



## 2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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### **(A) Your Candidacy**

#### **1. What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?**

- Pedestrian safety. Two men were killed in crosswalks this past winter. I worked closely with community groups, Medford's traffic engineer Todd Blake, and state agencies to bring roadway improvements to the locations where car crashes killed Dan Dill and Arthur Webber. These crashes never should have happened and if I have anything to say about it, nothing like that ever will happen again. Medford residents deserve to walk safely on our sidewalks and across our roads.
- Services for our most vulnerable residents. Medford needs to increase its revenue so we can provide better services for our neediest residents. We need to bolster our Health department, one of the hardest working departments in City Hall. They do so much for our community, but could do even more if we provided them with the staff they really need. Our librarians also provide needed assistance to vulnerable residents, and they should be paid what they deserve. We owe it to our city workers to show up for them like they show up every day for Medford residents.
- Housing affordability. Medford needs to increase its housing stock, with built-in affordable housing units required by law. Zoning is one way to address this, though not the only mechanism. We have to continue to work to find solutions for residents across the income spectrum to survive and thrive, stay in their homes, find a place to live in Medford that suits their needs, and love where they live.

## **2. What qualifies you to hold this office?**

My background is in the arts and higher education and I hold a BFA and MFA from Boston University, but when President Trump was first elected in 2016, I was pregnant with my daughter and I decided that attempting social change through the arts was too slow for me. I went back to graduate school to study public policy at UMass Boston, getting a graduate certificate in Gender, Leadership, and Public Policy. I worked at the Massachusetts State House and for the Superintendent of Schools here in Medford. I saw how desperate our schools were for more funding, and knew the only way to achieve that was to shift the balance on the City Council, so I ran to vote in favor of a Proposition 2 ½ override. I did that, the override passed, and we saved 40 teachers' jobs. I have also worked as the Assistant Director and now President of the Board of the Malden Warming Center, a seasonal emergency overnight shelter for unhoused people. Because of my work with unhoused people, I can attest that our community members with the greatest challenges are worthy of care, respect, and dignity. 40% of Medford families deal with hunger. All of our families deserve food on the table, our children deserve access to programs that help them learn and grow, and our city deserves elected officials who aren't afraid to stand up for what's right. I have served as a City Councilor during two of the most productive years this city has ever seen, and I am eager to serve again, to continue to move Medford forward.

## **3. What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to adopt locally?**

Medford can learn a lot from its neighbors, especially in the realm of services for vulnerable residents. I would like us to adopt many of the policies of Somerville's Office of Housing Stability and Malden's Department of Substance Use Prevention and Outreach. I have worked closely with the Malden department via my work with the Malden Warming Center especially, and deeply appreciate their dedication to our unhoused neighbors with substance use disorder. They never give up on them and never relegate them to second class citizens, but always offer another opportunity to get help.

### **(B) Open-Ended Policy Questions**

#### **1. Given state law, municipalities in Massachusetts are limited in their taxing power. What opportunities do you see for the city to raise revenue to support essential city services?**

I believe the best opportunity for Medford to raise revenue is by reviewing our zoning laws in our squares and business corridors and by streamlining our policies around business development. I have spoken with and met with our Economic Development Director Sal Di Stefano on this topic many times. Sal is highly motivated to do this work with an eye toward equity. Since we are able to tax businesses at a higher rate than residents, businesses bring in more tax revenue than homes, and we can use that revenue to support city services.

**2. What are your top priorities for ensuring that all students in your city can receive a high-quality public education?**

I am serving on the Medford Comprehensive High School Building Committee, which is the group of residents, elected officials, and school administrators tasked with building a brand new high school. That is critical for Medford, as our high school is in extremely rough shape, was built in the 70s and not well-maintained, but has an excellent vocational program and will continue to be a strong foundation for our students as long as we are successful. I have also been working on reimagining the Citywide Elementary Alliance, a volunteer group of parents that is raising money for all the elementary schools in town to be shared equitably based on needs at each of the elementary schools. I am always thinking about how we can ensure that our schools have the funds they need and how to make sure they get them. I voted to allow a Proposition 2 ½ override to be on the ballot and campaigned for its passage, and would do it again in a heartbeat.

**3. What can your city do to help protect immigrant communities under attack from ICE and ensure genuine community safety?**

The City Council passed a Welcoming City Ordinance which ordained non-compliance with ICE. I have followed up on that with our Police Department with great frequency, requiring reporting on a regular basis from our police chief on arrests and what, if any, knowledge the MPD has of ICE activity. I am also actively in conversation with local neighborhood ICE watch groups.

**4. What are your top three policy priorities for making your city climate-resilient, and how would you ensure that equity is at the center of any such efforts?**

I am supportive of tree planting, I voted for the green score zoning ordinance, and I have been in ongoing conversations about flood mitigation with our

DPW and city engineers, especially in the neighborhood in west Medford that was a historically Black neighborhood where storm and flood water was not properly drained and stormwater pipes were installed too small. It is critical that as any new projects are performed, climate resiliency is factored in, and especially that the heat map is taken into consideration, trees are planted, natural drainage is a part of new construction, and proper stormwater pipes are installed. The green score zoning ordinance factors all of this in.

**5. What steps would you take to reduce dependence on cars and better facilitate the ability of city residents to safely get around by walking, biking, or public transit?**

My work to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists will make it safer for all modes of travel. When two men in Medford were killed this past winter in car crashes when they were walking in crosswalks, I made it one of my top priorities to ensure that the city and state departments were making all possible updates they could to our roads for pedestrian safety. MassDOT and DCR have both already begun safety improvements on major roadways, because of my advocacy.

**6. What policies will you advocate for to ensure that your city can be a place that is affordable for residents to live at any stage of life?**

Residential rezoning will allow for more housing stock to be built, as long as Mayor Lungo-Koehn is willing to allocate funding to that end. We can go as slowly as residents are requesting, as long as it is paid for. We can address affordable housing alongside rezoning, but it requires that the Mayor release the funding, which she has not done yet.

**7. [If relevant] How would you assess your city's MBTA Communities Act rezoning efforts so far?**

We have already done this.

**8. What strategies would you employ to resist federal overreach from the Trump Administration while protecting critical services and funding for residents?**

I have done this by crafting and passing the Gender Affirming Care and Reproductive Healthcare Ordinance and by voting in favor of the Welcoming City Ordinance. I believe that even if the Trump administration threatens us with reduced federal grants and greater ICE raids, we still have to make moves

to protect our residents. They are already targeting us, and we cannot govern from a place of fear. The federal government is operating like terrorists and we can't negotiate with terrorists.

### **9. How would you model transparency and accountability if elected?**

With other members of the Resident Services and Public Engagement Committee, I write a monthly newsletter about all of the discussions and votes of the City Council. With the same committee, I also hold monthly listening sessions at the Medford Senior Center and at other locations across the city including the library, and with other affinity groups. I will happily continue this and am eager to expand listening sessions to more groups. I have been meeting with our Medford Community Liaisons to brainstorm how best to reach out to our residents.

### **(C) Yes/No Policy Questions**

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **YES**
2. Do you support the creation of an unarmed, community-based emergency response program, separate from the Police Department, to respond to mental and behavioral health crises? **YES**
3. If your community has not already, do you support adopting the new specialized stretch code, which would require new construction and major renovations to be built to a very high-efficiency standard with all-electric (as opposed to fossil fuel) heating and cooling systems? **YES**
4. Do you support fare-free public transit? **YES**
5. Do you support the expansion of the network of permanent, protected bike lanes in your city? **YES**
6. Would you support a home rule petition to establish a small transfer fee on high-end real estate transactions to create dedicated funding for affordable housing production and preservation? **YES**
7. Would you support a home rule petition to enable the city to stabilize rents? **YES**
8. According to the American Library Association, in 2022 there were at least 45 attempts to restrict access to books in MA schools, disproportionately books

that speak to the experiences of LGBTQ students and students of color. Would you oppose such book-banning efforts if they occurred in your city? **YES**

**(D) Additional Comments**

*(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.)*