



Ecology Action Centre – Candidate Survey 2024

Candidate for Mayor

Name of Candidate: Alex Andreas

1. The [Halifax Green Network Plan](#) (HGNP) should be used to guide the region's growth, but full implementation of the plan requires resources and enforceable rules to protect important greenspace and wildlife corridors. Will you support the full implementation of the HGNP to protect the Green Network? Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I fully support the full implementation of the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP), as it is a reasonable plan of action.

The HGNP is crucial for guiding our region's growth while preserving greenspaces, wildlife corridors, and natural assets. As Halifax continues to expand, it's essential that development happens in a way that respects our natural environment and ensures sustainable growth.

However, the key to success lies in ensuring we have the necessary resources and enforceable regulations in place. I will advocate for the following:

- **Securing dedicated funding to implement the HGNP in a phased and timely manner.**
- **Introducing stronger land-use policies that protect essential green spaces and wildlife habitats from urban sprawl.**
- **Creating clear and enforceable rules to ensure that environmental protection is at the forefront of development decisions.**

We cannot afford to lose our natural spaces, which are vital for our well-being, biodiversity, and climate resilience. By committing to the full implementation of the HGNP, we will ensure that future generations benefit from the green network that defines Halifax's identity.

2. Will you commit to ensuring Halifax Transit attracts and retains enough staff to implement the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network and ferry routes in the [Rapid Transit Strategy](#)? Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I am committed to ensuring that Halifax Transit has the resources and staff necessary to implement the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network and expand ferry routes as part of the Rapid Transit Strategy.

Public transportation is key to reducing congestion, lowering emissions, and making Halifax a more connected and livable city. To make this a reality, we need to address the staffing challenges that have been affecting Halifax Transit. I would like to focus on:

- **Attracting and retaining transit staff:** We need to improve working conditions, offer competitive wages, and provide clear career pathways to make Halifax Transit a desirable place to work. This means working closely with transit unions and municipal leaders to ensure that staffing levels are sustainable and meet the needs of a growing city.
- **Training and development:** Offering increased training opportunities and incentives for transit staff will ensure they are prepared for the unique challenges of operating a Bus Rapid Transit system and expanded ferry routes.
- **Streamlining recruitment processes:** We need to speed up the hiring process and reduce bureaucratic delays to quickly bring in the talent needed to support the BRT and ferry expansion.

By investing in staff and creating a supportive work environment, we can build a reliable and efficient transit system that encourages people to leave their cars at home and use public transportation.

3. Will you commit to implementing the [Road Safety Strategy](#) and achieving its vision of zero injuries and fatalities across all modes of transportation? Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I am fully committed to implementing Halifax's Road Safety Strategy and achieving the vision of zero injuries and fatalities across all modes of transportation.

Road safety is a critical issue that impacts everyone, whether they are driving, walking, cycling, or using public transit. Achieving Vision Zero, where no deaths or serious injuries occur on our roads, will require bold action, including:

- **Enhanced Infrastructure:** We need to invest in road redesigns, including safer intersections, dedicated cycling lanes, and improved pedestrian crossings. These improvements will reduce conflicts between different types of road users.
- **Lower Speed Limits:** We will explore reducing speed limits in high-risk areas, especially near schools, parks, and residential neighborhoods, to lower the risk of collisions.
- **Education and Enforcement:** I will support public education campaigns on road safety, and we will strengthen enforcement of traffic laws, particularly against dangerous driving behaviors like speeding, distracted driving, and impaired driving.



- Data Driven Decisions: Using data to identify high-risk areas and tailoring interventions based on proven safety outcomes will help us make the most effective changes.

Achieving zero injuries and fatalities is an ambitious goal, but with the right resources including AI, commitment, and collaboration, we can make Halifax's streets safer for everyone.

4. Are you committed to ensuring the continued implementation and full funding of the [JustFOOD Action Plan](#) as the municipality's first comprehensive, long-range food strategy, which will increase collaboration across levels of government and among community partners, strengthening our collective capacity to build a just, healthy, and sustainable food system. Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I am fully committed to ensuring the continued implementation and full funding of the JustFOOD Action Plan as Halifax's first comprehensive, long-range food strategy.

Food security is a key issue for our community, and this plan is essential for creating a just, healthy, and sustainable food system. To make this happen, I will:

- **Strengthen collaboration across all levels of government, ensuring the city works closely with the provincial and federal governments, non-profits, and community organizations to expand access to healthy and affordable food.**
- **Prioritize food equity: The JustFOOD Action Plan addresses the need for equitable access to food, especially for marginalized communities. I will support efforts to make food more accessible through community gardens, local food markets, and partnerships with local farmers.**
- **Increase capacity for local food production: Supporting urban agriculture, community gardens, and farm-to-table programs will reduce our reliance on external food sources and boost local food production.**
- **Advocate for full funding: Ensuring the plan is fully funded means allocating municipal resources to support infrastructure, community initiatives, and public education efforts on sustainable food practices.**

The JustFOOD Action Plan is essential for the long-term well-being of our city, and I am committed to seeing it fully implemented for a healthier and more resilient food system.

5. With climate change wreaking heat waves even in temperate climate zones, and the price of home-heating fuel spiking due to global conflict, access to affordable home energy efficiency has become a human right crucial to comfort and standard of living. Cities across Canada are seeing tenants mobilize for these rights. As an elected official, would you



support a "right to efficiency" by-law supporting tenants' rights to affordable energy efficiency support? Explain why or why not (optional).

No, I would not support a "right to efficiency" by-law in its CURRENT FORM, and here's why:

While I fully understand the need for energy efficiency and the rising costs of home heating due to global conflicts and climate change, the introduction of a rigid by-law could have unintended consequences for tenants and homeowners alike. There's a real risk that such regulations could:

- Increase the cost of living: Retrofitting older buildings to meet strict energy efficiency standards could raise costs for landlords, who may pass those costs onto tenants, leading to higher rents or forcing smaller property owners out of the market.**
- Potentially create more homelessness: Any policy that increases housing costs or drives property owners to renovate unnecessarily could lead to renovictions, forcing tenants out and exacerbating the housing crisis.**

Instead, I believe we should focus on new developments and ensure that all new buildings are constructed with high energy efficiency standards from the start, which most are due to building codes and regulations. This proactive approach ensures long-term sustainability without displacing current residents or driving up costs.

I also support targeted programs that offer energy efficiency support to low-income renters who may not have the financial flexibility to make housing choices, but I am cautious about any blanket policy that could have broad economic impacts. Sometimes, leaving older structures as they are avoids hidden issues and cost escalations that may emerge during renovations.

In short, while energy efficiency is important, I believe it's essential to balance it with housing affordability, preventing any negative ripple effects that could worsen the very problems we're trying to solve. This being said, most investors will purchase an older property with the intention of renovating. HRM could offer an incentive program to complete the necessary upgrades to meet reasonable standards for all. Allowing the market to continually correct itself. As in my plan, new policies will be set in place to also prevent renovictions.

6. There are multiple stressors on local freshwater quality and quantity such as increased development and an increase in water-related climate events (e.g., floods, droughts, storms). Do you commit to advocating for and supporting watershed level management in municipal planning? Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I am fully committed to advocating for and supporting watershed-level management in municipal planning.

As Halifax continues to grow, we need to be mindful of the increased stress on freshwater resources due to development and the intensifying effects of climate change, including floods, droughts, and storms. A watershed-based approach is critical for ensuring the long-term sustainability and quality of our local water resources. Here's why:

1. Holistic Water Management: By managing at the watershed level, we can take a more integrated approach to protecting freshwater resources, accounting for all contributing factors such as development, stormwater runoff, and pollution across the entire water system, rather than just addressing issues within municipal boundaries.

2. Climate Resilience: Watershed management is vital for climate adaptation. By focusing on natural water systems, we can mitigate the impact of climate events, reduce the risk of flooding, and maintain water quality during droughts.

3. Sustainable Development: I will advocate for sustainable land use planning that considers the protection of water resources as a key factor. This includes better management of stormwater, protecting wetlands, and ensuring new developments have minimal negative impact on the watershed.

4. Collaboration and Policy Integration: Watersheds often span multiple jurisdictions. Therefore, I will push for collaborative efforts with provincial and federal governments to create policies that support watershed protection. This includes integrating watershed management into our development planning process to ensure that all future growth considers the health of our water systems.

By supporting watershed-level management, we can ensure that Halifax's growth is sustainable, protecting both freshwater resources and the community's well-being as we face increasing environmental challenges.

7. Will you, in the absence of a provincial Coastal Protection Act, advocate for and work towards passing municipal by-laws designed to address development on vulnerable coastal properties and infrastructure? Explain why or why not (optional).

Yes, I will absolutely advocate for municipal by-laws that address development on vulnerable coastal properties and infrastructure, especially in the absence of a provincial Coastal Protection Act.

Halifax's coastlines are not only some of our most valuable assets but also some of the most ****vulnerable to climate change impacts, including rising sea levels, storm surges, and erosion. Without strong regulations, these areas could face severe damage, putting properties, infrastructure, and natural ecosystems at risk. Here's my approach:**

1. Local Coastal By-Laws: I will push for the development municipal by-laws that restrict or guide development on vulnerable coastal lands. These by-laws would ensure that any development near coastlines is done with careful consideration of long-term environmental risks and climate resilience, particularly regarding sea level rise and erosion.

2. Environmental Impact Assessments: Any proposed development in coastal areas should undergo rigorous environmental impact assessments, considering both the immediate and future risks posed by climate change. We must prevent unreasonable developments that put residents and infrastructure at risk while also protecting natural coastal ecosystems.

3. Public Awareness and Consultation: Part of my approach would involve educating property owners and developers on the risks associated with unreasonable coastal development and including them in public consultations to create by-laws that are fair and reasonable, balanced, and grounded in the reality of climate change.

Halifax's future depends on smart, climate resilient development, especially in coastal areas. By taking action at the municipal level, we can ensure that our coastline is protected for both current and future generations.

