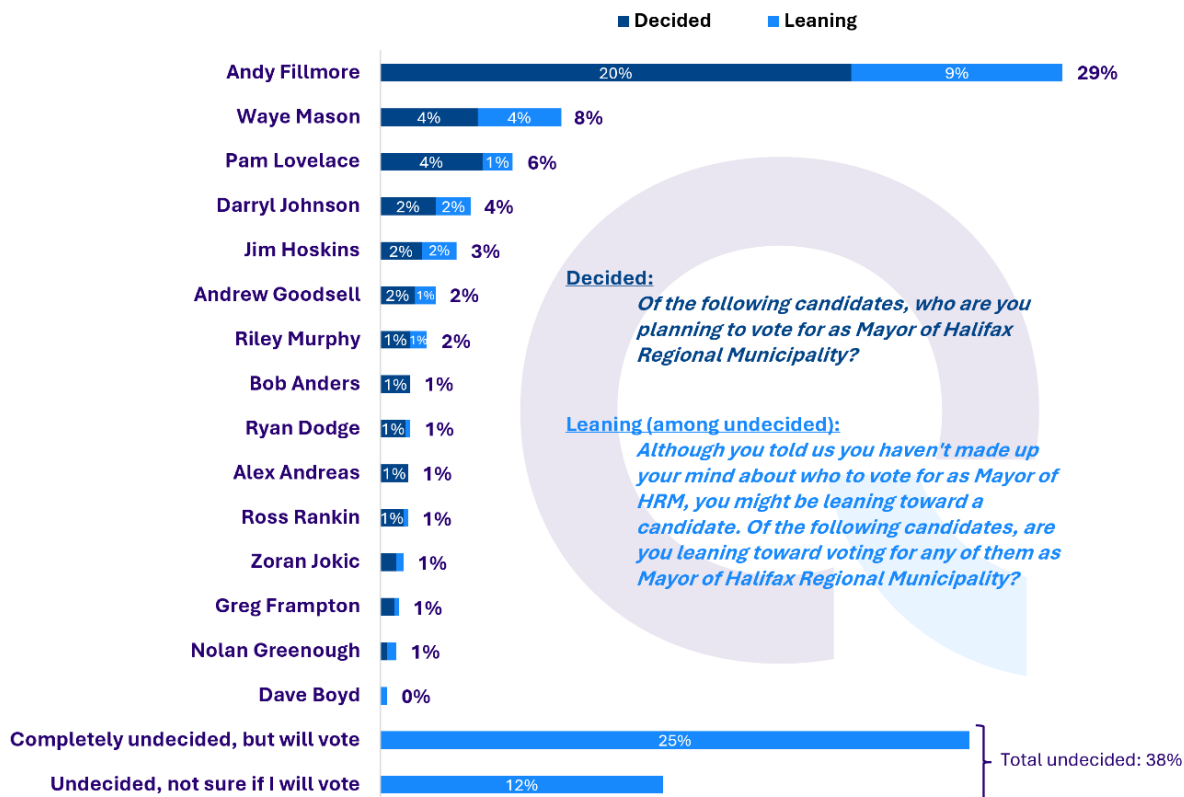


Nearly Half of Voters Unable to Name Any Mayoral Candidate as Halifax Election Nears: MQO Research Poll

Those with a preferred choice overwhelmingly leaning Fillmore

Halifax, NS – A new poll conducted by MQO Research reveals an enduring level of indecision among voters about who should serve as HRM’s next mayor.

The poll surveyed 383 eligible voters between September 24 and October 2, 2024. Initial responses about voting intentions indicate 58% of respondents were undecided. After being prompted with a "leaning" question, a significant portion remained uncertain, with 25% being "completely undecided, but will vote," and 12% "undecided, not sure if I will vote." This leaves a combined 38% of voters still completely undecided as voting is set to begin next week.



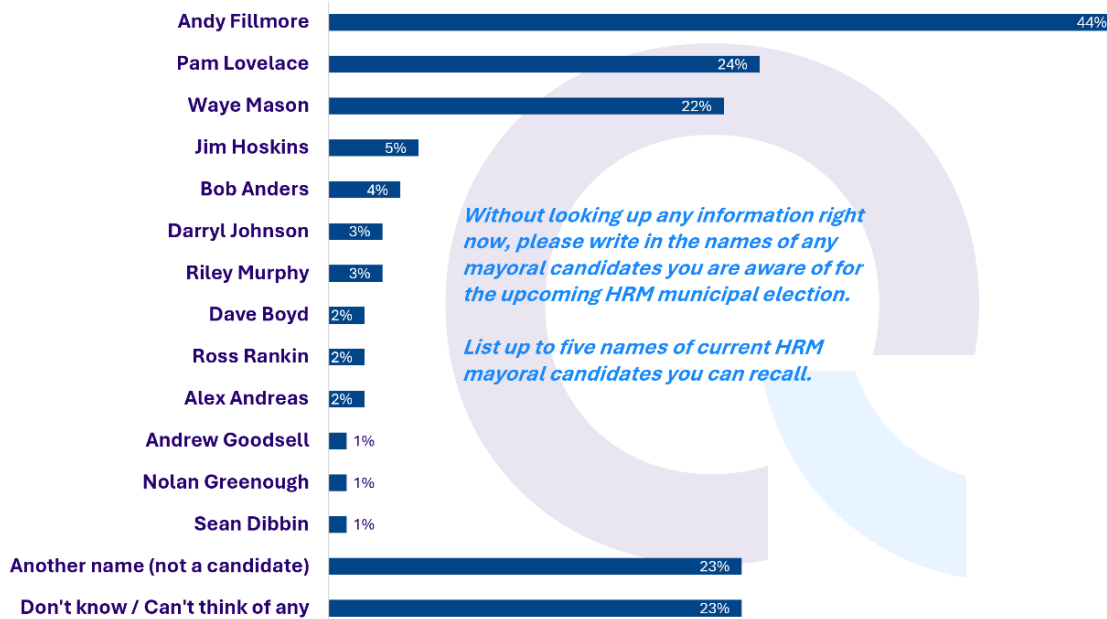
N=383 confirmed eligible voters per citizenship and residency requirements, sampled and weighted to census proportions.
"Decided" + "Leaning" figures do not always sum to the top % figure due to rounding.
Excludes 22 respondents who said they will not vote. Responses collected online September 24 – October 2, 2024.

The data suggest that name recognition is a primary driver of voter support.

Initially, nearly half of respondents (46%) either couldn't name a single candidate when asked to recall those running for mayor, or they named someone not actually in the race (such as the current premier of Nova Scotia, the current mayor of Halifax, or a current or former councillor). When a current candidate for mayor was accurately recalled, 44% mentioned Andy Fillmore, 24% named Pam Lovelace, and 22% recalled Waye Mason.



Free Recall of Candidate Names

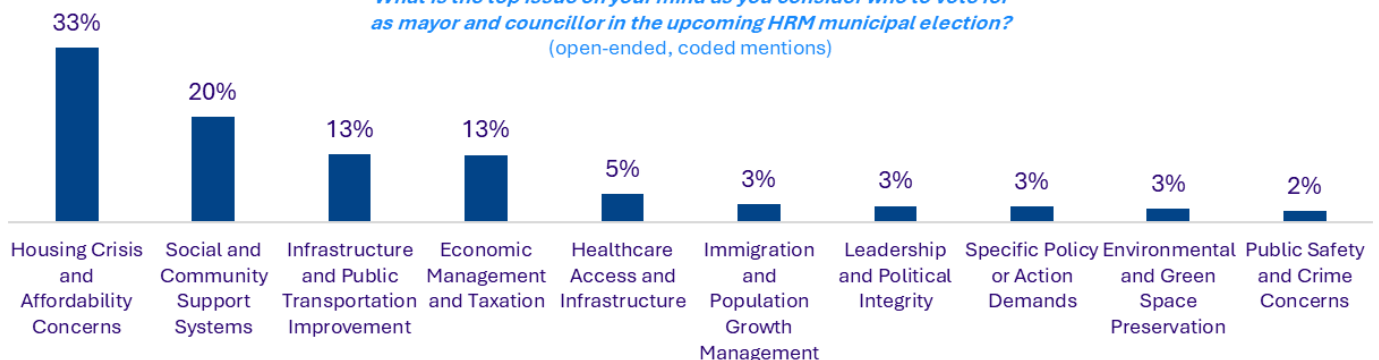


N=383 confirmed eligible voters per citizenship and residency requirements, sampled and weighted to census proportions. Excludes 22 respondents who said they will not vote. Responses collected online September 24 – October 2, 2024.

"Our research indicates a concerning reality: many do not appear interested in who the next mayor of HRM will be," said **Brenden Sommerhalder**, Vice President of MQO Research. "With over half of voters initially undecided and unable to recall most or any of the candidates so close to the election at this critical time for our municipality, there's a real risk that the election's outcome will come down to gut reactions at the ballot box."

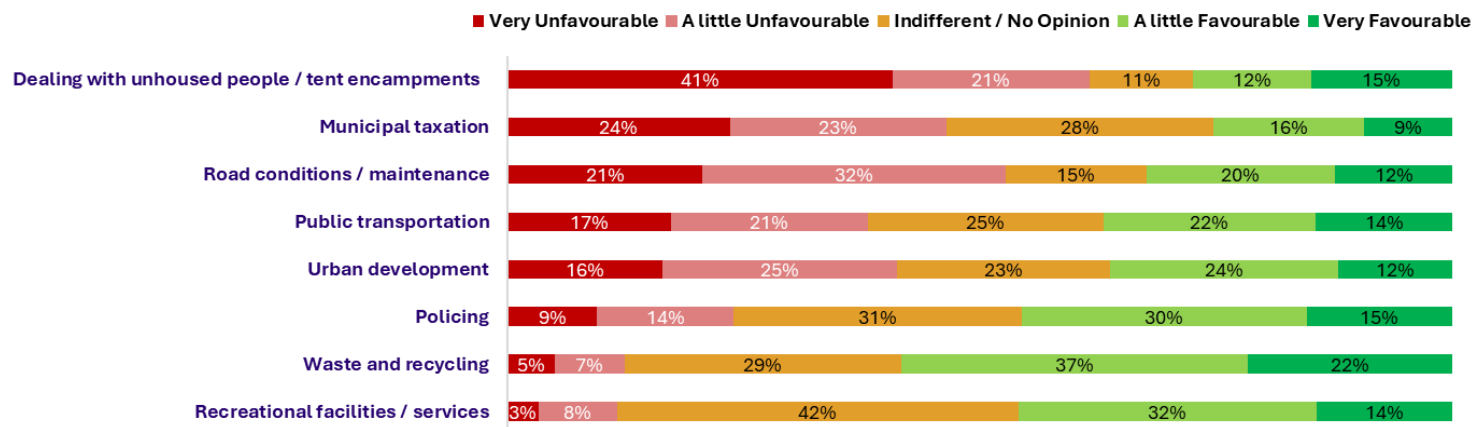
When asked, open-ended, what the top municipal issue is on their mind as they consider who to vote for, a one-third plurality (33%) mentioned the *Housing Crisis and Affordability Concerns* followed by two-in-ten (20%) mentioning *Social and Community Support Systems* primarily around tent encampments, food insecurity, and addressing poverty. Around one-in-ten (13%) mentioned each of *Infrastructure and Public Transportation Improvement* and *Economic Management and Taxation*.

What is the top issue on your mind as you consider who to vote for as mayor and councillor in the upcoming HRM municipal election?
(open-ended, coded mentions)



Respondents were further asked to rate their level of satisfaction with HRM's current approach or performance on a set of issues. Results indicate deep dissatisfaction with HRM's current *Dealing with unhoused people / tent encampments* with 62% saying they have an unfavourable opinion of the handling of this issue (with 41% reporting a *Very Unfavourable* opinion). Approximately half of respondents also hold an unfavourable opinion of the current approach to *Road conditions / maintenance* (53% unfavourable) and *Municipal taxation* (46% unfavourable).

What is your opinion about the current approach or performance regarding the following in Halifax (HRM)?



Opinions about HRM's performance with *Waste and recycling* and *Recreational facilities / services* were generally positive, with pluralities holding favourable opinions on those issues, while opinions were more split about *Public transportation*, *Urban development*, and *Policing*.

Responses were collected via online panel between September 24 and October 2, 2024. Respondents were 383 confirmed eligible voters per citizenship and residency requirements, sampled and weighted to 2021 HRM census proportions. Online panels are considered non-probabilistic, therefore a margin of error cannot be calculated. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of 383 respondents would have a margin of error of 5%, 19 times out of 20.

MQO Research (mqoresearch.com) is an accredited agency member of the Canadian Research Insights Council. Fully owned and based in Atlantic Canada with over 35 years of industry experience, MQO is a leading full-service market research, polling, and evaluation firm serving clients across North America.

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Media contact: Kevin Surette
647-523-8142

