportation or affordable local housing options. Businesses are suffering, choosing to move, or simply closing as a result. What would you do to ensure transportation and affordable housing investments are made to support the needs of the community and the future of our local small businesses?*

HJ Response: These are two of the biggest issues in our communities. We believe that everyone should be able to live in the community where they work. We will earmark \$500 million into a progressive, means-tested program to help low and middle income people afford the cost of rent. We will also prioritize building affordable housing across the North Shore. We will invest in public transit infrastructure on the North Shore, including a rapid transit link across Burrard Inlet. We will remove the PST from electric bikes to make them more accessible transportation options.

QUESTION 4. *Climate Change.* The issues of climate change remains a concern for the business community. What is your position and your party's position on the most important steps that need to be taken in the next year to address this issue?

HJ Response: We need to set climate targets that align with science for every government's term in office and ensure that they are held accountable if they fail to meet them. We need to immediately end all taxpayer subsidies to the fracking industry and invest in phasing out the use of fracked gas as soon as possible. The logging of our old growth forests, that serve as crucial habitat and carbon sinks, must stop immediately. Instead we need to invest in transitioning the logging industry to second growth forests. Workers cannot be left behind in the transition to a green economy

QUESTION 5. *Retraining Underemployed Workforce to Meet Opportunities in the BC Tech Sector.* The NV Chamber has championed a provincial call for the funding of retraining and skill enrichment that will help more fully employ new Canadians and other individuals with technical aptitude to support the growing needs of our growing local and provincial technology sector. What is your position on this and what steps would you take to tap into this talent and economic potential in our community?

HJ Response: We absolutely need to be taking steps to retrain workers into the sectors of the economy that have good long term prospects such as the technology sector. We support investments in these retraining programs.

