

## **Tim Toomey – Response to A Better Cambridge Candidate Questionnaire**

**1. DIVERSITY: ABC is committed to strengthening the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.**

*If elected, what policies will you support or propose to help strengthen the diversity of our community through increased affordable housing and greater economic opportunity for all residents?*

RESPONSE: I will continue to advocate for affordable housing as part of any large-scale residential development. Affordable housing should be available to residents in all neighborhoods in the city, and not just concentrated in certain communities. I will continue to work with local businesses and entrepreneurs to bring jobs to Cambridge. I support keeping our property taxes low and investing in programs to give all our children an outstanding education. I strongly support additional training programs and partnerships with local businesses to ensure that every child in Cambridge can pursue a career that is both fulfilling and affords a comfortable standard of living.

**2. SUSTAINABILITY: ABC wants to build a strong and sustainable community where current and future residents will be able to work, shop, and play near their homes.**

*If elected, what policies or initiatives will you support to ensure that there is adequate housing near public transportation that supports sufficient retail to meet neighborhood needs, meets the needs of current and future residents, reduces auto usage and encourages energy efficiency?*

RESPONSE: Access to efficient and affordable public transportation has always been one of my top priorities. The advantages to encouraging travel by public transit, by bike, or by foot are numerous, and business owners, younger consumers, and lifelong residents all prefer to live in a community where it is easy to get around without a car. I will continue to advocate for affordable housing in new developments, as I did in the recent Forest City proposal for Central Square, and I remain committed to the full funding and continued construction of the Green Line Extension. Moreover, I will continue working to secure funding for a multi-use community path along the Grand Junction rail line to connect our neighborhoods and provide safe pedestrian and cyclist access to a large part of Cambridge.

**3. GROWTH: ABC is working to preserve and expand the diversity of our community by supporting sustainable growth and appropriate density.**

*Do you agree that in order to support diversity and meet the housing needs of sustainable growth in Cambridge, increased density may be necessary? If elected, what specific policies or initiatives will you support to achieve sustainable urban growth and to increase low and moderate income housing for all populations, including families?*

RESPONSE: Increased density is a question that each neighborhood needs to answer for itself. When a neighborhood chooses to increase density, it deserves compensation from the developer in the form of public goods that benefit the whole community, and I strongly support the principle that mitigation funds should benefit the affected community first and foremost. I'm proud that Cambridge has led the way on sustainable urban growth, combining robust public transportation with incentives for green construction techniques and energy efficiency, and I will keep pushing developers to ensure that all new projects conform to the highest of both environmental and labor standards. Cambridge offers clean, green streets, outstanding educational opportunities, and the lowest property taxes in the commonwealth, and I hope to keep fighting to keep our city affordable for all families.

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- 4. LIVABILITY: We want to reinforce the distinctive character of our neighborhoods, ensuring that new development builds upon and enhances their defining traits.**  
*What traits of Cambridge neighborhoods do you find most distinctive? If elected, what policies or initiatives will you support to help reinforce these characteristics through new development, public and open spaces and other means?*

RESPONSE: The best part about Cambridge is that each neighborhood is different, yet we all grow together. There's no such thing as a stereotypical Cambridge family, and that diversity is one of our greatest strengths. But all of our neighborhoods are looking for similar things: affordable housing, safe streets, green spaces, and a variety of educational opportunities. There are several proposals before the City to redevelop parts of Cambridge, and as I've done in the past, I will work to ensure that any development includes mitigation in the form of educational partnerships and scholarships, open spaces, and a mix of residential, commercial, and community space.

- 5. DIALOGUE: We want to support open and constructive engagement between all parties to the planning process, based on mutual respect for differing views.**  
*In your opinion, do public planning processes in Cambridge support open and constructive engagement between stakeholders? If elected, how will you help ensure transparent and mutually respectful planning for the future of Cambridge?*

RESPONSE: I think we do a good job of keeping the development process open, fair, and constructive, and that is a credit to our community groups and the developers the city chooses to work with. The city's planning process is open to the public and easily accessible thanks to our efforts to streamline what goes on at City Hall. We can always do more to improve the communication between different groups, but I think we have earned our well-deserved reputation as a reasonable partner for both businesses and residents. Personally, I have fostered successful relationships and brokered smart compromises between different groups of people, and I hope to continue to do so over the next term.

- 6. Earlier this year the Central Square and Kendall Square Advisory Committees (K2C2) proposed recommendations to guide the future development of these key residential and commercial districts in Cambridge.**  
*Which three K2C2 recommendations do you believe should be top priorities for the City of Cambridge over the next few years? What specific policies or initiatives recommended will you support to ensure these priorities are achieved during the next City Council term? Are there policies and recommendations that you oppose?*

RESPONSE: I am in favor of increasing housing developments in Kendall Square, and boosting access to middle income housing in both Central and Kendall Squares. I will encourage developers to create more housing options a part of their development plans in order to create a true residential neighborhood in Kendall Square. I have a strong record of supporting affordable and inclusionary zoning and I supported middle-income affordable housing during the Alexandria Rezoning. I look forward to scrutinizing how the new system works, and, if it proves to be successful, it may be worth looking at how we can ensure that future housing developments follow similar standards.

I am also a major proponent of the Open Space Plan that would help to integrate Kendall Square, Central Square, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Combining these neighborhoods with green spaces as the “glue” will result in a better local economy and a stronger social fabric. To this end, I will continue to make the Grand Junction multi-use path one of my top priorities and continue to look for land swap opportunities and funding sources.