



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Liliana Patino

Office Sought: Councilor, Ward 5, Lynn, MA

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

-Transparency, communication, access and responsiveness - I would promote transparency via various forms of communication with residents, so that important decisions are made with their knowledge and input. Access is very important, and we need to ensure that residents are able to access City Hall and its services via various means - phone, internet, in person. Local government is the first stop for many individuals, and I will be a responsive councilor to my constituents' needs and requests.

- Ensuring that the downtown area is safe, clean, and welcoming for residents, business owners and guests of our City.

- Support the development of partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits that are already working with our residents in issues such as food insecurity, housing navigation, youth services, substance abuse prevention and other significant needs.

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

I am a bilingual leader in my field with more than 25 years of experience working with families from all different backgrounds and needs. I am an organizer, an advocate, and a collaborator at the local and state level.

Currently I serve as Senior Director of Community Impact and Development at Eliot Community Human Services, in my role I oversee the direct management and reporting of a couple of programs including the Eliot Family Resource Center - DCF Funded. The RISE Project (DMH Funded), the Everett Coordinated Community and Family Engagement - CFCE- (EEC funded); in addition to be part of the team that oversees the implementation of the Community Behavioral Health Center (CBHC) and Lynn CALM Team, a new collaboration with the City of Lynn. Through my daily work, I have become an expert at connecting community members to needed support and resources.

My commitment to public service and my community is evidenced in my services on the following boards and advisory councils:

- ❖ Governor Maura Healey's Advisory Council on Latino Empowerment
- ❖ MA Public Education Nominating Council
- ❖ Advisory Council on New Americans at the Office of the Attorney General
- ❖ Chair of The Joint Committee for Children's Health Care in Everett
- ❖ Everett Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Program (CFCE)
- ❖ Medford Family Resource Center Network (CFCE)
- ❖ Homeless Education Program Services Coordination Committee for the Everett Public Schools
- ❖ North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network -NSFN/CFCE
- ❖ Melrose – Wakefield Healthy Families Program, Children's Trust
- ❖ Everett Affordable Housing Task Force
- ❖ 2022 CHA Regional Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

On a more personal note, I am familiar with the struggles many of my neighbors in Lynn face and have faced. I am a Colombian-American immigrant, and I came to the U.S. when I was 21, with my younger sister and leaving with other 5 siblings in Colombia waiting for their turn to get a visa.

I witnessed the daily struggles my mom faced everyday in order to be financially stable and to support all of us.

Day by day I had to face new challenges, adjusting to new culture, new language, and similar needs to those many of the families in Lynn face everyday.

As a full-time working mother, I completed my Masters degree in Mental Health Counseling in 2015, always focusing on the importance of caring for my family, educating myself, growing professionally as well as supporting the communities I'm working with.

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

Through my work, I have been able to witness government and community agencies working hand in hand in various communities in the northeastern part of Massachusetts. An example is the relationship between the City of Malden and Housing Families, Inc. Any individual seeking support with housing in the City of Malden can be referred to this agency, needs such as eviction prevention, landlord mediation, homelessness prevention, Residential Assistance to Families in Transition (RAFT), etc. I find that it is important (and easier) to have established pathways of communication and collaboration between government and the experts that can serve constituents; it is my hope to establish and expand those pathways in Lynn.

(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 working more creatively in how we raise revenue can be impactful. Growing our local economy by aggressively pursuing grants and local partnerships can alleviate some of the deficit that is so often felt. I would also like to explore how the city could potentially repurpose underutilized properties and encourage development of small businesses. This way property taxes are not raised and revenue is added to the city.

- I believe in community-based solutions and would support focus groups with community members - residents, business leaders, government officials to discuss ideas about raising revenue. But ideas that I have that I would raise in such a group include stronger enforcement of existing city codes to increase revenues.

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

I truly believe in the importance of focusing on the cultural uniqueness of each

individual, and this applies equally (and especially) to students in public schools.

Lynn's students are from over 55 different countries and speak more than 30 different languages

(https://www.lynnschools.org/departments/multilingual_education.) As compared

to the state, Lynn has:

- more than three times the English learners (45.8% in Lynn compared to 13.9% in the state);
- close to double the low-income students (73.9% compared to 42.1%); and
- almost three times the number of students whose first language is not English (73.2% compared to 42.1%).

<https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=01630000&orgtypecode=5&leftNavId=305&>

Addressing the needs of these low-income students and multilingual students, but also their families and the educators who support them, must be a priority in ensuring high quality public education in Lynn. Related to this, I would support another effort to assist preschool and elementary teachers in becoming dually certified in English as a Second Language (and would add that dual certification in special education would be something I also support).

I also would prioritize strong social emotional support, having direct access to mental health support in the school, in addition to improving communication with parents in their native language.

Family engagement is another priority, as we know that engaging families in their children's education is vital to student success. We need to meet families where they are, and, in these times, approaches to family involvement have to be reconsidered for many families, especially given threats to immigrants under the current Presidential administration.

And finally, we need to support the educators who see our students every day. We have to ensure they have appropriate contracts, staffing, professional development, leadership and resources in order to best serve their students.

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

The City Council can continue work with the police chief, district attorney and mayor, who have indicated commitment to assisting our immigrant communities. We should partner with agencies like LUCE, MIRA, and legal aid in order to find immigrants assistance with legal matters related to their immigration status, their children's status, and their safety.

We should also proactively come up with a means of identifying community partners who are truly partners and not opportunists (e.g., charging immigrants exorbitant fees for work that a local non-profit would do) and we should partner with local non-profits who could train community volunteers to assist with various matters. The Council could also creatively look at ordinances that do not interfere with federal law in order to ensure that Lynn remains safe for immigrants.

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?

- Reduce flood risk in neighborhoods, especially Downtown, and West Lynn, which are susceptible to stormwater and coastal flooding.
- Mitigate the urban heat island effect, particularly in areas with vulnerable populations, such as Downtown Lynn and other areas with limited access to air conditioning. Developing a city-wide tree planting and maintenance program, with specific targets for increasing tree canopy in vulnerable neighborhoods.
- Focus on new efforts for clean energy and environmental responsibility, creating new programs and access to home owners and businesses to improve their homes.

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?

As noted, we need to ensure that the City is safe for all, including safe for all means of transportation. The bike lanes that are rolling out in the City are a good start, but the City will need to actively train residents on their use (drivers and bikers), and will need to enforce proper respect for the use of these new lanes. Lynn residents need to be made fully aware of discounts available on MBTA fares. In addition, we need to continue to advocate with our delegation at the state level for bringing electric rail and/or the blue line to Lynn. This has been discussed for a long time, and some positive steps have been made in recent years, but we will need to continue to strongly advocate for our City.

Finally, I continue to advocate for fare-free transit for individuals and families

who qualify.

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?

- I would advocate for community-owned real estate development models, encouraging tenants to be part of the ownership structure.

- I believe we need to be very cautious about development, and need to examine means of ensuring that there are requirements for mixed income residents in rental properties. This approach is crucial for preventing the displacement of lower income individuals and families. By actively promoting mixed-income housing we can foster more equitable and sustainable communities that reflect the diversity of Lynn.

- I think there are ways that the City can explore to assist not only tenants, but also landlords who demonstrate a commitment to ethical practices. This could look like developing a comprehensive incentive program that can provide property tax breaks, low-interest loans for home improvements and public recognition for landlord's contributions to the landscape of good tenant / landlord relationships.

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

I am pleased to be able to respond that Lynn has achieved compliance, as of May 2025, with the MBTA Communities Act:
<https://lynnincommon.com/22820/widgets/78510/documents/68534>.

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

Collaboration with community agencies is key to ensuring that residents receive critical services and funding for residents. In addition, we need to stay in close contact with our state and federal delegation in terms of not only advocacy but also information. As noted above, the city could also explore local legislation that could assist in addressing overreach.

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

I would direct my team to prioritize accessibility and direct engagement through a multi-faceted communication strategy. A bilingual newsletter distributed in both Spanish and English will provide regular updates. In addition I would leverage the power of social media for real time updates and

to solicit feedback. For those constituents that do not have access to social media, I will hold periodic “office hours” that will be held at public buildings such as City Hall, the library, or public schools that will offer face-to-face interactions. Lastly, I will partner with community agencies to directly connect constituents with city government information and services. By doing so streamlining referral processes and establishing an integrated support network.

(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.)