



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

1. **Economic and housing justice for working families:** While Washington serves up daily chaos and people struggle to afford groceries and basic necessities, the last thing we need is more dysfunction at home. Framingham must be a place where working families can thrive - where seniors aren't forced out by tax increases, where young families don't need six-figure salaries for starter homes, and where small businesses have real support.
2. **Environmental justice and fighting climate change:** Climate change disproportionately impacts our environmental justice communities, and we cannot wait for someone else to save us. While Framingham has made good strides with community electricity, geothermal and now launching the curbside composting, there is much more we need to do as a community. I cannot stress enough how much we need to expand our tree canopy in heat islands. Thanks to organizations like Energize Framingham, this is starting. However, they need more assistance in reaching out to the residents, landlords and business community. And the city also needs to do its part to plant more trees on city properties. There is no excuse for the removal of the trees downtown over a decade ago. Those need to come back. Secondly, we need to ensure all neighborhoods have access to green spaces and clean blue ways. Thirdly, Framingham must get serious with solar – installing panels on buildings and parking lots of municipal and school buildings.

3. **Transparent government that works in the open:** Years of insider politics and endless studies have failed our residents while real problems persist. We need government that works for everyone, not just those with the loudest voices at Memorial Building meetings. This means community-led processes, multilingual engagement, and decision-making power shared equitably across all neighborhoods. Community input should actually influence decisions, not just rubber-stamp what's already been decided. It also means every budget, expenditure, and contract should be online and searchable.

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

I bring a unique combination of grassroots organizing, policy expertise, and proven community leadership. As Chair of Framingham First, I led the successful campaign for city government, proving I can build coalitions and deliver results. Through my newsletter "The Ham'er," I've spent years writing to neighbors informing them of government decisions and issues, analyzing city policy and holding government accountable while proposing concrete solutions.

My hands-on community building includes co-founding Friends of Framingham Trails, organizing our annual New Year's Eve celebration, and coordinating pandemic mutual aid efforts. I've served on the Strategic Initiatives and Financial Oversight Committee and advocated successfully for Vision Zero traffic safety measures. I am also on the Framingham FORCE board and Pheasant Hill Civic Association.

As a former aide to Governor Patrick and small business owner, I understand both how government works and the challenges residents face. Most importantly, I don't just identify problems - I collaborate with others, present solutions, and get things done.

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

Boston's comprehensive website redesign approach that puts residents first. When Boston redesigned their website, they didn't just change the design and technology, they reimagined how residents interact with their government. Their process was rooted in citizen involvement from day one, with guiding principles to "act as a helpful human" and "build an energizing environment."

Framingham's current website is a constant source of frustration. Not a week goes by without hearing from a resident that they can't find basic service information or who to contact with an issue. We need to follow Boston's model of talking directly to

residents about their challenges, reaching out to different communities and neighborhoods for input, and creating a truly collaborative partnership.

This isn't just about technology – it is about becoming citizen-centered rather than government-center, which would transform how people engage with the City of Framingham.

When I worked for Governor Patrick, I was his Director of Online Media. As Director of Online Media, my work focused on transparency and accessibility projects – literally building virtual bridges between government and the people it serves. I was one of the architects on the new Mass.Gov (no longer new) that focused on residents, what they were searching and bringing government digitally to them.

From here, this mentality should become part of government culture. Besides a revamped resident-centric website, I'd like to see us take a page out of Cambridge and Somerville's guidebook and start a participatory budget process that gives residents direct decision-making power over public spending. Residents, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, directly propose and vote on how to spend portions of the city budget.

In Framingham, this could transform how we approach everything from park improvements to traffic safety to community programming, ensuring that our Brazilian, Hispanic, and other underrepresented communities have real voice and power in city government.

(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?

While working families struggle with inflation and stagnant wages, we cannot simply raise property taxes and burden residents further. Instead, we must be strategic and equitable about revenue generation.

- **Progressive development policies** that require wealthy developers to contribute meaningfully to affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, and community benefits when they profit from our community.
- **Commercial tax base expansion** through targeted economic development. Framingham's commercial growth stagnated for two years. This is unacceptable. Business growth equals more resources for our schools, our public health services, transportation, parks and fields, infrastructure and

public safety. If we do not grow, we cannot keep up with the needs of our residents.

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

- **Build the southside school:** For too long, children in certain neighborhoods have faced longer commutes to school. No child should spend hours every day on a bus to get to school.
- **Universal pre-K for all 4-year-olds:** Studies consistently show high quality early education is a game changer for our kids. In Framingham, not every kid gets that opportunity. Quality early childhood education ensures every child starts kindergarten ready to succeed, not just in school, but in life.
- **Partnership with our schools.** I will work closely with our District 3 School Committee member to support students, teachers, and staff. This means advocating for school repairs, adequate funding, and policies that help our children thrive academically and socially.
- **Partner with our labor community** to create pathways from high school to good-paying union jobs in construction, healthcare, and green energy.

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

Framingham's strength comes from our diversity, and we must protect all residents regardless of immigration status. Framingham should reaffirm its commitment to being a welcoming community through clear policies and practices.

With the Trump administration's promised mass deportation efforts, we must do more than performative gestures. We need concrete action to protect the backbones of our local economy who are tax-paying residents not getting the benefits and support they deserve.

- **Education and awareness campaign** led by the city, not expecting our immigrant communities to educate others about their rights. The city must clearly communicate that overstaying a visa is a civil offense, not a crime, and educate all residents about what constitutes actual criminal behavior versus immigration status. We cannot depend on vulnerable communities to do this education work themselves.
- **Comprehensive city employee training** including police sensitivity training and "know your rights" education for every city worker who interacts with residents. Our immigrant neighbors don't know who they can trust, and every

city employee must be equipped to provide accurate information and appropriate support without fear or judgment.

- **Develop and implement a preparedness plan** ensuring that all City employees know how to abide by the Welcoming Ordinance and know how to respond to federal immigration enforcement activities on City properties or facilities based on guidance from the City Solicitor's Office.
- **Audit of any data** the city collects and ensure vulnerable communities are protected.
- **Centralized resource coordination** to strengthen our social service organizations through streamlined communications, resource sharing, and data collection about community needs. Following models like Holliston's comprehensive database, we should create accessible, multilingual resource directories and provide coordinated backup support for organizations serving immigrant families.
- **Safe community communications** that clearly establish Framingham as a place where all residents can access city services, report crimes, and participate in civic life without fear. While it has been the long-standing policy of the Framingham Police Department to not assist ICE, and this is also stated in the Welcoming Ordinance, it must be reaffirmed.
- **Economic justice as community safety** by defending workers' rights, combating wage theft, and ensuring immigrant-owned businesses have equal access to permits and support programs. When working families have stability, entire neighborhoods are safer and stronger.

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?

- **Accelerate carbon neutrality to 2035** through comprehensive municipal action. Install solar on all suitable city and school buildings, and solar canopies in parking lots. Electrify the city fleet and implement a ride share program for city vehicles, and expand charging stations. Update our 12-year-old Green Community plan and implement the existing Ameresco solar proposal that's been sitting on the shelf for years.
- **Expand tree canopy and address heat islands.** A recent study found downtown Framingham is 10 degrees hotter than more suburban areas in the city. We need aggressive tree planting in environmental justice communities first, partnering with residents and businesses to plant on their properties, and using natural methods to cool heat islands throughout the city.
- **Climate adaptation with housing justice** because the most climate-vulnerable residents live in the least resilient housing. Weatherization programs, flood mitigation, and emergency preparedness must prioritize

renters, seniors on fixed incomes, and families living paycheck to paycheck who cannot afford private solutions.

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?

- **Complete our trail network** by finishing the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Upper Charles Rail Trail, and Chris Walsh Trail. These aren't just recreation - they're transportation infrastructure that connects neighborhoods safely. Framingham will be the Hub of Trails in MetroWest if we don't take our eyes off the ball.
- **Expand MWRTA service** with routes that reach more residents. Currently, many neighborhoods lack safe, accessible bus stops. We need comprehensive public transit that connects every neighborhood to jobs, schools, and services.
- **Build protected bike lanes on major thoroughfares.** Framingham has too many dangerous "sharrows" through intersections. Protected bike lanes should be a critical component of all road construction, not an afterthought.
- **Update our Complete Streets plan** (last updated in 2015) to design streets that move people, not just cars. Focus on safe pedestrian infrastructure including ADA-compliant sidewalks and traffic calming measures.

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?

With housing costs skyrocketing while wages stagnate and the Trump administration threatening to eliminate affordable housing programs, local action is more crucial than ever.

- **Support for first-time homebuyers** through down payment assistance, shared equity programs, and homebuyer education that helps working families build wealth and stability.
- **Stop pricing out the people who built this community.** Seniors on fixed incomes shouldn't be forced out by tax increases. Young families shouldn't need six-figure salaries for starter homes.
- **Community-led, transparent development process.** When projects like apartments on Edmands Road are proposed, neighbors must be heard from the beginning. Early community engagement and genuine consideration of neighbor concerns should be required.
- **Encourage diverse housing stock** for all stages of life - starter homes for young families, accessible units for seniors and people with disabilities, rental options for working professionals. Housing diversity strengthens neighborhood stability.

- **Use Community Preservation Act funds strategically** for affordable housing production and preservation, ensuring benefits reach all neighborhoods.
- **Support economic development** that creates good-paying local jobs so residents can afford to live where they work.

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

Framingham's MBTA Communities process exposed some ugly truths about our city's lack of strategic planning. After months of debate that pitted neighborhood against neighborhood, the Mayor submitted the already existing Central Business District zoning—essentially doing the minimum required.

This highlighted our fundamental problem: Framingham has no strategic plan to guide housing discussions or preserve open space. We cannot become a sustainable, welcoming community if we don't know what our values are and how to get there.

The process should have been an opportunity for community visioning about what kind of city we want to be. Instead, it became divisive because we lacked shared goals and clear communication about how development decisions get made.

As Councilor, accountability and strategic planning are two of my focuses. We need a comprehensive plan with measurable outcomes that helps guide these conversations in the future. How Framingham handled the MBTA Communities Act should never happen again.

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

With the Trump administration's promised attacks on immigrant communities, women's reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ residents, and working families, local government must be the firewall protecting our most vulnerable neighbors.

- **Continue building strong state and federal partnerships with our delegation** to ensure Framingham's voice is heard and our interests protected. Local government must work collaboratively with state partners to protect residents.
- **Strengthen local services** so residents have reliable support regardless of federal policy changes. This means robust public health capacity, strong social services, and economic development that doesn't depend solely on federal funding. Also, continuing to advocate for a strong Framingham Union Hospital

I critical in for health and emergency care many of our residents need and cannot get to Boston for that care.

- **Defend our values through local policies.** We should continue environmental initiatives regardless of federal rollbacks and maintain community safety programs that build trust.
- **Build community resilience** through mutual aid networks and strong neighborhood connections that can respond to crises regardless of their source.
- **Regional solidarity** with other communities to share resources, coordinate resistance strategies, and demonstrate that democracy and justice can thrive at the local level even when federal leadership fails.
- **Defend democratic participation** by protecting voting access, maintaining transparency, and ensuring that local government remains accountable to residents, not outside political pressure or corporate interests.

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

- **Every budget, expenditure, and contract online** in searchable, understandable formats—not buried in PDF files. Community input should actually influence decisions through genuine early engagement, not rubber-stamp meetings.
- **Regular neighborhood updates** and office hours so residents know what I'm working on and can easily reach me. I'll maintain my newsletter and communication practices that have made me accessible to the community.
- **Strategic planning with clear goals** and measurable outcomes. No more endless studies about problems we already know exist - let's create solutions with timelines and accountability measures.
- **Collaborate with community expertise** by listening to people who serve on boards, commissions, and nonprofits. I'll support their work and help turn community input into concrete policy proposals.
- **Direct communication** through email, phone, and regular presence in neighborhoods. Residents deserve a councilor who returns calls, follows through on commitments, and stays on issues until they're resolved.

(C) Yes/No Policy Questions

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **YES/ NO**
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/ NO Yes, and Framingham is a pioneer in this space.**

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/ NO**
4. Do you support fare-free public transit? **YES / NO**
5. Do you support the expansion of the network of permanent, protected bike lanes in your city? **YES / NO**
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 / NO**
7. Would you support a home rule petition to enable the city to stabilize rents? **YES / NO**
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 / NO**

(D) Additional Comments

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