



Ecology Action Centre – Candidate Survey 2024

Candidate for Councillor, District 16 – Bedford - Wentworth

Name of Candidate: Anita Kirkbride

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.

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. The number one way we're going to solve issues around traffic, road safety, fatalities and emissions is to improve our transit system so it becomes a preferred method of commuting. Rapid Transit and more buses will require more staff. We can't have one without the other.

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, and, let's focus on putting in place road safety principles in new development areas. Add protected bike lanes / active transportation lanes from the beginning so they're not an extra-expensive upgrade later.

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.

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. In principle, I would support the idea of enhancing tenants' access to affordable energy efficiency measures. However, without seeing the specific wording and expectations of the bylaw, I can't commit to a full 'yes' just yet. While energy efficiency is crucial, we must be mindful of potential unintended consequences. For example, this could lead to increased development costs, which might, in turn, raise rents—something we definitely want to avoid.

Moreover, such a bylaw could disproportionately impact small landlords who manage older, more affordable buildings. This could necessitate significant investments in retrofits, which may not be financially feasible for them without additional support.

While I agree that energy efficiency is a key factor in improving quality of life, I believe we need to carefully consider how best to implement such policies in a way that balances the needs of all stakeholders. It's not just about recognizing energy efficiency as a right, but ensuring that any steps we take are fair, equitable, and sustainable for everyone involved.

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 fully support advocating for and implementing watershed-level management in municipal planning. Protecting our local freshwater quality and quantity is essential, especially in the face of increased development and more frequent water-related climate events like floods and droughts.

I am particularly concerned about the ongoing challenges related to the Sackville River and Little Sackville River floodplains and the Sandy Lake special planning area (as designated by the Province). The mapping and management of these floodplains are crucial to ensuring the safety of our communities. However, I need clarification on the current proposal to update floodplain mapping only every 10 years. Given the rapid pace of development in these areas, more frequent updates would better reflect the evolving landscape and its impact on our watershed.

As this area continues to grow, we must collaborate closely with neighbouring municipalities. Without coordinated efforts, the risk to our water systems increases, potentially leading to more severe flooding or water quality issues. By working together with neighbouring municipalities and



revisiting the frequency of floodplain mapping, we can better protect our vital water resources and the communities that depend on them.

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. Our coastal areas are some of our most valuable and fragile natural resources, and we must take proactive steps to protect them.

I am deeply concerned about the practice of infilling in the harbour, which has reached an unacceptable level, especially in areas like Bedford and Fairview Cove. The extensive infilling we've seen not only disrupts natural ecosystems but also poses significant long-term risks to our coastal resilience. We cannot continue to expand our waterfront properties by adding landfills to the coastline. This approach is short-sighted and threatens the environmental integrity that makes our coastal areas so special.

I also want to acknowledge the strong opposition from citizens regarding the infilling at Dartmouth Cove. Their protests reflect a growing public awareness and concern about the environmental impact of such practices. It's a clear signal that our community values the preservation of our natural coastlines and demands responsible development.

As we face increasing climate-related challenges, it is more important than ever to adopt sustainable development practices that prioritize the health of our coastal environments. I am committed to working with municipal leaders, community stakeholders, and environmental experts to create by-laws that will protect our vulnerable coastal properties from further harm and ensure that future development is both responsible and sustainable.

