



## Ecology Action Centre – Candidate Survey 2024

### Candidate for Councillor, District 16 – Bedford - Wentworth

**Name of Candidate: Jean St-Amand**

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. We're in the enviable position of having a thriving and growing city with multiple outstanding green spaces in or near our city and that's worthy of protection. Not only do these green spaces provide wildlife corridors, let's not forget that they are natural infrastructures themselves that mitigate flooding that would otherwise be far more serious with a city's natural tendency to hardscape its development areas. They need to remain a part of our watershed and overall green space planning for the city and for the health of our community. The cost of not protecting them could potentially be much higher.**

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've already met with the new president of the Transit Union and made the same commitment. Fast, efficient, accessible, affordable and frequent transit is the key to transitioning our city from personal vehicle dependency and escalating infrastructure costs to walkable interconnected communities with thriving centres that support their nearby residents.**

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 commit to the broad principles of the strategy. I believe the data-driven approach will bear out the successes or need for redirection as the strategy is implemented. It's an aspirational model that will guide the design and accessibility of our city for generations to come.**

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. This is another policy that I support in general, while having reservations about some of the practicalities involved. As an example, aiming to increase the availability of locally produced food in markets and stores is a laudable goal, while challenging to put into practice. In the same way the CRTC put Canadian Content rules in place, the practical effect was to limit Canadian media's potential within an innovative creative economy. Quantity was prioritized over quality in order to satisfy the content percentage demands. I'm be wary of such an impact on something as vital as our food supply. I would favour a blended approach that would include a messaging campaign aimed at consumers to favour locally produced food, and tax incentives for retailers that stock locally produced food, thereby minimizing the sometimes overwhelming cost advantage some categories of imports have. I'm not sure this is a municipal domain as opposed to a provincial one, but it might be possible at both levels of government.**

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 like the thinking, but I worry about the execution. We're already at the federal level incentivizing transition away from fuel oil with rebates on home energy efficiency. Renters are not achieving the full benefit from that because the rebates go only to the owner of the building/home/etc. and nothing is required to be passed on to the home's occupant. Direct tax incentives that the resident gets to enjoy would be my preferred means of delivering some much needed relief that bypasses the landlord (though some form of tax relief or other incentive might be warranted there as well). It's the equity concern that I believe warrants further consideration. Maybe roll it out in phases and target low-income housing first rather than allowing the incentives to be utilized by people that can already afford these efficiency investments.**

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. In Bedford we certainly saw the consequences of past generations' mistakes with respect to development and the impact from climate events with massive flooding in the summer of 2023. I**



attended both Bedford-based municipal consultations on the Sackville River floodplain remapping and rezoning and had discussions with the engineers about the modernized means of managing watershed management. The principal challenge, as I see it now, since these interconnected systems quite often span well beyond the boundaries of a single municipality is management from higher level and coordinating efforts and regulation across multiple municipalities for more cooperative efforts toward common goals. Like the Coastal Protection Act, this is something that, in an ideal world, should be handled at the provincial level.

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. We have an investment to protect. Public infrastructure that is vulnerable to climate change is particularly in need of further protections and the cost of moving too slowly is certainly likely to exceed taking proactive measures to implement protections.**

