

Candidate name (first and last):	Theodora Skeadas
How do you see transportation, housing, and climate issues connecting and how will you work to align them if elected? [600 character limit]	Transportation, housing and climate change are inherently connected, with the declining tree canopy over Cambridge directly impacting residents in urban areas because of the increased temperatures it causes. Estimates show that many areas of Cambridge will be underwater due to flooding from climate change by 2070 if things aren't done to deter it. As a city councilor, I will push to implement greener infrastructure by promoting greener transportation options to cut the emissions from transportation in Cambridge, adjust building electrification and design requirements.
1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Cambridge? (Check the top 3.)	Bus, Bike (bike-share or personal bicycle), Walking
1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)	Duplex/Triple-decker, Over-six-unit apartment building, As a renter, Urban
1. Often street projects designed to improve traffic safety and public transit involve removing on-street parking or reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes to make space for people walking, biking, and transit infrastructure. How would you advance these projects when there is active opposition to narrowing the roadway and removing parking? [1200 character limit]	I would emphasize the importance that these projects have to the growth and prosperity of Cambridge. There are many benefits that come from increasing space for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate the streets, including environmental and local benefits to the community. Increasing bike lanes through reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes also has traffic calming effects, which contribute to a safer community for both pedestrians and motor vehicle operators, as it requires drivers to travel at slower speeds and be more aware. By providing cyclists and pedestrians with a designated place to operate, it influences more people to utilize the space, which in turn stimulates the local economy through its accessibility to businesses while on foot. I would use my platform as City Councilor to emphasize that by reducing the number of travel lanes or removing on street parking, many positive benefits will be observed in the local economy, citing the trial of Mt. Auburn St project that showed a positive reaction when making similar changes.
2. The Cambridge Cycling Safety Ordinance (a) requires that when streets designated for protected bike lanes in the Cambridge Bicycle Plan are reconstructed they must include those lanes in the project; and (b) sets a mandatory timeline for the installation of approximately 25 miles of protected bike lanes within the next five to seven years. Do you support the goals of the Cycling Safety Ordinance, and would you hold the city accountable to compliance with all its requirements and timelines? [1200 character limit]	Yes, I support the goals of the Cycling Safety Ordinance and as City Councilor I pledge to hold the city of Cambridge accountable to ensure that the requirements are met. The creation of separated and protected bike lanes is crucial to the safety and wellness of the people of Cambridge, as well as to the fight against climate change, as transportation emissions account for approximately 40% of greenhouse gas emissions in Massachusetts. Having dedicated bike lanes through either construction or quick-build infrastructure, where streets are not being reconstructed, by 2026 as stated is incredibly important to the growth and prosperity of Cambridge, therefore I would use my position as city councilor to work to meet these deadlines as they come up. The safety of the people of Cambridge is too important to allow these necessary precautions to be pushed back any longer. Along with safety benefits, the Cycling Safety Ordinance also contributes to creating a more equitable, sustainable Cambridge, as people will have a more equal access to safe transportation.
3. Quick-build bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure is a fast way to make improvements, while capital investments in street redesign can reshape the street to better accommodate a multi modal future. How do you consider the tradeoffs between capital reconstruction that will meaningfully fix the streets and create high quality infrastructure, and balance this with the short term benefits of quick build infrastructure? [1200 character limit]	One area I hope to improve when I am elected is transparency in city government. For this specific topic, I would host community conversations with residents to clearly explain the benefits and drawbacks of each approach and gain their buy-in. I appreciate the value of quick build projects in getting immediate results. I also want to strive for the ideal street redesign can bring in better integrating all modes of transportation and creating a better experience for all users. I think that following the leadership of residents whose lives will be directly impacted by these projects is the best way to balance both approaches.
4. While the MBTA controls bus service, the City of Cambridge controls the streets the buses operate on. How would you accelerate bus service and bus priority infrastructure? [1200 character limit]	As a City Councilor, I will work with the City of Cambridge to accelerate bus service through the use of bus priority infrastructure. Although Cambridge does not have control of the MBTA as a whole, we can work to improve the consistency and reliability of the buses when they are on our streets by creating and adapting infrastructure to better suit the needs of the buses. This can be done through the creation of designated bus lanes, so buses do not have to get caught up in other motor vehicle traffic, along with bus priority systems at intersections, to keep the buses running at a more consistent time. Along with these travel updates, I would advocate to reassess the placement of bus stops, to ensure that they are placed in the more efficient areas and that they are of equal access to everyone.
5. The MA state legislature is considering creating a new dedicated governance board for the MBTA, emulating the Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB). Given this, how would you utilize the board meetings to advocate on important issues that might be outside the City's control? [1200 character limit]	I would use this board to advocate for larger overhauls of the MBTA system that in turn have a trickle-down effect when it comes to Cambridge. Some proposed changes I would advocate for are expanding the hours of operation of MBTA services, better accessibility and fare-free transit. The bus system in Cambridge is only as good as the system as a whole, therefore I will advocate for changes that will help Cambridge and the rest of Massachusetts at large.
6. In a new housing development where space is limited, and parking adds substantially to the cost, how would you prioritize space/think about tradeoffs (between more units, parking, open space, etc.)? What would you do in the face of community opposition to developments that seek a different balance of these priorities? [1200 character limit]	As a City Councilor, I pledge to uphold a form of government that supports, engages with, and works for the community in which it operates. To me, this means that as a single member of this community, I may not have all the answers. I will continue to discuss these issues with local business owners and residents so that we can help to educate each other and work to find solutions together. Also, I would approach this work by building coalitions and change around areas of agreement. I will work diligently to communicate the policies and purposes that we pursue on City Council, including those outlined by Vision Zero, through effective outreach and education programs. I cannot promise to please everyone, but I will do everything possible to ensure that community members feel heard and respected in the decision-making process.
7. According to Envision Cambridge, 72.7% of new housing in 2015 was built within 0.5 miles from an MBTA subway station, with a goal of increasing to 75% by 2030. The plan separately cites declining housing affordability, increasing population, and increasing inequality in Cambridge. How will you ensure that lower-income residents have access to affordable housing near transportation? [1200 character limit]	I strongly believe that public transportation should be equally accessible to all, and in addition to expanding the MBTA services to better reach all communities, establishing affordable housing near these stations is equally important. I advocate for the use of shared equity housing in new developments near MBTA stations in order to provide a community-owned, democratically managed, and affordably priced housing option. The ability to easily access a subway station should not be limited by one's income or ability level, especially when the use of public transit should be encouraged to reduce emissions from car travel. I will use my position on City Council to demand that new developments are not taken advantage of by large housing corporations, and instead advocate for and work alongside local developers in order to create affordable housing solutions in these crucial areas that have previously been unattainable for marginalized and underprivileged communities.
8. In addition to increasing the housing supply for low-income households, Envision Cambridge identifies increasing the housing supply for moderate- and middle-income households as a key priority. What approaches would you take to meet these goals? [1200 character limit]	In order to increase and maintain moderate- and middle-income housing, we have to base our housing systems as being tenant-first. I will advocate for the expansion of tenant rights, including but not limited to establishing rent stabilization policies, making the process of homeownership more community-based and democratic, and rejecting the advances of large, corporate developers in our community. I will place particular importance on where and how we expand moderate- and middle-income housing. These homes need to be more accessible and available for all those in our community. I pledge to ensure that affordable housing options are made available in communities that have previously been income-restrictive in order to combat the racial and income-based segregation in Cambridge. Housing near accessible public transit, parks, schools, and business areas needs to be made more affordable for community members in these income levels, as proximity to these public services and areas should not be a privileged luxury.
9. Improvements to affordable housing in Cambridge requires not only increasing production and allocation, but also increasing the amount of housing that will maintain its deed-restricted affordability status. How would you try to reach Envision Cambridge's goal of making 25% of Cambridge's new housing production deed-restricted affordable by 2030? [1200 character limit]	I believe strongly in the use of shared equity homeownership like deed-restricted affordable housing, land trusts, and limited equity co-ops that allow tenants to enter into a housing experience that places them as the priority. In a time of raising housing prices and severe displacement exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, I pledge to support these initiatives for affordable housing now more than ever. On City Council, I will advocate for the use of these methods of homeownership in new developments while pushing back against corporate developers who place profit at the center of their projects. As an early member of the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association and current board member of the YWCA, I have experience working with local housing organizations and will continue to connect with these groups to better understand the housing needs of those in our city so that affordable housing is established strategically, effectively, and equitably.

<p>10. What actions or policies that fall under existing municipal powers (i.e., do not require a home rule petition) do you support to help prevent displacement? [1200 character limit]</p>	<p>I am one of the few renters running for City Council. Over a ten year period, I moved approximately once a year. This experience emphasized the importance of advocating for security for renters through tenant organizing and tenant unions and makes me a better advocate for renters. I specifically support a number of policy priorities that empower tenants, prioritize solutions for low and middle income people, and work on behalf of the unhouesd including, but not limited to:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Allow tenants to organize with other tenants without interference -Push back against large, corporate developers in favor of local groups -Prioritize investment in low income communities -Create new forms of social housing such as limited-equity co-ops and land trusts. -Build publicly financed social housing on underutilized city and state owned property. -Establish rent stabilization/control and tenant's right of first refusal for condo conversions -Enact a Housing First policy to address homelessness, which has a low barrier to entry and does not require people experiencing homelessness to graduate through a series of programs before they can access housing.
<p>1. The Massachusetts Vision Zero Coalition supports the removal of direct policing from Vision Zero goals, citing issues of equity and a lack of effectiveness in improving safety. You can read about these issues in the Boston Vision Zero Progress Report and the Coalition Statement on Gov. Baker Administration's Road Safety Legislation. Do you support removing police enforcement from Vision Zero?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I pledge to support the demilitarization of the Police Department and reduce their funding. Increased funding has not been shown to measurably increase safety, while policing continues to threaten the lives of communities of color. Reallocating police funding to community-based solutions is crucial.</p>
<p>2. Police details are often required for construction projects and open streets events -- it would save money and create jobs if community members were allowed to do this work. Civilian flaggers were first authorized in 2008 to help fill these roles in Massachusetts; nevertheless, these projects and events are still primarily staffed by police on overtime, and detail requests often go unfilled entirely. Do you support reducing police involvement in streets-related projects and events?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I support reducing the funding and ubiquity of police departments in favor of delegating jobs to community members, such as with street projects. I favor these solutions for not only reducing the unnecessary scope of police work, but also for reallocating resources within the community itself.</p>
<p>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). The MA Vision Zero Coalition is specifically supportive of the following bills due to their strong protections around equity and data privacy, H.2426, H.2532, S.1545. If the State House passes this automated enforcement legislation and allows cities & towns to opt-in to a speed or red-light camera program, would you support your municipality using this tool?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I strongly advocate that Cambridge opt in to these programs. Racial bias is proven to be inherent in humans, and until we have established comprehensive solutions to train and guard against it, I pledge to support these strategies that are not affected by socially constructed ideas of race.</p>
<p>4. Many injuries from traffic crashes happen on busier arterial roads. Do you support traffic calming for high-crash intersections and roadways of arterials to prevent crashes and save lives, even when it means taking away parking or travel lanes?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Our cities' infrastructure must undoubtedly put people's lives and safety first, so I will advocate any changes necessary to ensure that our community members can travel safely. I support implementing policies to ensure that pedestrians, bikers, and motorists are protected on Cambridge's streets.</p>
<p>5. Mode shift occurs when people get out of their cars and choose other ways of getting around. Do you support improving bus service through Cambridge as a way to increase mode shift?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I support the expansion of availability and accessibility of bus service as an encouragement of more eco-friendly travel. Alongside the use of a fare-free system, this would help increase the number of people utilizing public transit as an environmentally conscious substitute for car travel.</p>
<p>6. Do you support the rapid construction of quick-build protected bike lanes on the streets listed in the Cambridge Bicycle Plan?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I strongly support infrastructure plans that promote more environmentally responsible travel and pledge to advocate for protected bike lanes. I will ensure that bike lanes are being established equitably, guaranteeing that access to a safe bike route is not a privilege determined by one's income.</p>
<p>7. How curb space is managed can impact many different city functions, including bus service, commercial delivery, and residential parking. When used effectively, curb space can speed up bus service with dedicated lanes, create safe biking infrastructure, and/or allow businesses to receive deliveries quickly and safely. Do you support conducting a city-wide parking study to evaluate how effectively curb space is being used?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I pledge to uphold a vision of transit that places priorities on traffic besides cars. I support the addition of protected bike and bus lanes around the city to promote more eco-friendly travel and agree that we should invest resources into better structuring Cambridge's streets to meet this goal.</p>
<p>9. The current price for residential parking permits in Cambridge is \$25 per year, which is approximately \$2.08 a month. For comparison, in Somerville, the annual parking permit fee is \$40/year. Do you support raising the annual fee for residential parking permits?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I do support raising the parking permit fee. However, I understand that this may not be feasible for everyone and will work around peoples' specific transportation needs. This is one step toward a future of using public transportation to decrease the emittance of fossil fuels into the atmosphere.</p>
<p>8. Do you support free bus service on the MBTA, and a low-income fare option for other public transit options?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I want to promote the use of mass transit by pressuring the state to fully fund and expand the MBTA by making it free and more accessible. Transit access should not be a privilege and is crucial for connecting people to opportunity and essential services, so I pledge to support fare-free transit.</p>

<p>10. Adding parking to housing developments is expensive and increases the cost of housing. While mandatory parking minimums have been eliminated for low-income housing, many standards are still in place throughout the city for new developments. In order to create more moderately priced housing, do you support eliminating all requirements for a minimum number of parking spaces for new development?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>As we build accessible public transit, less residents will be in need of a car to travel effectively. This allows for parking space reduction and encourages eco-friendly travel. I would support eliminating such requirements as a necessary choice to combat the housing crisis.</p>
<p>11. Do you support increasing density as a strategy for improving affordability and increasing housing stock?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I believe increased density is both an environmental solution and housing solution. As a Councillor, I will prioritize building more housing near transit stations and on underutilized land to increase housing stock and boost affordability.</p>
<p>12. The City of Boston and Boston Housing Authority have recently launched a city project-based housing voucher program. Do you support implementing a similar program for the City of Cambridge? Would you support expanding it to include additional funding and/or a mobile voucher program?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>As a renter, affordable housing is personal to me. I would support a similar program in Cambridge, and demand that no one have their rental application denied due to use of a voucher and advocate for additional funding for this program to combat the severe income and racial segregation in Cambridge.</p>