

# MASON FOR MAYOR

MAYOR  
DAY  
ONE

# 2024

PLATFORM

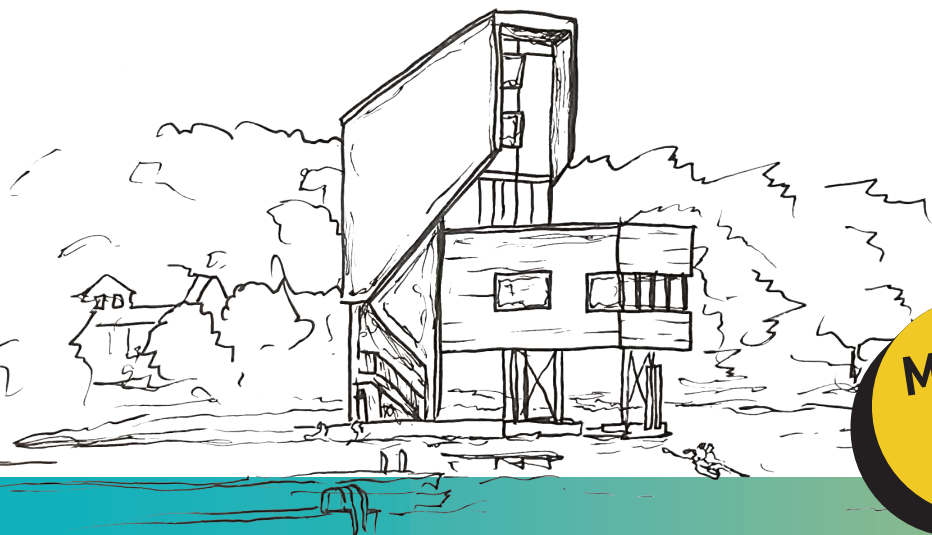
“I’ll work to make HRM  
an even better place!”



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**MAYOR  
DAY  
ONE**



**“ I want to be your Mayor because I’ve had the chance to see firsthand, while serving on council, the amazing progress we’ve made over the past 12 years. I’m excited about the opportunities ahead, and as I’ve travelled all across HRM over the years, you’ve told me you feel the same way.”**

In the last decade, we’ve transformed our municipality. We used to worry about our future. Now, we are one of the fastest-growing and most sought-after places to live in Canada. But this still remains the HRM we know and love. I’m proud of what we’ve accomplished so far, and I want to keep that momentum going so we can achieve even more.

While we’ve overcome many challenges, we now face new ones that come with our successes.

Our diverse communities share a responsibility to tackle some of the biggest issues of our time, such as the national housing crisis,

inequality, climate change, and the rising cost of living, and to respond with empathy and compassion. Some residents feel like they’re being left behind. We need to continue encouraging smart growth as we work to solve housing issues and make life more affordable for everyone. The Mayor may only have one vote on council, but their role is crucial. Connecting people, being non-partisan, understanding the issues, and setting a positive tone are all essential.

I will be a Mayor who knows that consistent, small efforts are key to creating lasting change. That’s how we can enhance our community’s appeal

and confidence while building on our current successes. I know we can rise to this challenge together.

For more than a decade, I’ve been a leader on council, fostering teamwork and gaining support for my initiatives. I understand what our municipality can achieve, and I know how to navigate the system effectively. Together, we can create a better HRM that benefits us all.

**I am ready to be  
MAYOR DAY ONE.**

# DELIVERING HOUSING SUCCESS

As your Mayor, I will be committed to ensuring that every resident has access to a safe, affordable place to call home.

I will prioritize accelerating approval and permitting processes for all housing developments, whether affordable or market-rate. The priority is more housing completed faster. I will launch Housing Halifax to coordinate affordable housing efforts, and work to enhance council's authority to better manage and guide housing initiatives.

Recent fires, floods, and hurricanes have underscored the urgent need for proactive climate adaptation and community protection. I am dedicated to advancing green and resilient neighborhoods that not only reduce costs but also strengthen our infrastructure for the long term.

***Together, we will build a future-ready Halifax that stands strong.***

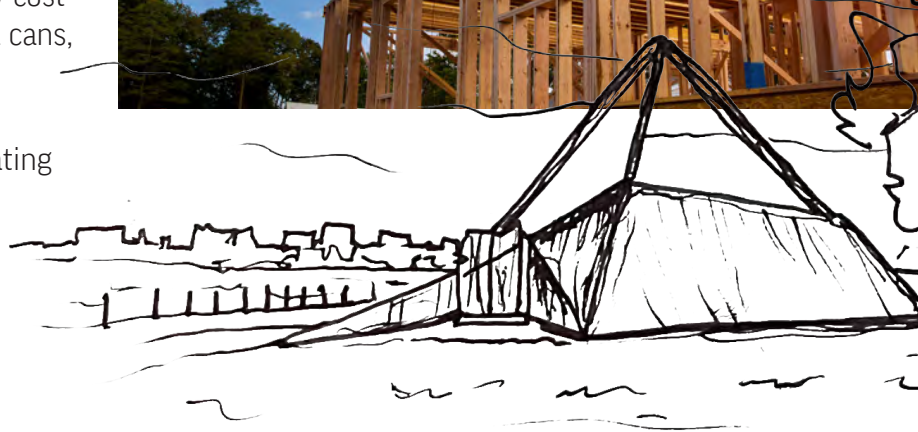
## Faster Market Housing

- Reduce building permit wait times by communicating more clearly and transparently, by setting clear timelines, and by getting out of builders' ways.
- Speed up construction by making status information on all permits and applications publicly accessible through HRM's website, providing a transparent and accountable framework for government, builders, and residents.
- Save time for home builders, planners, and contractors by soliciting ideas and acting on ways of cutting red tape.
- Speed up the completion of new housing by establishing a frictionless, outcome-focused building permit system based on an approval-first policy and launching the Trusted Partner Program.
- Speed up renovations and adapted reuse and protect heritage areas by completing nine new Heritage Conservation Districts by 2028.



## Faster Affordable Housing

- Boost the supply of affordable housing by establishing Housing Halifax, an arm's-length agency to partner with not-for-profit, co-op, and private-sector developers, as well as private homeowners, to build and operate housing projects.
- Lower the cost of affordable housing development by asking the province to change the Utility Act to allow Halifax Water to waive development charges tied to the level of affordable housing offered or provided.
- Improve access to already-existing public housing units by renewing the call to take over responsibility for this housing in HRM from the province and by funding this transfer by redirecting \$190 million in province-collected property tax to HRM.
- Increase the supply of below-market, rapid-build housing by incentivizing and investing in low-cost construction, such as modulares, pre-fabs, sea cans, backyard suites, and tiny homes.
- Speed up affordable housing projects by creating a policy to automatically fund federal- and provincial-backed social and supportive non-market housing initiatives.
- Ensure affordable housing is available across the region by implementing a policy for inclusionary zoning.



## Green, Resilient Communities

- Respond to climate change by enhancing the Regional Plan's protection of valuable greenspaces, wetlands, wildlife corridors, watersheds and water systems, and by acting on coastal protection.
- Decrease energy poverty and reduce carbon output by expanding Solar City and by providing low-interest loans to complete energy retrofits including small multi-unit housing.
- Protect ecosystems and natural assets by incorporating the Regional Plan's environmental sustainability principles for growth and development in decision-making.
- Protect and expand Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes, Purcells Cove Backlands, and Sandy Lake Park by continuing to acquire land.
- 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.
- Protect heritage properties from climate change by exploring the introduction of environmental impact grants.
- Fortify the sustainable management of our tree canopy by fully funding the Urban Forest Master Plan.
- Continue to help protect against sea-level rise and ensure resilience and recovery from natural disasters by ensuring right-sized infrastructure and increasing funding for emergency management and preparedness.



# CREATING AN AFFORDABLE & INCLUSIVE HRM

As your Mayor, I'll be dedicated to making sure HRM does everything it can to ease the burden of rising costs on residents. I will work tirelessly to ensure that property taxes reflect the level of services residents receive and to keep recreational and municipal programs affordable.

I will advocate for investment in practical and accessible transportation solutions, recognizing that biking, walking, rolling, and public transit must meet the diverse needs of our urban, suburban, and rural communities.

We know that every dollar invested in climate adaptation today can save \$13 to \$15 down the line. We need to target our spending wisely and make thoughtful decisions now that will benefit us for years to come.

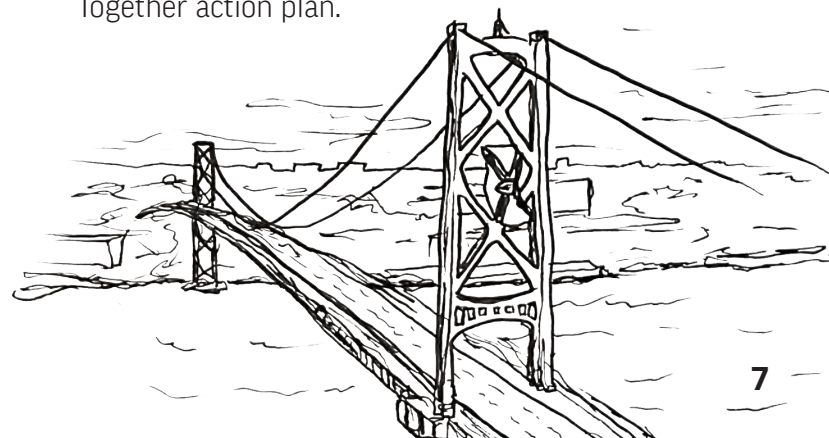


## A More Affordable HRM

- Save more residents money by expanding eligibility for the Affordable Access Program, providing low-cost bus passes and free or discounted recreation enrolment.
- Reduce everyday costs and make aging in place easier for low-income residents by expanding eligibility for municipal property tax assistance.
- Guarantee fair taxation by adjusting the rural tax rate to match the municipal services those areas receive.
- Save families money and encourage all residents' participation in recreation and exercise by freezing recreation registration fees and rental fees for rinks and gyms for two years.
- Provide property tax relief by creating grants for not-for-profit organizations that lease, rather than own, their spaces.
- Strengthen community supports and protect ongoing essential services by eliminating property taxes for not-for-profits that deliver municipal services on behalf of HRM.

## Climate Action

- Ensure green, comprehensive economic growth by continuing to fund and implement the Halifax Partnership's People. Planet. Prosperity. Halifax's Inclusive Economic Strategy 2022-2027.
- Save on future infrastructure and emergency-response spending by applying a climate-smart lens to construction and by working in concert with the provincial and federal governments to immediately adopt green building codes.
- Move toward a zero-waste system by developing a four-year plan for a circular economy solid-waste model.
- Maintain national leadership in climate action and resilience by continuing to support and fully funding the HalifACT 2050: Acting on Climate Together action plan.



## Affordable, Citizen-Centred Transportation

- Ease congestion for people using buses, trucks, and cars by establishing a traffic operations centre to monitor road conditions and control traffic flow in real-time.
- Support a growing municipality and our healthcare, shift, and service workers by establishing 24/7 transit service with maximum 30-minute off-peak wait times and faster peak frequency on key corridor routes.
- Make transit a more usable and convenient choice by increasing frequency on corridor routes.
- Increase the frequency of the airport bus to every 30 minutes.
- Improve transit users' comfort by providing more and higher quality shelters at high-usage locations and by adding more schedule information at all stops.
- Speed up commutes and daily trips by reorganizing Halifax Transit corridor, local, and express routes around proposed Bus Rapid Transit routes and by prioritizing investment in bus lane construction.
- Save seniors money by establishing a free seniors' off-peak bus pass to be phased in by adding an additional day per week annually.
- Improve Halifax Transit service to under-18s by expanding the free student bus program to all students.
- Provide safe and effective transportation for people of all abilities by completing the transformation of Access-A-Bus to improve service and reduce notice required to book.
- Make transit faster, smoother, more frequent, and more efficient by getting Bus Rapid Transit routes on the road and fast ferries in the harbour with the help of available federal and provincial funding.
- Make moving around easier for rural residents by doubling available funding for on-demand community transit services over four years.
- Make travel cheaper by allowing transfers between community transit and Halifax Transit.
- Give residents better and cheaper choices for getting around by developing a Transportation Master Plan, integrating transit, land use, and traffic planning with the province's transportation planning for the region.



- Connect residents to main streets, commercial districts, universities, health centres, and transit hubs by completing the bike network in the Regional Centre and by adopting and funding a multi-year suburban bike plan.
- Keep walkers, rollers, and cyclists safer by delivering on road safety policy changes and HRM Road Safety Strategy capital projects and by making safety and speed enforcement a priority for police.
- Sustain complete communities in rural HRM by obtaining provincial and federal funding for rural walking, rolling, and cycling infrastructure and by ensuring the construction and maintenance is not funded through unfair area rates.

# MAKING BEST DECISIONS WIN

As your Mayor, I'll be committed to harnessing the tremendous potential of our economic and population growth to ensure that everyone benefits, not just a few. I will prioritize practical, smart decision-making so that we all share in the success.

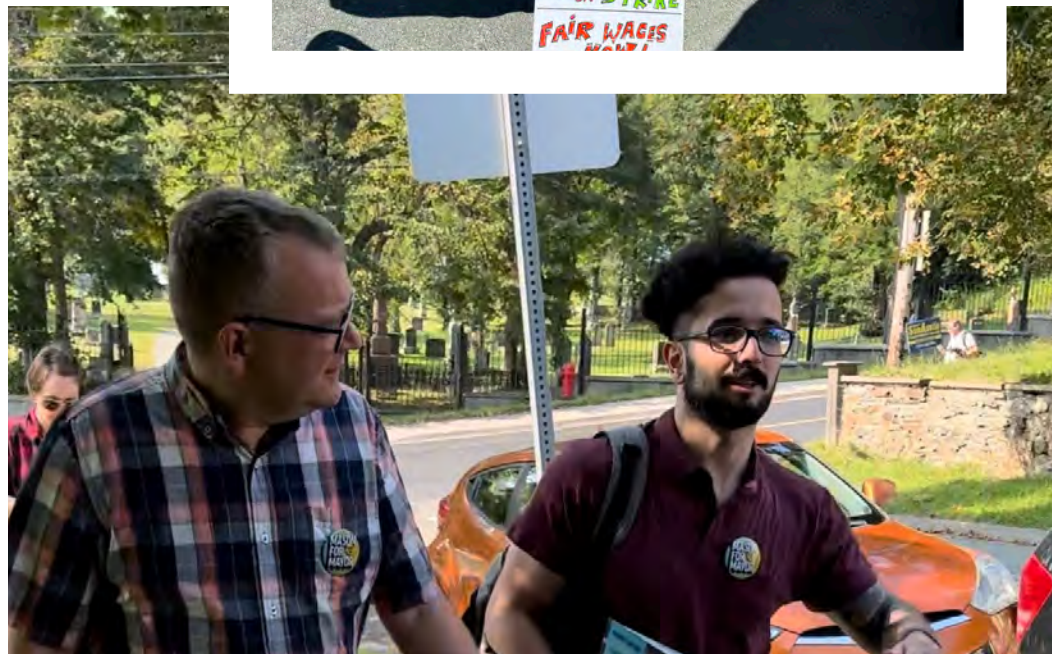
***I will focus on building a just, equitable, healthy, and welcoming community because those are the municipalities that truly thrive. I will work to foster safe and secure neighbourhoods where everyone feels protected and valued.***

I'm dedicated to transforming how HRM operates, even when it means challenging the status quo. By embracing change, we'll become more nimble, efficient, and better equipped to achieve our goals and serve our communities effectively.



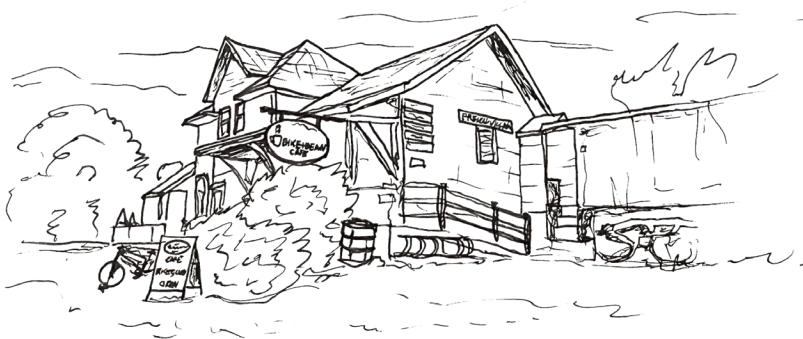
## Equity, Fairness, and Access for All

- Support a reparative process to address the harms done to, and loss of intergenerational wealth by, the residents of the African Nova Scotian community by supporting the establishment of black-led community land trusts and by returning control of the Africville lands to former residents and descendants.
- Cultivate diversity and anti-racism by setting up performance measures and tracking actions aimed at dismantling the systemic barriers that prevent under-represented groups from participating in and accessing municipal services.
- Support equity and inclusivity by continuing to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History.
- Create a Mayor's Council to address racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism and create accountability by working directly with community leaders.
- Make all HRM spaces accessible by ensuring that the municipality achieves its accessibility goals by 2030, as outlined in the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act.
- Guarantee access to high-quality library services by providing Halifax Public Libraries with adequate resources to ensure that HRM has a library system with appropriate staff and infrastructure to meet community needs.
- Ensure recreation services keep pace with population growth by developing a strategic plan for recreation by increasing capital and operating funding to deliver much-needed services.
- Grow our downtowns and main streets by creating a reliable multi-year fund for streetscaping, increased maintenance, and new community infrastructure, such as supporting Downtown Vision 2030 and the Musquodoboit Harbour community vision.
- Fight for rural communities in HRM to receive their fair share of the provincial and federal funding that is available to all other non-HRM rural communities.



## Community Safety

- Boost street safety and better respond to residents in crisis by establishing a civilian-led response-team model to respond to issues resulting from those experiencing homelessness, mental health, addiction support, and other crises.
- Save money and police resources by establishing 24/7 civilian staffing for by-law enforcement.
- Work to restore trust in policing by rapidly completing the decades-awaited police reform that communities in HRM have been advocating for.
- Provide strong police oversight by ensuring the Board of Police Commissioners has independent legal advice and a board secretariat, by compensating civilian non-councillor members, and by instituting a civilian board chair.



## Changing How We Work

- Restore trust in government by strengthening public consultation processes and by reporting back to participants and the public on the impact of consultation in an easy-to-find and easy-to-understand way.
- Lead the national call for a new fiscal framework with the federal and provincial governments.
- Enhance the delivery of night-time/after-hours services in the downtowns by establishing a night-manager model responsible for overnight municipal services.
- Address concerns that rural and suburban communities are not being heard at City Hall by holding mayor's office hours in these communities on a monthly rotating basis.
- Make the delivery of services to rural communities more flexible and fitting by creating a dedicated cross-department rural team with a single rural manager.
- Ensure land-use by-laws and service standards are seamless across county-boundary lines in communities like Hubbards and Elmsdale by developing consistency among HRM and neighbouring municipalities.
- Provide confidence and clarity to residents and businesses by adjusting planning to identify appropriate sites where industrial and construction use is allowed.
- Protect and enhance the work of social service providers in under-served communities by liaising with the province to secure core operating funds.

***I'm dedicated to transforming how HRM operates, even when it means challenging the status quo.***

- Save money and increase quality, reliability, and efficiency by working with unions to bring municipal service delivery in-house where appropriate.
- Strengthen the arts by boosting funding for professional arts organizations by 50 percent over four years and by supporting the goals of the Greater Halifax Arts and Culture Coalition.
- Support local special event organizers affected by inflation by creating a one-time special events stabilization fund.

**2024**  
PLATFORM

**[masonformayor.ca](https://masonformayor.ca)**

Authorized by the official agent for Wayne Mason