



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

- Strategic Planning,
- Funding Prioritized Essential Services
- City Forensic Audit

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

- I was a School Committee Member last term and am a retired teacher and union member. I have been an active member attending most council and many subcommittee meetings and created resolutions restricting charter school expansion, calling on the Commonwealth to fund charter schools directly and not by reducing chapter 70 payments to public school districts. I have been active since the founding of our local Support Our Schools Advocacy Movement as well as Save Paradise City which has studied the plans for a huge 3-5 year MASS DOT plan to reconfigure our city's downtown and advocated for changes in that plan and a trial run. I have talked to many city residents about what matters most to them is being heard by our mayor and councilors as well as transparency and honesty in getting answers.

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

- Rent Control

(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?

- Home rule would open up significant revenue options for us, particularly around taxing the increasing gentrification of neighborhoods and sales prices of homes for astounding amounts. Additionally we have one downtown property owner who has bought up many buildings and kept them as empty storefronts. Focusing on seizure by eminent domain of those properties which are being held stagnant might be worth the legal costs.

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

- Funding. Our city has over the past 20 years starved our schools. When I was on School Committee I made a motion during budget season to pay teachers a living wage and it was adopted. Our mayor, who is also chair of the school committee, has used that action to say that we have bankrupted the city by paying teachers and has fired over 32 positions in the past two years in order to adhere to her outdated fiscal stability plan. Our schools are now experiencing white flight to neighboring charters who offer free transportation and smaller classes. We can not maintain our public schools in the face of consistent underfunding. Our city has millions in stored wealth and I believe we can fund our schools well and still fund all other essential services.

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

- We are a sanctuary city. We need stronger safety measures in place to protect residents who are under attack which includes local police noncompliance with ICE and protection of families and children. What does sanctuary mean if it's just lip service?

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?

- Free public transportation and school busses- electric
- Ensuring our city has planned for and instituted measures to protect neighborhoods against flooding, including 100 year storm pipes and ensuring that wetlands and historic low lands are protected as bio sponge areas.
- Green space and trees as an integral part of all new developments and infill. Protecting mature trees on private and public land.

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?

- Our city is gung ho bike lanes. Much of what I have learned is that bike lanes are not a stand alone safety measure, they are very dependent on traffic patterns, volume, confluence and driver education. Our narrow New England streets are not conducive to bike lanes. Bike paths are great- but politic in terms of right of ways.
- Walking and mobility access are dependent on sidewalks, crosswalks and curb access. Snow removal is imperative. Improving mobility access beyond generic ADA compliance is key. Maintaining a safe and accessible network of sidewalks is imperative. Our city should explore the concept of 'Woonerfs' on lightly traveled city streets, where sidewalks are not needed and traffic is slowed to a crawl.

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?

- Our city is becoming rapidly gentrified. Our city leaders seem to have a rosy glass sense of what 'affordable' means in housing and the interconnection between skyrocketing housing assessments and fair market rent raises. Residents in our town in 'affordable' housing have just received 45-88% increase in their monthly rents due to new condo and apartment high end development.
- Long term residents who purchased homes many years ago are being priced out of living here. They can't pay the assessed value of their homes. They are advised by city officials that they shouldn't complain- their houses are worth far more and they can sell well. They don't want to sell. We need to grandfather long term residents to an affordable percentage increase and develop a far more humane subsidy than making elderly or low income home owners work off their taxes by being crossing guards or picking up litter- earnings that are dissolved because they have to pay taxes on them!

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

- Northampton is not an MBTA zoning community

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

- Network, network. There is strength in numbers- work with western MA cities and towns and with our legislators to push back on Trumpian demands. It's coming.

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

- These concepts are the heart of my platform. They are missing in the current administration and our city is fed up. Transparency is ensuring all residents know what's going on- not as a post happening scenario or a gratuitous mayoral back pat. Our city's social media has to regain a focus on real news and information and not PR.
- Accountability starts with sharing why and how we make decisions. Sharing open discussions, listening, being out there talking to those impacted and being absolutely public about what's coming down the pike, how we will deal with it, taking input on how we could do it better and admitting when it didn't work. Celebrating when it does!

(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.)

Thank you. I really enjoyed these questions and probably answered some in naive hopefulness but if we are able to elect a city council super majority of like minded, our city can be a model of democratic process rather than a stranglehold of back door decisions. We need healthy debate, a willingness to do due diligence and a strategic plan to guide us.