

Candidate name (first and last):	Nicola Williams
How do you see transportation, housing, and climate issues connecting and how will you work to align them if elected? [600 character limit]	I have been involved in environmental activism for decades and will continue if I am elected. I support the Net Zero Task Force and Action Plan that provides a pathway to making our buildings reach net-zero emissions because new constructions should be net-zero ready and include solar panels as well as rainwater recapture technology. This is important because building emissions are the major source of greenhouse gases in Cambridge. Additionally, I will work on a regional transportation strategy with our neighboring cities to promote greener and more affordable and accessible modes of transit.
1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Cambridge? (Check the top 3.)	Car, Bus, Walking
1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)	Duplex/Triple-decker, 4-to-6-unit building, Over-six-unit apartment building, As a renter, As a landlord, Home ownership, Housing insecure, Single-family home, 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]	According to the City of Cambridge Community Health Assessment 2020, 65.2% of Cambridge residents believe bicycle safety is a concern; 72.8% believe pedestrian safety is a concern; and 61.9% of Cambridge uses public transportation. The MBTA has been chronically underfunded, and people are frustrated with the lack of innovative solutions. I believe in working with local businesses and the local community in helping to achieve space for walking, biking, and transit infrastructure that many people support.
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]	Investing in infrastructure and enacting systemic changes to improve the functionality, safety and affordability of the public transit system, will create a system that works for all. Through my work as board member of Harvard Square Neighborhood Association, I have been supporting the efforts of the Memorial Drive Alliance comprising environmentalists, bicycle groups, and other stakeholders. Our shared goals are saving the trees along Memorial Drive and adding separate bike lanes in part on Memorial Drive itself, thus limiting vehicular traffic to two lanes and bike lanes to two lanes. I have also advocated closing Memorial Drive on both weekend days. So naturally, I aim to hold Cambridge accountable for protecting bike lanes and installing more in the next upcoming years.
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]	I support the rapid implementation of quick-build bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure. Cambridge is actually implementing a quick-build bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure plan along Massachusetts Avenue, the main street corridor that connects Cambridge, Boston and Arlington. However, the challenges are that not every section of the street can be treated the same way. Some streetscapes have medians, while others have higher densities of small businesses. We cannot take a one size fits all approach to quick-build and need to address the unique nuances of each neighborhood. It is important to bring all the stakeholders together so there is buy-in early on in the process and no surprises. If it was done earlier in the process for the Porter Square part of the quick-build implementation, the City would have realized that the total elimination of parking on the main corridor will be detrimental to the small businesses that line several blocks, especially since there is a median in the middle of the street. As a Councillor I need to represent all constituencies—the cycling community, pedestrians, residents, renters and property owners.
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]	Our current public transportation system is lacking as a result of poor infrastructure and minimal innovative solutions to dramatically transform and create more equitable modes of transportation. I strive to create a public transit system that is affordable, accessible and equitable. In my role as City Councillor, I will be committed to building a city that is safe and available for all by creating policies that encourage people to use sustainable modes of transit when possible. It is essential that Cambridge work with our neighboring cities in Somerville, Watertown, Belmont, Arlington and Boston to develop a regional transportation strategy that includes greener modes of transit. In order to encourage communal travel, the city of Cambridge must invest in infrastructure and services that will make this goal feasible. Raising revenue for investment in clean transportation solutions is an integral strategy to addressing this. Additionally, I support a local pilot to offer free public transportation in Cambridge including free bus transit vouchers for those in need.
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]	If the FMCB board is enacted, there needs to be representation from a variety of constituents, including Black, Hispanic, and indigenous and low income populations, because many of them take the MBTA more than any other constituent. The board meetings need to be public and include public comment so all voices are heard.
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 an environmentalist, I support minimizing the use of parking as much as possible for open space. Space is a big factor for new housing development, especially denser affordable housing. Parking takes up a large amount of land as most of Cambridge relies on their cars as opposed to public transportation. Balancing the amount of units with available parking and open spaces is challenging but should be at the forefront of planning when increasing affordable housing. We also need to make sure that we understand the needs of the constituents needing subsidized housing. I think it is imperative that a survey be done to assess the work schedules and reliability of public transportation. The Boston area does not have 24 hour transit services which impacts especially low income residents. They have to rely on cars to get to work overnight and night shifts and some of them are self employed as Uber and Lyft drivers. Working families with young children unfortunately need to rely on their cars to purchase food for their household and transporting their young children to day care (if they can afford it), or to another family member to care for the children while they work.
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]	Housing may be the largest expense most Canterbridgians have, but the cost of transportation can be a huge burden on the low income residents. As affordability decreases in Cambridge, access to public transportation needs to become a priority to retain our city's diversity. To avoid community opposition and high costs, affordable housing is often moved further away from job centers. As a result, these residents suffer from the cost of maintaining a vehicle, long commutes, and large fees for transit. While further developing our transit infrastructure is vital, making sure it is accessible to those who need and will use it should be the primary goal. Affordable housing in Cambridge should be focused on transit-oriented development and seek partnerships with the MTBA who would benefit heavily from an increase of nearby riders.
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]	People-centered housing policies are one of my top priorities and I have been outspoken against policies that prioritizes developers over residents and has no plan for affordability for low and middle-income residents. My housing plans center on empowering communities to 1) build wealth through homeownership programs, cooperatives, community land trusts, and innovative down payment programs; 2) create pathways for families that allow them to accept promotions without risking their housing and without strings attached; and 3) change Cambridge's ineffective homeownership program to allow families to be able to build equity and pass along their homes to their families. We need pathways for transitioning residents as their income improves, so they are not displaced; develop a comprehensive and regional approach to housing and transportation that is affordable and environmentally sustainable for all; and institute rent stabilization policies that incentivize property owners to offer below market rents for stable housing.

<p>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]</p>	<p>My campaign is proposing the 50/20 Plan that will raise our affordability from 14.5% to 20% and increase our homeownership from 35% to 50%. My 50/20 Plan will only be achievable with thoughtful, deliberate, and proactive policy planning and execution. I want to see more tenants become owners and reform Cambridge's ineffective homeownership agenda that is co-opted and dictated by developer-backed PACS and that deter families from being able to build equity and pass along to their families. It is vital to invest in housing cooperatives and community land trusts in order to house more people affordably. We need a regional approach to housing that will work with elected leaders in Boston, Somerville, and other nearby municipalities to help end displacement, create reasonable rent stabilization policies, and develop a pathway for economic empowerment for our residents.</p>
<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>The policies and actions that can be developed under existing municipal powers include: Building new forms of social housing such as limited-equity co-ops and land trusts. Building publicly financed social housing on underutilized city-owned lots, and on top of municipal properties, such as certain libraries and municipal buildings. Supporting tenants' right of first refusal for condo conversions. Enacting a Housing First policy to address homelessness, which has a low barrier to entry, provides supportive services, and does not require people experiencing homelessness to graduate through a series of programs or address behavioral health issues before they can access housing. This can include, but is not exclusive to, permanent supportive housing models. Supporting better home ownership programs for marginalized groups and the underserved in order to build equity. Revamping our Homebridge program and replacing it with an affordable down payment program that offers the owner the opportunity to build equity and pass the property down to their children.</p>
<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 strongly align with Vision Zero's goal to prioritize the safety of Canterbridgians. If police enforcement is failing to improve safety and contributing to issues of equity there is no reason for their continued presence.</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>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. These projects and events are still primarily staffed by police on overtime, and detail requests often go unfilled entirely.</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>Generally, I support these bills. I would like to monitor its progress because I don't want it to become a tool of oppression for any resident</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>I strongly believe in enacting systemic changes to improve the functionality, safety and affordability of our transportation system. Traffic calming for high-crash areas encourages more responsible driving and reduces dangers for drivers, pedestrians, and bikers.</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 absolutely support encouraging increased mode shift as communal travel, which is an important step towards a greener and more accessible Cambridge. I strongly advocate for improving our bus system and developing systems that make it public transportation for low-income residents.</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 support the rapid implementation of a citywide network of protected bicycle lanes as described in the Cambridge Bicycle Plan. I have worked closely with Cambridge Bicycle Safety, local businesses, and the local community in helping to achieve protected bike lanes through all of Mass Ave.</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>Allowing for increased public transportation and supporting businesses is essential for Cambridge's COVID-19 recovery. A city-wide study could inform the Council's decisions and provide an opportunity for increased transportation efficiency.</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>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>I generally support raising the fee if the funds are used for transportation infrastructure improvements. I also support waivers for seniors and very low income residents.</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>Somewhat Support</p>

Please explain. [300 character limit]	I believe in providing free bus transit vouchers and economical public transport for those in need to encourage commuters to use public transportation and provide affordable options to achieve further economic stability.
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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	We also need to make sure that we understand the needs of these constituents. The Boston area does not have 24 hour transit services and many of our low income and BIPOC residents are service workers who may need cars to get work during off hours. We don't want to affect access to employment.
11. Do you support increasing density as a strategy for improving affordability and increasing housing stock?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	I would like to increase our affordable housing in Cambridge from 14.5% to 20% by 2040. In order to achieve those goals, we need to increase housing density. I also support increasing affordable housing with existing housing stock to offer a tax break to landlords for offering below market rents.
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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	Affordable housing is something Cambridge is in desperate need of. While it is still necessary to build more affordable housing, implementing a program to subsidize rent costs for low income residents to maintain our current cultural and economic diversity is vital.