

# How would you shape Maine as our next Governor?

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Page 1: Help us understand your position on topics important to all Mainers.

**Q1** Please state your name.

Donna J. Dion

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Page 2: PLANNING

**Q2** What will you do to encourage towns to plan proactively and for the long term, understanding that the environment and rural character are fragile and can be damaged before people take notice?

Have the communities inventory their resources and evaluate the businesses processes taking place within their communities to measure any negative impact. They would need to develop a plan that would minimize any negative impacts from the emissions or processes.

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**Q3** What could you, as Governor, do to support and encourage the kind of community level localism and ruralism that is succeeding in some Maine communities today? (Generally, localism supports local production and consumption of goods, local control of government, and promotion of local culture and local identity. Ruralism is the rural equivalent of new urbanism: creating walkable communities with a range of housing and job types.)

Transparency is the development of projects that will change the character of their community. Establishing a plan that will pull people together in enhancing the growth of local businesses. Also important to support local farmers and establishing an intown farmer's market. Continued support of the Main St. Maine projects, where the downtown becomes the new destination for specialty shopping, restaurants and businesses.

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Page 3: THE RURAL ECONOMY

**Q4** How will your policies support regrowth of Maine's downtowns so that their heritage, unique rural character and economic value is safeguarded?

Establishing possible grants for new business to be encouraged to establish their business in the historical downtown areas, and maintaining the characters of the older buildings and pictures of the older uses of those buildings. Having periodic historical walks with plaques on buildings noting their historical significance to the city. Destination point as a result of marketing tools targeting key interest points of the city. Resulting in more foot traffic and more uses for the building and ending with an increased income for the city.

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**Q5** How will your policy/action support a shift in focus for growth in our rural areas, such as the recent example in the Katahdin Region?

Once again working with each community to high light their unique resources, become destination points.

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### Page 4: TRANSPORTATION

**Q6** Maine is a rural state, which makes efficient public transportation challenging. However, the lack of it makes it more difficult for many people to find and keep jobs and access affordable housing. What will you do to encourage funding and development of more transit solutions both in our rural and urban areas?

Collaborations must be developed within smaller rural communities to develop shuttle buses that will provide scheduled transportation form smaller rural areas to the larger business communities. Increased transportation would also increase available workforce, young and old, that are not able to currently travel based on lack of vehicles or licenses.

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**Q7** What is your plan for sustainable funding to maintain/repair our transportation system to shift away from the current over-reliance on gas tax and general fund bonds each year?

I have been looking into a service fee, currently being used by other States, to charge nonresident property owners, who pay no income taxes to Maine. We could establish a small yearly % placed against the value of their homes to help support the upgrade of our infrastructure.

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### Page 5: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Q8** People-to-people connections are increasingly identified as a key determinant of individual health as well as successful community engagement. How would you encourage both our aging population and other Mainers to create connections within their community?

Market local community activities where youth provide through community projects to connect with elderly in nursing homes. Neighborhood projects to enhance the beauty of their surroundings. Working on community gardens, dog parks.

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**Q9** Broadband infrastructure is critical to Maine's economic future and the personal well being of Mainers. Who should determine access to the internet – communities or companies?

State Economic Development entertaining large businesses to come to Maine. I know in the past companies had approached Maine and they were turned away. Years ago I investigated the possible interest from companies to come to Maine and confirmed they had not been successful. We need economic funds to entise broadband companies to submit proposals.

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### Page 6: ENERGY

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**Q10** What are the pillars of your energy policy? How will you prioritize energy efficiency? How do you define renewable energy and what role will it play in your energy policy? Please touch on transmission as well as production and usage of energy.

Educating citizens on the most efficient time periods to utilize large quantities of energy, such as early evening showers, dishwashers and clothes washers/dryers, easy first step. Measuring the impacts of solar and wind turbines and prioritizing which areas with direct funding could yield the fastest savings. a bigger return in the lowering of the energy footprint.. Transition may be Maine working with Canada and their Canadian Grid to possibly get a lower fee as we transition Maine into larger uses of solar, water producing.

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### Page 7: SCHOOL FUNDING AND TAXATION

**Q11** What are your thoughts on the pros and cons of using property tax dollars as a basis for school funding. What are other options and how would they shape Maine's development patterns and our economy?

I believe we first look at where Maine is providing tax relief and evaluate their value. We could eliminate some of those exemptions and those funds could have a major positive growth to the income tax base that could in turn provide additional general funds to the average 55% funding equation. Some of those tax exemptions go also be transferred to existing business providing them with capital investment funds that would allow them to grow and hire additional staff, a direct positive impact to the Maine economy.

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### Page 8: GOVERNANCE

**Q12** GrowSmart Maine facilitates people working together to reach better solutions for their communities. What will your administration do to build an effective relationship with the Legislature that listens and responds to the differing voices of Maine communities?

My politic platform is just one word "RESPECT", we need to be listening, encouraging new ideas, brainstorming the pro and cons of recommendations. We need to put political tags aside and care about the future of moving Maine forward. We should be pulling information from each community to be part in the decision making, one size does not fit all.

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### Page 9

**Q13** Thanks for taking GrowSmart Maine's survey! We'll be sure to get your answers out to our members and friends right away. If you have anything more you'd like to tell us, feel free to send us a file as shown below. Thanks again.

**Respondent skipped this question**

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