



Ecology Action Centre – Candidate Survey 2024

Candidate for Mayor

Name of Candidate: Waye Mason

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 need to respond to climate change by continuing commitment to the Regional Plan's protection of valuable greenspaces, wetlands, wildlife corridors, watersheds and water systems, and by acting on coastal protection; protect ecosystems and natural assets by continuing to incorporate the Regional Plan's environmental sustainability principles for growth and development in decision-making, and; preserve open and green spaces by creating a timeline for a fully funded and publicly trackable implementation strategy for the Halifax Green Network Plan, including the acquisition of property to protect and enhance green space corridors.

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. A lot of work has been done to address this, with the approval of 11 relief workers, and 8 already hired for the ferry service, and the work done to increase recruitment and retention of bus operators. HRM will always be subject to labour pressure as skilled operators are drawn away by competitive job offers, but changes to the collective agreement, quality of life on the job, compensation adjustments and constant tracking of staffing levels by Council through the Transportation Standing Committee, to hold senior staff accountable.

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've been a supporter of Vision Zero and all sorts of programs to provide for increased safety for vulnerable road users and pedestrians, from getting HRM to adopt mandatory sideguards on all corporate and contractor trucks, to early adoption of tactile high contrast intersection markers, to increased implementation of traffic calming, to removing the requirement to press beg button to get a pedestrian crossing on the peninsula during the day. Vision Zero will not happen over night but it has to be our goal, and the strategy is the way to accomplish it.

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. One of the most disappointing votes this term was when Council voted down fully funding JustFOOD last budget cycle. I voted for it then, I will continue to support it.

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).

Yes. This one is more of a maybe. I will support finding out if HRM has the legal authority to do this. Unlike municipalities in BC, NS municipalities don't have the ability to influence building code related matters. HRM can help decrease energy poverty and reduce carbon output by expanding Solar City and by providing low-interest loans to complete energy retrofits of small multi-unit housing but we may not be able to require these changes. HRM can also save on future infrastructure and emergency-response spending by applying a climate-smart lens to building and by working in concert with the provincial and federal governments to immediately adopt green building codes.

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. Watershed level management is the only way to ensure a holistic and logical approach to this change in the environment.

In addition HRM must respond to climate change by continuing commitment to the Regional Plan's protection of valuable greenspaces, wetlands, wildlife corridors, watersheds and water systems, and by acting on coastal protection (in as much as the current "minimum planning" regulations recently adopted will allow) HRM can protect ecosystems and natural assets by continuing to incorporate the Regional Plan's environmental sustainability principles for growth and development in decision-making.

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. As I said above, HRM must respond to climate change by continuing commitment to the Regional Plan's protection of valuable greenspaces, wetlands, wildlife corridors, watersheds and water systems, and by acting on coastal protection. The province was the best order of government to do this, but they have explicitly stated that this is in their opinion "best handled by municipalities" so HRM will need to do what we can to fill this unfortunate gap.

