

Meet the Candidates

North Vancouver Chamber Questions for Candidates
Federal Election 2025



JONATHAN WILKINSON

North Vancouver-Capilano
Liberal Party of Canada

BIO:

Jonathan Wilkinson has brought the North Shore's voice to Ottawa as Liberal Member of Parliament since 2015. He has served as Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and most recently, as Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. A Rhodes Scholar, Jonathan made use of his educational background in public policy when he worked as a constitutional negotiator and a federal-provincial relations specialist. Jonathan also spent 20 successful years in Vancouver's private sector, including as CEO of a number of leading clean technology companies.

1. GOVERNMENT COSTS

High taxes and the threat and uncertainty of US Tariffs are the number one issue for the business community in North Vancouver.

Q: How would you reduce government costs to businesses?

A: The greatest threat to our businesses is the trade war with the United States. Canada has stepped up with a robust plan – including a package of reciprocal tariffs on American goods. Already, the federal government will defer corporate income tax payments and GST/HST remittances from April 2 to June 30, 2025, providing up to \$40 billion in liquidity to businesses; deploy a new financing facility for businesses; and provide more funding to Canada's regional development agencies, so they can better support businesses.

A Carney government will require federal departments to review and report on progress within 60 days on steps to eliminate outdated or unnecessary rules, reduce duplication or overlap with provincial rules, and streamline the administration of rules and the delivery of regulatory decisions for businesses. This will compliment the development of a one window approval process for large scale

infrastructure projects, reducing uncertainty for investors while reinforcing safety, Indigenous consultation and environmental protection.

In terms of direct costs, the current federal government previously reduced the small business tax rate from 11 to 9%. We further mandated lower credit card fees. 90% of small and medium-sized businesses accepting credit cards benefited from reduced interchange fees (up to 27%). This change alone is expected to generate savings of about \$1 billion over five years.

2. GOVERNMENT REGULATORY BARRIER

Q: How would you cut government imposed regulatory and trade barriers, such as reducing interprovincial trade barriers and regulatory reform (reducing red tape), while also protecting Canadian sovereignty?

A: There should be one Canadian economy, not thirteen. Mark Carney has committed to Canada wide free trade at the federal level by July 1st – Canada Day – of this year. We have committed to table legislation by July 1, 2025, to eliminate all federal barriers to interprovincial trade and labour mobility and to remove all federal exemptions under the Canada Free Trade Agreement. Concurrently, we are working with all provinces and territories to reduce barriers throughout the country.

A Liberal Government will fast-track major energy and resource projects of national interest, by establishing a Major Federal Project office committed to the principle of One Project, One Review, issuing decisions on projects within two years. We will expedite project approvals by signing Cooperation & Substitution Agreements with Provinces and Territories, ensuring that projects are subject to one review while upholding environmental standards and indigenous consultation requirements.

We will inject \$5 billion into a new Trade Diversification Corridor Fund, to build the infrastructure that will help diversify our trade partners, create good jobs and drive economic growth. This fund will accelerate nation-building projects at ports, railroads, inland terminals, airports, and highways. This will build one Canadian economy and diversify our trade away from the United States. And we will instruct Canadian ports to cooperate instead of competing, in order to maximize efficiencies by leveraging comparative advantages.

Working together to unlock economic projects and remove barriers, Canada can offset impacts of U.S. tariffs – creating jobs and becoming stronger at home and stronger abroad.

3. FUNDAMENTAL REGIONAL ISSUES IMPACTING ECONOMY

Many regional issues are severely impacting our local North Vancouver economy.

Q: What would be your specific local response to tackle the following interrelated challenges for employers in North Vancouver:

- Affordable housing – the housing shortage
- Skilled staff - difficulty attracting and retaining
- Public Transit - the need for significant capital and operating
- Innovation - Investment in Research & Development.

A: Affordable housing – the housing shortage – Build 500,000 homes per year by creating a new home building agency and catalyzing private capital. Cutting red tape, incentivising prefabrication, providing \$10 billion in low-cost financing and capital to affordable home builders. We will reintroduce a major tax incentive (MURBs) to construct thousands of rental units. We will cut development charges by 50% for a period of five years. We will reduce the barriers to buying by eliminating the GST for first time home buyers on the first \$1 million.

Skilled staff - difficulty attracting and retaining: Launch a plan to cover costs of apprenticeship training for skilled trades workers, establish a new \$20 million funding stream for colleges to support new apprenticeship training spaces; support employers with up to \$10,000 per apprentice hired. Provide upskilling benefit for workers in priority sectors like manufacturing, healthcare, construction, and technology. Addressing the housing crisis is critical to keep skilled workers on the North Shore.

Public Transit - the need for significant capital and operating investment - The federal government recently committed an investment of more than \$2 billion over 10 years to provide Metro Vancouver's transit network with long-term predictable capital funding. This will support Bus Rapid Transit on North Shore – and eventually Skytrain.

Innovation - Investment in Research & Development - Fold innovation into all aspects of government policy to find cutting edge solutions to ongoing challenges, such as; investing more in modular and prefabricated homes and utilizing materials like mass timber.

Investing and supporting innovators directly through programs like the Strategic Innovation Fund, which has helped over 750 SMEs – including SMEs on the North Shore like Ecoation - that have attracted over \$1.7 billion in investment.