Paul Toner

1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Cambridge? (Check the top 3.)

- Car, Subway, Walking

1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)

- Duplex/Triple-decker, Home ownership, Single-family home, Urban

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)

My 15-year-old son, Jack, and his friends ride their bikes through Cambridge and Greater Boston everyday; making sure that streets are safe for cyclists is personal to me. I agree with the goals of the Cambridge Cycling Safety Ordinance, however, I believe there needs to be flexibility on the construction timeline in order to gather input from relevant stakeholders, such as neighborhood residents and businesses. I want to see a more uniform bike lane design throughout Cambridge that’s built to last and ensures that cyclists stay safe on our roads. I would hold the city accountable for implementation but allow the flexibility to create the best possible plan for all. For instance, in the North Massachusetts Avenue corridor, I believe we should move construction of these bike lanes out to 2024 to allow out build out of important bike infrastructure before rather than proceed with a temporary fix only to revisit and disrupt the neighborhood again a few years later.

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 construction 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)

I’m in favor of speeding up timelines for capital investments in street redesign. Cambridge has strong municipal finances and federal funding through the American Rescue Plan that can be used to install high quality infrastructure to ensure cyclist’s and pedestrian safety and encourage more people to utilize bikes as a means of transportation. Quick build infrastructure can be used on ancillary roads but I prefer moving directly to capital investments on major roads like Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street. This must involve working with the community to develop a plan for bike lanes, alternative parking areas, and outdoor dining. Dine that has become so important for local restaurants. I think the raised bike and pedestrian infrastructure that Somerville installed on Beacon Street is a great example of what we should be doing where we can. The narrowing of the street from four lanes at points to two to support the infrastructure seems to have worked. We should also engage cyclists, businesses and residents after quick build infrastructure has been in place for a year to understand impacts and get feedback to better inform our plans going forward.

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)

I believe that public transportation is a critical tool to address traffic safety and reduce carbon emissions. I would accelerate bus service by utilizing block by block cycle tracks and improving the bus lane lane where appropriate in order to facilitate more bicycle and bus traffic on our roads. I support regional collaboration in order to enhance our public transit system. I would engage with council members, our state legislative delegation, city staff, and regional partners to address our transportation challenges. I would also use board meetings as an opportunity for regional advocacy for improvements to services and access for transit riders.

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)

My understanding is that this already passed the State Legislature a few weeks ago. I support regional collaboration in order to enhance our public transit system. I would engage with council members, our state legislative delegation, city staff, and regional partners to address our transportation challenges. I would also use board meetings as an opportunity for regional advocacy for improvements to services and access for transit riders.

6. In a new housing development where space is limited, and parking adds substantially to the cost, how would you prioritize streetscapes (more walkability, more green space, etc.)? What would you do in the face of community opposition to development that seek a different balance of these priorities? (1200 character limit)

New developments should provide some parking. Having no on-site parking will impact parking in the surrounding neighborhood because some new tenants will have cars. That said, I believe we can reduce our downtown growth through smart design. First, we must build more housing near public transportation hubs. We should also create incentives for tenants of new apartments to forgo car ownership. These incentives could include requiring the tenants to only use car-free, offering discounted E-bikes to residents or providing free reduced MBTA cards, or housing several ZipCars and Blue Bikes on-site. If there is no parking on-site at a new development, I believe we need to discuss prohibiting residents of these developments from accessing Cambridge Parking Permits. We also have to understand how our lower income residents commute to work. I get a little uncomfortable at how these conversations are often led by and include mostly people who, like myself, have more employment, life/work balance options. Often low income residents work hours and/or in places that require driving their own cars to get to work. I would like to get more data about this issue to better understand the parking realities.

I will ensure that low-income residents have access to affordable housing near transportation by supporting more developments like the 2072 Massachusetts Ave project that would create housing within a half mile of the MBTA's future Orange Line station.

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 we need more housing stock for residents of all income levels. I support the concept in the Missing Middle Housing plan of creating flexibility to build more multi-family housing. However, as written, it did not guarantee that the zoning flexibility would only be given if the owner created more units of housing. I would like to see the City Council work with housing advocates and the planning board to develop a zoning proposal that will help developers create more housing options for middle income residents. I also want to hear from developers and the State’s Department of Housing and Community Development about what the realities are around costs, process, frivolous lawsuits, etc. that impact these developments so that the policy we develop is practical and can be implemented effectively. I think previous councils have dug deep into this issue and I look to learning form their work as well.

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)

This issue requires sustained engagement with community members and councillors alike. There is friction between creating more affordable housing and allowing low-income families to invest in a home and create mobility-impaired residents and small businesses. Both of these things can be true at the same time. It doesn’t mean tough decisions to plan for the future won’t have to be made. But we need to understand how that impacts people today as well and address their real concerns and not be dismissive.

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)

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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]

There are two important changes we can make to help prevent displacement. First, we must ensure there are adequate rent subsidies during crisis situations and beyond when needed. Second, we should put a moratorium on evictions and provide tenants with access to legal assistance and mediation programs to provide additional support. Protecting tenants’ rights is absolutely essential if we are to minimize displacement.

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?

Strongly Oppose

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I believe police have a role to play in implementing Vision Zero. When a driver’s actions endanger the safety of cyclists, or when a cyclist ignores traffic safety rules, I believe it’s the responsibility of law enforcement to intervene in order to ensure everyone’s safety.

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?

Somewhat Oppose

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I’m supportive of free bus service and a low-income fare option for public transit. I do, however, want to know how these programs would be sustainably funded.

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 using this tool?

Neither Support nor Oppose

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I’m open to considering cameras to improve traffic safety and reduce bias in traffic enforcement. I would like to see them piloted in parts of the city before being implemented citywide. The use of cameras has pros and cons and has been contentious elsewhere.

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?

Somewhat Oppose

Please explain. [300 character limit]

Traffic calming is a reasonable measure for increasing the safety of busy intersections. I’m open to discussing a variety of measures to improve the safety of intersections. I would need to know more about the specific locations being reviewed.

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?

Strongly Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I have nothing more to add other than creating faster, more consistent bus service on well-maintained busses would increase ridership.

6. Do you support the rapid construction of quick-build protected bike lanes on the streets listed in the Cambridge Bicycle Plan?

Somewhat Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I am supportive of quick build lanes where necessary after a public process that engages community businesses and residents regarding local impact. I personally think we should be using new infrastructure funding to speed up move towards permanent well planned protected bike lanes.

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?

Strongly Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I’m in favor of conducting a city-wide parking study to evaluate the use of curb space. Such a study would be an important building block for the development of a priority bus lane and long-term bike infrastructure.

8. 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?

Somewhat Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I support raising the annual parking permit fee as a way to encourage alternative modes of transportation and raise revenue for the city for targeted infrastructure projects. I would allow low-income residents and senior citizens on a fixed income to pay the current $25.00 permit fee.

9. Do you support free bus service on the MBTA, and a low-income fare option for other public transit options?

Somewhat Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I’m supportive of free bus service and a low-income fare option for public transit. I do, however, want to know how these programs would be sustainably funded.

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?

Somewhat Oppose

Please explain. [300 character limit]

Without a prohibition on car ownership and/or parking permits for new residents, some people in any new development will have cars. I think it’s disingenuous of developers and housing advocates to tell abutters that reducing parking requirements will not impact their current parking situation.

11. Do you support increasing density as a strategy for improving affordability and increasing housing stock?

Strongly Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]

I think it’s important for the City to support increasing density as a strategy for improving affordability and increasing housing stock.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please explain. [300 character limit]</th>
<th>Increasing density, particularly near public transit stations and along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor, is one of the best tools we have to improve housing affordability and reduce carbon emissions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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?</td>
<td>Somewhat Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please explain. [300 character limit]</td>
<td>I agree with the concept but would need to know more about the source of funding for the program.</td>
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