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EDITORIAL: Trick or treat

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It's Halloween, when ghosts, goblins and ghouls are expected to roam our streets.

This year, of course, local politicians are adding to the mix, joining trick-ortreaters on their door-knocking rounds. The candidates aren't after candy. They're looking for something even sweeter - your vote.

But - similar to costumed Halloween characters - sometimes it's hard to figure out who the real people are behind the smiling, baby-kissing masks.

Candidates at election time are chameleons.

Reading their campaign materials, it can be hard to distinguish between them.

Everyone is in favour of affordable housing, neighbourhood character, families, seniors, motherhood and apple pie.

We say: a little less talk, a little more action.

Past behaviour is often a good predictor of future behaviour.

For incumbents, look at how the candidates voted on particular decisions.

How did they react to that daycare proposal in the neighbourhood? Did they vote for or against a highrise tower project?

For those new to politics, it's worth looking at their backgrounds. Are they stepping up with a particular party ideology? How have they been involved in the life of the community?

Admittedly, this kind of unwrapping takes a little work. But it's the only way to tell if there's a trick or a treat in the offing.

We're used to exhortations to "get out and vote."

But voting with no idea of what you're voting for is arguably as bad as not voting at all.

And that's something that's really scary.

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