



## 2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

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Office: Sought: City Councilor AT-Large/Methuen

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### (A) Your Candidacy

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

If elected to serve on the Methuen City Council, my top three priorities would be:

##### 1. Public Safety and Quality of Life

Every resident deserves to feel safe and supported in their own neighborhood. I will work to strengthen collaboration between public safety officials, community organizations, and residents to create a city where families can thrive. Progressive values remind us that safety is not just about policing—it's also about investing in mental health resources, youth programming, and neighborhood infrastructure.

##### 2. Expanding Affordable Housing & Economic Opportunity

Housing is a basic human right, and Methuen families deserve safe and affordable places to call home. At the same time, we must create opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs to grow here. My vision is rooted in fairness and justice—lifting up hardworking families while making sure Methuen is a city where future generations can afford to stay and prosper.

### 3. Fostering Transparency & Civic Engagement

Government works best when people are informed and included. I will push for greater transparency, more community conversations, and policies that reflect the voices of our residents. Progressive values are grounded in accountability and inclusivity—I want residents to know their voices matter, and I will ensure they are part of the process, not left on the sidelines. Also, creating opportunities for civic engagement and participation is important, so establishing forums throughout the year for community engagement is critical and important to my campaign.

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

I am qualified to serve on the Methuen City Council because I bring nearly two decades of experience in leadership, advocacy, and community service. As Vice President of Community Living for Waystone Health & Human Services, I oversee critical programs supporting seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals with medical complexities. This role has taught me how to manage budgets, navigate policy, and build solutions that truly impact people's lives.

Beyond my professional work, I am a certified trauma coach and practitioner, which has deepened my commitment to holistic care and mental health—areas I believe local government must do more to support. Through Roses of Renewal, an initiative I founded, I've organized dozens of workshops and community events to promote healing, civic engagement, and connection among residents.

I understand how to bring diverse voices to the table, listen with empathy, and turn ideas into action. My progressive values—equity, inclusivity, accountability, and opportunity—guide how I lead and serve. I am not afraid to tackle difficult issues, and I have the experience, dedication, and heart needed to ensure Methuen moves forward in a way that uplifts all of us.

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

One policy I've seen pioneered in other cities that I'd most like to adopt in Methuen is the creation of a participatory budgeting process. Cities like Cambridge and New York have empowered residents to directly decide how a portion of the city's budget is spent—whether on parks, street improvements, youth programs, or public art.

This approach builds transparency, strengthens civic engagement, and ensures that taxpayer dollars reflect the priorities of the people who live here. It also gives historically underrepresented voices—youth, working families, seniors, and people with disabilities—a real say in shaping their neighborhoods.

Progressive values are rooted in accountability and inclusivity, and participatory budgeting is a proven way to bring those values to life. By adopting this model in Methuen, we would not only increase trust in local government, but also ensure that decisions are made with the community, not for the community.

Another option is:

One policy I've seen pioneered in other cities that I'd most like to adopt in Methuen is the development of inclusionary zoning and community land trusts to address housing affordability. Cities like Somerville and Burlington, VT, have implemented models where a percentage of new housing developments must be set aside as affordable, while land trusts keep housing permanently affordable for working families.

This kind of policy ensures that Methuen doesn't just grow, but grows responsibly—keeping longtime residents, young families, and seniors from being priced out of their own city. It reflects progressive values of fairness, stability, and protecting housing as a human right.

## **(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 municipalities are limited in their ability to raise revenue through taxation, which means Methuen must be both creative and strategic in how we support essential city services.

First, we can explore opportunities to attract and retain small businesses while supporting responsible economic development. By making Methuen a welcoming place for entrepreneurs and local businesses, we not only create jobs but also expand our commercial tax base in ways that relieve the burden on residential taxpayers.

Second, we can strengthen our ability to leverage state and federal grants, particularly in areas like infrastructure, public safety, education, and community health. Other municipalities have been successful at hiring or designating grant writers to maximize these opportunities, and Methuen should do the same.

Third, we can consider innovative partnerships with nonprofits, cultural organizations, and regional agencies to co-invest in programs that support residents—whether that’s public spaces, youth programming, or housing initiatives.

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

Investment in Mental Health and Whole-Child Learning:

Students cannot thrive academically if their emotional and mental health needs are unmet. I will support the expansion of school-based counselors, social workers, and wellness programs so students feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. Holistic care for students means stronger outcomes both inside and outside the classroom.

Strong Partnerships with Families and the Community

Parents and caregivers should be partners in education, not bystanders. I believe in expanding opportunities for family engagement, mentoring programs, and community-school partnerships that bring in local organizations to support enrichment, arts, and after-school opportunities. Schools are the heart of our community, and it takes all of us working together to give students the best chance at success.

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

- Invest in Community-Based Safety

True safety comes from connection and opportunity—not fear. By investing in youth programming, mental health services, and neighborhood engagement, we strengthen our city as a whole and reduce conditions that create vulnerability.

- Partner with Advocacy & Support Organizations

Methuen can collaborate with nonprofits, faith-based groups, and legal aid organizations that provide direct support to immigrant families. When families know where to turn for resources and protection, they are more likely to thrive and feel secure.

**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?**

·Investing in Green Infrastructure

We need to modernize stormwater systems and create more green spaces that reduce flooding, improve air quality, and lower heat in vulnerable neighborhoods. These projects not only protect our environment but also enhance quality of life.

·Expanding Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

By supporting solar, wind, and energy-efficiency upgrades in municipal buildings, schools, and homes, we can reduce costs for residents while lowering the city's carbon footprint. Programs should prioritize low- and moderate-income families so savings and benefits are shared equitably.

·Building Climate-Conscious Transportation and Housing Policies

Methuen can promote walkability, bike safety, and accessible public transit, while also encouraging sustainable, energy-efficient housing development. This ensures growth without sacrificing environmental responsibility.

**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?**

·Improve Walkability and Bike Safety

We need safer crosswalks, expanded sidewalks, bike lanes, and traffic-calming measures to protect pedestrians and cyclists. Families, seniors, and youth should feel safe moving around their neighborhoods without relying on a car.

·Strengthen Public Transit Access

Methuen can work closely with the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) to expand bus routes, improve reliability, and ensure stops are safe and accessible for people with disabilities and seniors. Public transit is a lifeline, and we should make it more convenient and affordable.

- Integrate Transportation with Smart Growth

As we develop housing and business districts, we should design them with connectivity in mind—so residents can live closer to work, school, and shopping. This reduces car dependence while promoting healthier, more vibrant neighborhoods. Equity must guide these efforts. Low-income families, immigrants, seniors, and people with disabilities often rely most on walking, biking, and public transit. By putting their needs at the center, we can build a Methuen where safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation works for everyone—not just those who drive. In addition, introducing E-bikes across our city can generate more revenue while promoting wellness and less traffic congestion.

## **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?**

- Expand Affordable and Mixed-Income Housing Options

We need to encourage responsible development that includes affordable units, protect existing housing stock, and explore tools like inclusionary zoning and community land trusts. Housing is a basic human right, and affordability must be built into our growth. Different models that can support our veterans should also be considered.

- Support Seniors and Aging in Place

Many older residents want to remain in their homes and communities, but rising costs and limited resources make it difficult. I will support property tax relief programs for seniors, expand access to home modification grants, and strengthen services that help people age safely at home.

- Strengthen Economic Opportunity Across Generations

Affordability isn't only about housing—it's also about wages, access to jobs, and family supports. By investing in small businesses, workforce development, and childcare accessibility, we can make Methuen affordable and livable for working families, young professionals, and retirees alike.

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

N/A

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

- Diversifying Funding Sources: Securing a mix of state, local, and private funding streams to reduce dependence on federal programs, making critical services more resilient to policy changes

- Community Engagement and Transparency: Keeping residents informed about potential impacts on services and involving them in decision-making to strengthen public support for local initiatives.

- Emergency Preparedness: Maintaining contingency plans for essential services (healthcare, housing, public safety) to ensure continuity even if federal funding is reduced or restricted.

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

If elected, I would model transparency and accountability by ensuring that every decision and policy action is communicated clearly and accessibly to the residents I serve. This includes holding regular public meetings, sharing detailed updates on city budgets and initiatives, and maintaining open channels for residents to provide feedback. I would also prioritize data-driven decision-making and publish progress reports on key projects and goals, so the community can see measurable outcomes. Accountability would be reinforced through consistent follow-through on commitments, responsiveness to constituent concerns, and fostering a culture where city leadership operates with integrity and openness at every level. Once a standard has been established, others tend to follow right after. It is so important to not gate-keep and to give the Methuen residents what they need to know, good or bad.

**(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? **NO**

#### **(D) Additional Comments**

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

I am running for City Council AT-Large because I care deeply about the future of Methuen and the well-being of our community. My years of experience in human services, advocacy, and community engagement have shown me both the strengths we have as a city and the challenges that still need to be addressed. I want to ensure that every resident—whether young or old, disabled or able-bodied, struggling or thriving—has access to the support, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed. I'm solution-driven, lead with integrity, and am committed to bringing practical, compassionate leadership to city government.