



Ecology Action Centre – Candidate Survey 2024

Candidate for Councillor, District 3 – Dartmouth South - Woodside - Eastern Passage

Name of Candidate: John Paul

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 would support the full implementation of the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) to protect the Green Network. Effective implementation is essential for safeguarding ecologically significant areas, wildlife corridors, and culturally important lands.

The HGNP offers a solid foundation for guiding sustainable growth in the region, while fostering biodiversity and enhancing community well-being. It aligns with broader objectives of environmental protection and responsible urban planning, ensuring that development occurs in harmony with nature.

The Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) has several strong points that focus on preserving the natural landscape while promoting sustainable growth across the Halifax region.

**Protection of Ecologically Important Areas
Sustainable Land Use
Connectivity of Open Spaces
Support for Long-Term Planning**

These initiatives aim to enhance the environmental, cultural, and recreational value of Halifax, making it a more sustainable and livable region.

To fully implement the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP), several actions need to be taken:

Resource Allocation: Ensure sufficient funding in municipal budgets to support land preservation, infrastructure improvements, and environmental monitoring.

Enforceable Regulations: Strengthen zoning laws and land-use policies to protect critical green spaces and wildlife corridors from overdevelopment.

Public-Private Partnerships: Collaborate with businesses and environmental organizations to secure additional resources and expertise for green initiatives.

Community Engagement: Encourage public participation in the decision-making process, ensuring community support for long-term environmental goals.

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 will commit to ensuring Halifax Transit attracts and retains enough staff to implement the Bus Rapid Transit network and ferry routes in the Rapid Transit Strategy.

The Rapid Transit Strategy for Halifax focuses on creating a faster, more reliable transit system that promotes sustainable growth and reduces reliance on private vehicles.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Four BRT lines will be developed to provide high-frequency service (every 10 minutes), making transit accessible to around 120,000 residents. The BRT system will be designed to reduce travel times and encourage walking, cycling, and public transport use, fostering more compact, walkable communities.

New Ferry Routes: Three new ferry routes will connect downtown Halifax with terminals in Mill Cove, Larry Uteck, and Shannon Park. These routes aim to reduce commuting times and provide an eco-friendly alternative to private vehicles, with ferries designed to be fast and environmentally efficient.

Sustainable Development: The strategy integrates transit with land-use planning, encouraging transit-oriented development near stations and terminals to accommodate population growth sustainably. This supports Halifax's broader environmental goals, aligning with the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) and the HalifACT 2050 initiative, which aims for a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030.

The plan reflects Halifax's commitment to building a more convenient, environmentally responsible, and future-focused transit system.

Ensuring Halifax Transit has sufficient staff to implement the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network and new ferry routes outlined in the Rapid Transit Strategy is crucial for the plan's success. Committing to attract and retain qualified staff will involve several key actions;



Competitive Salaries and Benefits: Offering competitive wages and comprehensive benefits will make Halifax Transit an attractive employer, encouraging both retention and recruitment.

Training Programs: Establishing comprehensive training and apprenticeship programs can ensure that new hires are well-prepared and reduce skill gaps, while ongoing professional development encourages long-term staff retention.

Work-Life Balance Initiatives: Offering flexible work schedules, manageable workloads, and mental health support programs can help retain staff by improving job satisfaction.

Recruitment Drives: Proactive recruitment efforts, such as targeted hiring campaigns and partnerships with educational institutions, can attract more candidates, ensuring sufficient staff for the BRT and ferry network expansion.

Improved Working Conditions: Listening to employee feedback on working conditions and taking steps to improve them can significantly enhance job satisfaction and retention rates.

By committing to these steps, Halifax can meet the staffing needs required to successfully implement the Rapid Transit Strategy.

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 will commit to Halifax Road Safety Strategy because it aims to significantly improve road safety through data driven approaches and community involvement, targeting a reduction in traffic-related injuries and fatalities. Here are my key reasons;

Vision Zero Approach: The strategy adopts the Vision Zero philosophy, which prioritizes reducing road fatalities and serious injuries to zero by focusing on safer road design, improved traffic management, and behavior change among road users. This is a global best practice in road safety.

Evidence-Based Planning: The initiative emphasizes using data analysis and crash statistics to identify high-risk areas and allocate resources more effectively. This ensures that interventions are targeted where they can have the greatest impact.



Comprehensive Action Plans: The strategy includes actionable goals across multiple areas, such as enforcement, education, engineering, and evaluation, providing a well-rounded approach to road safety improvement.

Alignment with Other Initiatives: It aligns with broader city goals like the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) and the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGPN), encouraging sustainable and safer transit, cycling, and pedestrian options, further reducing emissions and promoting healthy lifestyles.

By supporting this strategy, Halifax can make significant progress toward safer streets for all residents, while fostering a sustainable, eco-friendly environment. Committing to implementing the Road Safety Strategy and working towards its Vision Zero goal of zero injuries and fatalities across all modes of transportation is crucial for creating safer streets in Halifax.

I support this strategy, because it prioritizes the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, while also promoting more sustainable forms of transportation like cycling and public transit. This commitment would not only improve public safety but also align with other key city goals, such as reducing traffic congestion, cutting down emissions, and fostering healthier communities.

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 will support the implementation and full funding of the JustFOOD Action Plan because it focuses on building a sustainable, just, and healthy food system.

Here are my reasons;

Food Security: JustFOOD aims to ensure that all residents, regardless of their socio-economic status, have access to nutritious, affordable food. It prioritizes community food sovereignty, particularly for marginalized groups such as African Nova Scotians and Indigenous Peoples.

Sustainable Local Food Production: The initiative supports urban and rural food producers by offering resources and infrastructure to enhance local food systems. It encourages short food chains, making the local economy more resilient and reducing dependency on long-distance food transportation.



Health and Wellness: By promoting access to nutritious food and fostering healthy eating environments, JustFOOD contributes to improved public health outcomes. It also integrates climate resilience by focusing on environmental sustainability and biodiversity.

Food Waste Reduction: JustFOOD promotes practices to reduce food waste, including composting and redistributing surplus food, which helps combat hunger and minimizes environmental impact.

This initiative aligns with broader regional goals of creating a sustainable, inclusive food system that benefits the local economy, promotes equity, and addresses climate challenges.

There are challenges but I will work with the other councillors to make sure JustFOOD Action Plans are implemented and do everything in a councillor's power to ensure the plan is executed.

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. As an elected official, I would support the "right to efficiency" by-law that ensures tenants have access to affordable energy efficiency solutions because it would be a crucial step toward addressing both climate change and economic inequality.

Here are my reasons;

Energy Efficiency as a Human Right: With climate change leading to more extreme weather events, including heat waves and colder winters, access to energy-efficient homes is no longer a luxury but a necessity for maintaining a basic standard of living. Rising energy costs, compounded by global conflicts, make it harder for many tenants to afford heating and cooling. A "right to efficiency" would ensure tenants can live in homes that are insulated, equipped with energy-efficient appliances, and designed to reduce energy consumption, ultimately lowering utility bills.

Addressing Climate Change: Energy-efficient homes reduce carbon emissions by lowering the demand for heating and cooling, which in turn lessens the pressure on local and national energy grids. By implementing such a by-law, cities can contribute to meeting Canada's national and international climate targets, while also mitigating the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

Tenant Rights and Economic Justice: Many low-income tenants are trapped in poorly insulated homes, bearing the brunt of high energy costs. A by-law supporting energy efficiency would ensure landlords take responsibility for upgrading buildings and making energy-efficient retrofits, aligning with broader tenant rights movements across Canada that advocate for safe, affordable, and habitable housing.

As climate change worsens and energy costs rise, particularly due to geopolitical factors, ensuring that everyone has access to energy-efficient homes, appliances, and infrastructure becomes crucial for maintaining living standards and reducing environmental impacts. I will support the "right to efficiency" by-law because it not only ensures affordable access to energy-efficient housing but also make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability and economic justice.

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 wholeheartedly commit to advocating for and supporting watershed-level management in our municipal planning. The health of our local freshwater resources is crucial not only for the environment but also for the well-being of our community.

Understanding the Issue: Our region faces significant challenges related to freshwater quality and quantity, exacerbated by rapid development and the increasing frequency of water-related climate events. Protecting our watersheds is essential for maintaining biodiversity, ensuring clean drinking water, and safeguarding our infrastructure against flooding and erosion.

My Commitment:

Integrative Planning: I will push for an integrative approach to land use planning that incorporates watershed management principles. This aligns with the Halifax Regional Municipality's Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, which emphasizes a holistic approach to water management.

Data-Driven Decisions: Advocating for the collection and analysis of data on water quality and quantity will be a priority. Utilizing frameworks like the Provincial Watershed Planning Guidelines, we can make informed decisions that directly address the impacts of development and climate change on our freshwater systems.



Green Infrastructure: I will support the implementation of green infrastructure solutions—such as rain gardens, permeable pavements, and enhanced tree canopies—that mitigate stormwater runoff and improve water quality. This approach is consistent with the Halifax Green Network Plan, which encourages sustainable practices to enhance urban resilience.

Community Engagement: Engaging the community in watershed protection efforts is vital. By fostering a culture of stewardship, we can empower residents to take an active role in preserving our natural resources through educational programs and volunteer initiatives. This aligns with the Nova Scotia Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, which emphasizes public participation in environmental protection.

Partnerships: Collaborating with organizations such as the Ecology Action Centre, local environmental groups, and academic institutions will be essential in developing innovative solutions to protect our watersheds. The Municipal Climate Change Action Plan is an excellent example of how partnerships can lead to effective climate resilience strategies.

In conclusion, I recognize that healthy watersheds are vital to our community's sustainability. I am committed to ensuring that our municipal planning incorporates effective watershed management practices that safeguard our freshwater resources for future generations.

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 advocate for and work towards passing municipal by-laws designed to address development on vulnerable coastal properties and infrastructure, especially in the absence of a provincial Coastal Protection Act. The impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels and increased storm frequency, make it imperative for us to proactively manage our coastal resources.

My Commitment:

Local Regulation: I will prioritize the development of municipal by-laws that establish clear guidelines for development in coastal areas, focusing on sustainable practices and protecting vulnerable ecosystems. This is essential to ensure that our coastal communities are resilient to climate change impacts.

Alignment with Existing Frameworks: I will ensure that these by-laws align with the Halifax Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, which emphasizes the need for sustainable development practices, particularly in areas at risk from climate impacts.



Risk Assessment and Planning: Utilizing frameworks like the Provincial Flood Risk Management Strategy, I will advocate for rigorous risk assessments that inform development decisions in coastal zones, ensuring that we account for future environmental changes.

Incorporating Best Practices: I will draw upon best practices outlined in the Federal Government's Climate Adaptation Strategy, which encourages municipalities to incorporate climate resilience into planning processes. This includes measures such as setbacks from the shoreline, restrictions on certain types of development, and enhanced natural buffers.

Community Involvement: I believe that community input is vital in shaping effective coastal management strategies. I will promote public consultations to ensure that the voices of residents and stakeholders are heard in the development of these by-laws.

Partnerships: Collaborating with organizations like the Ecology Action Centre and other environmental groups will be crucial in developing evidence-based policies that protect our coastal areas.

In conclusion, protecting our vulnerable coastal properties is not just an environmental issue but also a matter of public safety and community resilience. I am committed to advocating for proactive municipal by-laws that will safeguard our coastline for future generations while aligning with provincial and federal policies aimed at climate adaptation and environmental protection.

