



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

Affordable housing; Preventing displacement — both economically and by protecting noncitizens from federal overreach; and growing Medford's dwindling budget, which affects nearly every other area of municipal governance and actively prevents us from providing basic services

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

I hold a PhD and a commission in the Navy Reserves; prior to my first term, I was an active affordable housing advocate and served on Medford's Charter Study Committee and Community Preservation Committee. I have served one term thus far, and in that capacity I have worked to fund our new affordable housing trust; made Council more transparent through a newsletter, live-streaming, and my personal website; helped to pass our first-ever override; made Medford into a Sanctuary City; and passed programs to help low-income veterans.

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

Fractional affordable housing incentives so that we can fund our affordable housing trust; incentives to build affordable housing generally.

(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?**

We already passed our first-ever override this past term. The only other option is expanding our commercial tax base via rezoning, which Council is working on.

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

Council's role in that is to give the schools more money. It's the School Committee that handles the rest.

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

Council passed a Sanctuary City Ordinance a week before Trump took office (<https://www.mattleming.com/blog/welcoming-city-ordinance>) and I spearheaded a campaign to pass out red cards (<https://www.mattleming.com/blog/red-cards>). Beyond that, I'm discussing policies that would enable MPD to request to see identification for plainclothes federal officers, though it's difficult to craft policies that are enforceable in this area.

- 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?**

First, finish our tree ordinances, which have been dragging through City Council for a while. I have to credit my colleague for doing the legwork on that, but I'm supporting where ever I can. Second, finish rezoning the city, which would mandate green space use on residential lots; that's stalled in Medford in a very public way (<https://www.tuftsdaily.com/article/2025/09/progress-stalled-on-medford-rezoning-as-city-council-and-mayor-work-to-negotiate-way-forward>), but I'm hoping we can incentivize growth that doesn't exclusively rely on cars. Third, Council's going to pass a values-aligned ordinance that would divest our city's investments from fossil fuels, which is the one way we have of affecting things outside the city. Equity comes into place when you craft green-centric zoning

that also incentivizes affordability and expands housing and public transit options.

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?

Greater housing density around transit hubs; funding our city appropriately so that our sidewalks are more walkable; and a TDM program (<https://www.mattleming.com/blog/transportation-demand-management>). All of these are why rezoning is so important.

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?

Affordable housing incentives, full stop. And funding our affordable housing trust. I write about it a lot and generally try to educate residents on the need for this (<https://www.mattleming.com/blog/where-to-focus-affordable-housing-activism-at-the-local-level>).

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

We're compliant and passed that a while ago. We just need to finish our actual citywide rezoning efforts.

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

Do the right thing (see number three) and don't be afraid to litigate if necessary.

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

I write a biweekly blog that sometimes includes videos, and I started live-streaming Council meetings on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/@CityofMedfordMass/streams>). And my committee publishes a City Council newsletter.

(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.)