

Candidate Questionnaire: People-centered Streets

Basic Information

If you would like to review a PDF of the entire questionnaire, you may find it here:

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/livablestreetsalliance/pages/1689/attachments/original/1503520202/Candidate_Questionnaire_Boston_-_People-centered_streets.pdf?1503520202

Candidate name (first and last) *

Tito Jackson

Office that the candidate is seeking (include district number if applicable) *

Mayor of Boston

Name of person completing the questionnaire (first and last) *

TaShonda Vincent-Lee

Name and EIN of the committee (if applicable)

Committee to Elect Tito Jackson

Campaign email address *

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Campaign address

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Campaign Facebook

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/tito4mayor/>

About You

1. Do you personally walk to destinations in your community? If yes, how often do you do so?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments

I have 42 years of experience walking in and around Boston! I thoroughly explored my neighborhood by foot as a child and young adult. It was a diverse middle class vibrant community, Boston at it's best. As a City Councillor it's been a privilege to walk every community in the city, hearing constituents concerns, ideas, and connecting with the people of Boston.

2. Do you personally travel by/ use public transit to get around? If yes, which trains and buses do you routinely use?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments

I've been taking the MBTA and busses in Boston since the age of 5, and during my first two years as City Councilor when I didn't own a car. I take public transit not only for environmental and traffic benefits, but much like walking, it allows me to authentically engage with the residents of Boston. I often take the Silver Line if I'm heading from my Campaign Headquarters to downtown Boston, and use the Red, Orange, Green or Blue Lines if I'm moving around downtown.

3. Do you personally bike in your community or commute by bike to other communities? If no, would you be willing to give it a try periodically, e.g. once or twice per month?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments

I love to bike! And as someone who lives in Roxbury, I am particularly interested in bringing bike infrastructure to underserved and often disconnected parts of our city. I recently participated in National Bike to Work Day, Jamaica Plain's Bike Spring Roll, and I biked for a bit in the Boston Pride Parade. You may have noticed my excellent Fedora helmet. I was also able to attend a Boston Bike Party, it was a blast and I hope to go again in the future. I am a huge supporter of Boston Bike Life and the way they civically engage young people - they have ridden with me in several parades.

Policy proposals

Please articulate concrete and feasible policy and budgetary proposals to advance the following goals. If you would like to submit supporting materials, please submit them on page 6 at the end of the questionnaire or email your proposals to info@visionzerocoalition.org.

Note that there is a glossary available at www.visionzerocoalition.org/glossary_for_2017_candidate_questionnaire

*indicates a definition available in the glossary

1. How will you work to establish funding for the infrastructure changes needed to slow traffic on your community's streets, and improve crosswalks and intersections to make them safer for people who are walking and using mobility assistive devices?

One of my first actions as Mayor will be a comprehensive audit of the City's operating and capital budgets. This will be done with transparency and accountability to the residents of Boston. A comprehensive audit will allow us to understand where city funds are being poorly allocated and move forward with better distribution of resources, adopting a budget that better reflects the City's needs and priorities. This will be done in a way that emphasizes both community engagement and transportation equity.

We will advocate for a combination of Community Preservation Act (CPA) and Parking Funds to invest in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and will prioritize full implementation of Vision Zero citywide. Neighborhoods should not have to compete against each other for safety. The current allotment of per person spending is insufficient for authentic implementation, and we need additional staff members to lead Vision Zero initiatives.

We know what works for traffic calming in other Vision Zero cities locally and worldwide. We know that Montreal is an old city like Boston with roads that are hundreds of years old, but they have managed to install safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure citywide. We know that Vancouver is a city we can emulate with their walkable and cycleable greenways. We will use best practices and existing data. It is imperative for the safety of Boston residents that we implement Vision Zero now. We will be laser-focused on meeting the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

2. How will you improve the reach, frequency, and quality of public transit in Boston?

A Jackson administration will leverage our relationship with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to increase the efficacy and hours of the MBTA while maintaining affordability. We know that residents in Mattapan, East Boston, and Dorchester have the longest commute; this is both an environmental and transportation justice issue for those areas of the city that are comprised of large communities of color. We will pursue rapid bus transit and late night MBTA service as it is imperative that Boston residents be able to get to work and around the city as needed.

3. How will you ensure fast-tracked implementation of a city-wide network of off-street paths and protected bike lanes* on major thoroughfares and connecting streets that are comfortable for people of all ages and abilities?

As Mayor I will disband the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) and create a human-centered planning department; this new planning department will be publicly accountable and separate the planning and development functions, decreasing the power of developers.

Vision Zero will be an integral part of the Jackson Administration's human-centered planning. We know that our design choices should match the outcome we want -- a transportation system that prioritizes health and safety. Within all existing projects, we will implement Vision Zero initiatives with immediate road diets and construction of protected bike lanes. I pledge to implement at least 10 miles of high priority projects and will create short-term benchmarks leading to aggressive 2030 goals.

4. How will you increase access to biking in every neighborhood equally? What do you see as the major obstacles to encouraging ridership, and how will you address them?

We know many Boston residents are open to cycling but don't attempt it because they feel there is a safety risk. We will focus on roadway design and operation, and public engagement and education. Knowing that many residential neighborhoods do not have access to Hubway, I will expand Hubway to all neighborhoods and allocate city funds for expansion when necessary. I will also further promote the subsidized Hubway membership program to ensure access to our low-income residents. Finally, a Jackson Administration will lead by example encouraging City of Boston employees to bike commute through increased access to bike parking at City Hall and a Hubway partnership.

A Jackson Administration will also partner with organizations such as Bikes Not Bombs that promote safe biking to youth through such initiatives as their Earn-a-Bike program.

5. How will you increase funding for biking infrastructure?

A budget is a value statement. It shouldn't take the death of a cyclist to increase funds for public safety.

As a City Councillor, I advocated strongly and publicly that funding for Vision Zero be increased and that Vision Zero plans be implemented. As Mayor I will ensure that a combination of Community Preservation (CPA) and Parking Funds are invested in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and that Vision Zero is fully implemented.

Yes/no questions

Note that explanations for your responses are not required, but provide useful context and are strongly encouraged.

*indicates a definition available in the glossary (available here:

http://www.visionzerocoalition.org/glossary_for_2017_candidate_questionnaire)

1. Do you support the adoption of Vision Zero* and funding for its rapid implementation? Vision Zero is an approach which aims to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030 and has been adopted by several communities, including Boston and Cambridge. *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

We know that pedestrian fatalities and injuries from crashes are on the rise. We also know that 47 communities applied to participate in Vision Zero and the Slow Streets Initiative even though only 5 zones were selected. The increase in crashes is proof that spending less than \$5 per person on Vision Zero isn't working. For the safety of the people of Boston we cannot delay the implementation of Vision Zero.

2. Do you support lowering design speeds* through traffic calming measures* on downtown and neighborhood streets as a means of enhancing the safety of people walking, using mobility assistive devices, biking, and driving? This may involve the expansion and enhancement of programs like Neighborhood Slow Streets* (Boston) and Neighborways* (Somerville). *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

I absolutely support the use of proven traffic calming measures, residential streets where pedestrians are given priority, and continuous routes between schools, parks, and public squares.

3. One key strategy that has been proven to effectively reduce speeding, improve safety, and remove racial bias in traffic enforcement in other states and countries is automated enforcement (i.e. speed cameras and red light cameras). Do you support state legislation that authorizes the use of automated enforcement in Massachusetts, per the July 2017 recommendation of the National Transportation Safety Board*? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

We know that implementation of automated enforcement leads to a decrease in right-angle crashes, red light running violations, and speed reduction. We also know that there is a significant issue with racial bias in policing in Boston; although only 25% of Bostonians identify as black, nearly 70 percent of the people BPD observed, interrogated, or searched last year were black. A Jackson administration will always use an equity lens to address public safety issues. Further, no policy in a Jackson administration will disproportionately adversely impact any group – especially those most marginalized by race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, documentation status, dis/ability, and/or other factors.

4. Do you support redesigning space on the street in order to improve safety for people biking by creating protected bike lanes? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

Not only do we need a network of protected bike lanes connecting neighborhoods, but common sense solutions like two stage turn boxes at large intersections and adding bicycle traffic lights that get a green light before cars. These solutions will encourage residents interested in riding but concerned about safety.

5. Do you support the increased use of curb extensions* to improve safety and visibility at intersections, even if it requires the removal of one to two parking spaces? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

Boston is not merely a “car town”—it is a town of pedestrians, of cyclists, and public transit riders. Human life should be the priority of a city and we need to make sure we do everything in our power to reduce traffic deaths.

6. Do you support implementation of all of the Better Bike Corridors* and other bike projects in the Go Boston 2030 Plan, and commit to making sure all short-term projects are planned and implemented within three years, and long-term projects are implemented by or before 2030? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

I support implementation of separated bike lanes, parking protected bike lanes, and sidewalk level bike lanes in order to provide safe and comfortable means of biking for Boston residents, commuters, and tourists.

7. Will you address age-friendly walking in your community -- an issue raised by many seniors as critical to their ability to “age in community”? If yes, how? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

We need to design our streets to be comfortable for all users. Uneven sidewalks and poorly paved streets can be extremely hazardous to the elderly. We know small innovations like shortened distances between bus stops, benches, trees for shade, increased crossing times, and properly paved streets can make a huge difference to ensure our seniors remain active in their communities. In a Jackson Administration, in addition to the human-centered planning department, we will renew the former strength of Neighborhood Councils. Every neighborhood will have a structured Council and will be a tool to hold the city accountable for its promises, the quality of public work projects like repaving, and be the voice of the community.

8. Boston has many traffic signals that do not work well for pedestrians. Will you work to make signal timing safer, easier, and more convenient for people walking and using mobility assistive devices at all paces? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

Concurrent operation pedestrian signals can put pedestrians at risk. Like our neighbors in Cambridge, for all concurrent operation signals, I will ensure leading pedestrian intervals are a minimum of 3 seconds and are longer for larger intersections. This lead time will allow pedestrians plenty of time to walk several feet into the crosswalk and establish control of the space. When the turning car accelerates at the green light, several pedestrians are well within view, giving the driver adequate time to react. I will also reduce right turns on red.

9. Do you support the restriction of on-street parking during rush hour on major thoroughfares in order to provide lanes for the exclusive use of buses? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

Effective bus travel is good for our city as well as the climate. For example, I would look at Roslindale (specifically Washington Street from Forest Hills to Roslindale Square) as a route where we could replace the parking lane with a bus lane during morning and evening commutes to speed up transit.

10. Do you support the creation of a staff position within the Transportation Department solely devoted to managing transit in the City of Boston? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

The Transit Manager will interface with the MBTA, Environmental Department, and Vision Zero Task Force to ensure all aspects of transit are thoughtfully planned and implemented, with a focus on equity and community engagement.

11. Do you support exploring new ways of raising revenue to provide the City of Boston with more tools to improve conditions for people walking, using mobility assistive devices, and biking (e.g. congestion pricing)? If yes, please give examples that interest you. *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

We know that implementing Vision Zero Initiatives can actually raise additional city revenue. New York City collected a record \$1.9 billion in fees and fines in 2015 with growth driven by motor vehicle violations under Vision Zero. The largest increase in fines came from red light, bus lane and speed cameras installed near schools. A Jackson administration will aggressively pursue grants to raise additional revenue.

12. Do you support charging an annual fee for residential parking permits? *

☐ Yes

☒ No

Please explain your choice

Not at this time. One of the central issues we face as a city is our rapid displacement and gentrification crisis. We must be committed to a city where everyone is able to live without the issue of displacement hanging over them. Although annual fees for residential parking permits may be a laudable goal for raising revenue that can be spent for better schools, more housing, better infrastructure, and vital city services, it is important to fully assess whether we inadvertently also create more desirable neighborhoods that more affluent people will be attracted, potentially pushing out less resourced residents. Furthermore, many of our residents live in households that don't resemble what may be considered traditional households. It is important not to inadvertently shut out access to transportation and housing for residents with fluid or more complex family and household structures. Some of our residents hold CORIs and others are part of families where some members may be undocumented, and fee-based residential permits may simply be too burdensome, so we must be careful to study all the possible implications for such a program before we commit to it.

13. Do you support the rollout of dynamic parking meter pricing* (i.e. increasing meter rates during periods of increased demand) in business districts to free up on-street parking and reduce cars "cruising" for open spaces? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

We will continue to monitor results of pilot program, and are hopeful it will increase use of public transportation as well as limit "cruising".

14. Will you help the community of Charlestown work with the City to develop a consensus design for Rutherford Ave and Sullivan Square that balances the community's desire for walkability, connectivity, open space and resiliency with vehicular traffic? (See context in the glossary under 'Rutherford Ave.')

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please explain your choice

The integrity of neighborhoods and the communities within them will be the priority of a Jackson Administration. A Jackson Administration will place at its center the need to respect the voice of neighborhoods in all aspects of decision-making. We remain committed to a vision of Boston where the best ideas are arrived at together as a community after a deep and honest conversation between and among diverse, sometimes conflicting, viewpoints, with the vision of healthy communities being our central focus.

Supporting materials

If you would like to submit supporting materials, please include them in the answer field below or email them to info@visionzerocoalition.org

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