



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

1. Preventing displacement of our community: people, small businesses, and local culture. I will work to expand affordable housing, strengthen tenant protections, and pursue innovative options like supporting the Central Street Studio.

2. Building safer streets for everyone. People walking, biking, riding transit, or driving should feel comfortable getting around Somerville. We need updated designs and accountability. We also need safe routes to school. People centered design will create a safer, more vibrant city.

3. Securing more resources and support for our public schools so every child in Somerville can thrive. We are facing looming budget shortfalls, even before taking into account the need for a new school.

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

I've been a community advocate in Somerville for years, especially on housing and safe streets. I have shown up consistently by attending City Council and committee meetings, talking with neighbors, and pushing for solutions. I also volunteer with the Somerville Community Land Trust, where I help expand permanently affordable housing. My professional background as an engineering leader and teacher has trained me to analyze complex systems and ideas, make them understandable, bring people together, and deliver results. These are skills I will bring to the Council.

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

It's hard to choose just one. I am interested in creating a Somerville version of Cambridge's unarmed community responder program, which sends trained professionals to handle calls involving mental health, housing insecurity, or wellness checks. I am also watching Cambridge's recent zoning changes to allow more housing by right. If those reforms succeed in increasing affordability and reducing red tape, I would like to explore how a similar approach could work in Somerville.

(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?**

Massachusetts law limits how municipalities can raise revenue, so Somerville has to be strategic. In the long term, the most important step is growing our commercial tax base. For years we were told life sciences would get us there, but the bubble burst before it moved the needle. We need to broaden our focus to other sectors—small and mid-size businesses, green industry, the creative economy, and neighborhood-scale commercial spaces—so we are not overly dependent on one volatile market.

In the near term, stronger community benefit agreements and a more robust PILOT program can help make sure large nonprofits and major developments contribute their fair share to the city's needs. We should also continue pursuing targeted state funding for schools, housing, and climate resilience, even as federal dollars disappear.

Eighty percent of our tax revenue comes from residents. Somerville cannot keep leaning on residents alone. A healthier commercial base and fair contributions from our largest institutions are essential to supporting schools, city services, and infrastructure.

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

While many decisions about curriculum and instruction rest with the School Committee, the City Council plays a critical role in making sure our schools have the resources they need. That starts with listening to both the data and

the lived experiences of teachers, staff, students, and families. Right now we are hearing clearly that teachers do not feel they have the support necessary to meet the wide range of student needs.

As a councilor, my priorities would be: ensuring school budgets are fully funded even in the face of citywide shortfalls, supporting the hiring and retention of teachers and paraprofessionals, and making sure schools have the resources for mental health, special education, and language support. A high-quality education depends on teachers and staff that stick around and have what they need to succeed. The Council has a responsibility to deliver that support.

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

Somerville cannot control ICE, but we can protect our immigrant neighbors. I will work to strengthen our Sanctuary policies, prohibit any collaboration with ICE, and safeguard resident data. We should pass laws requiring law enforcement officers operating in the city to show identification and never wear masks while enforcing laws. We should also forbid police from working for immigration enforcement or administration, even while off duty. Finally, we need to invest in unarmed crisis responders, expand language access, and partner on legal defense and know-your-rights workshops so all families feel safe accessing city services.

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?

1. Ensure all new city buildings are net-zero and invest in retrofits that reduce emissions, cut energy bills, and keep residents safe during extreme weather. Support distributed solutions such as solar panels, green roofs, and rain barrels so residents and small businesses can participate directly in resilience efforts.

2. Invest in green infrastructure like tree canopy, parks, and stormwater systems that cool neighborhoods and prevent flooding. Expand permeable infrastructure—bike lanes, sidewalks, and public spaces—that reduces runoff and creates safer, greener streets.

3. Expand sustainable transportation options so walking, biking, and transit are safe, reliable, and attractive alternatives to driving.

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?

Reducing car dependence starts with making walking, biking, and transit safe,

reliable, and convenient. That means redesigning key corridors like Highland Avenue, Mystic Avenue, McGrath Highway, and the Alewife Brook Parkway so they work for everyone, not just cars. We also need to better connect East Somerville and Assembly so people can move between neighborhoods without relying on a car. I would push for protected bike lanes, raised crosswalks, safer intersections, and bus priority measures on these and other major streets.

I would also advocate for stronger partnerships with the MBTA to improve bus frequency and reliability, along with better bus stop infrastructure across the city.

Equity must guide this work. We need to make sure improvements reach neighborhoods that have historically been underserved, and that residents with mobility challenges benefit from safe, accessible sidewalks and crossings. A city where it is safe and easy to get around without a car is healthier, more affordable, and more sustainable.

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?

Let's be honest: Somerville isn't affordable right now. Families trying to raise kids, seniors hoping to age in place, and young workers starting out are all being pushed out. Deferred maintenance and major capital needs are putting enormous pressure on the budget, and we cannot keep leaning on residents to carry the load.

I will advocate for stronger tenant protections, more deeply affordable housing through the Community Land Trust, and expanded housing options for seniors and multi-generational families. On the fiscal side, we need to broaden the commercial tax base and secure fair contributions from our largest institutions so residents are not left holding the bag.

Somerville should be a city where people can build a life and stay rooted at every stage.

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

Somerville is already in compliance with the MBTA Communities Act, and I am proud that we are doing our part to allow more housing near transit. The real challenge is that some communities are refusing to comply. I believe the state must take a tougher approach to enforcement, and I will use my position to push for this, because the housing crisis cannot be solved if only a handful of cities carry the load while others block progress.

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

Even in a strong-mayor system, the Council can protect residents from federal overreach. I will back ordinances that strengthen Sanctuary protections, safeguard abortion and gender-affirming care, and block local data from being used for federal enforcement. I will push for state and regional partnerships to buffer against funding cuts and use the Council's platform to keep residents informed and organized. Local government must be a shield for our community.

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

Transparency and accountability start with being available, honest, and clear. I will not take money from developers or people with business before the city, and I will recuse myself any time there is a conflict of interest. I will hold regular office hours, send updates explaining my votes, and push for meeting materials and city data to be posted in plain, accessible formats. I believe residents should be part of decision-making early, so I will prioritize community meetings and reporting back what I hear. Accountability means making sure people can see how and why decisions are made.

(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.)