Quinton Zondervan

I have been advocating for and designing policies to accomplish net zero emissions in our housing and transportation sectors for over a decade. We need to continue to de-emphasize car-oriented transportation and improve walkability and public transit options for our residents. I’ve also introduced the Green New Deal Zoning Petition to further decarbonize the commercial building sector in Cambridge while providing economic opportunities to low-income and minority communities by promoting green jobs. I’m a lifelong climate activist and am dedicated to decarbonizing our economy.

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

- Subway, Bus, Walking

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

- As a renter, Home ownership

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]

- I played a key role in advancing this policy and seeing it adopted by City Council. The most important task for the next council is to hire a new city manager who will make sure the ordinance is fully implemented, on time, as required by law.

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]

- We need to do quick-build everywhere we are not planning to make permanent improvements in the next year or so, as we have done on Webster Ave. and countless other streets in the last few years, and continue to make permanent improvements through our 5-year road and sidewalk improvement plan as we did on Western Ave. and are about to do on River St.

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 would work to create a flexible, comfortable and highly-functional city run shuttle service that is free for all road users and carries people from neighborhoods and business districts to MBTA controlled transit nodes and bus stops.

5. The MA state legislature is considering creating a new dedicated funding source 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]

- We will continue to use all available mechanisms to communicate with the MBTA and advocate for our constituents’ needs. Unfortunately the MBTA is massively underfunded and unfairly required to pay for its own operations, leading to a negative spiral of increasing fares and decreasing ridership. The model is completely broken and requires a complete revisioning based around taxing wealthy people and funding the MBTA to the point that anyone can ride for free!

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]

- These questions are generally decided by the Planning Board. As City Councillors we do weight in and I have consistently advocated for zero parking. We also set policy for the city and I’m actively working on a policy to eliminate minimum parking requirements for new developments.

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 have consistently and successfully advocated for increased funding for affordable housing construction, including a $500 million bond proposal this term. The best mechanism we have for producing more affordable housing is to spend more money doing so.

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]

- I voted for the AHO and secured the first ever “right of return” preference for Cambridge tenants who were recently evicted from the city, as well as abolishing parking minimum requirements to help increase affordable housing production.

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 2037? [1200 character limit]

- Again, same answer as 7 and 8 above. All affordable housing built with funding from the AHT is deed restricted to remain affordable in perpetuity.

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]

- Currently we are working on a Condo Conversion bylaw to extend the notice requirements and increase protections for existing tenants. This is no-brainer legislation that frankly should have been passed years ago but has repeatedly stalled for lack of political will on the council to get it done. I support any and all policies aimed at preventing displacement and secured an amendment designed to support these efforts as part of the AHO.


- I’m leading the effort along with Councillor Sobrino-Wheeler on alternatives to armed police traffic enforcement. We need a more progressive administration who will implement these policies.

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? Please explain. [300 character limit]

- Yes, I’ve been advocating for this for years, but the city manager negotiates the union contract with the Police and that contract blocks us from hiring non-Police for traffic details. Again, critical that the next council hires a city manager who will prioritize this in the union negotiations.
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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

This is a great alternative to increase enforcement without increasing police oppression. When roads and traffic control systems are properly designed, it becomes nearly impossible to violate the rules in ways that massively endanger other road users.

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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

Proper road and traffic control design is critical, and that includes so-called "traffic calming" measures, which might as well be renamed to "proper road design" measures. Narrow and not-straight traffic lanes, curb bump-outs to reduce speeds during cornering at intersections, protected bike lanes.

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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

I believe that free transit that is more convenient and more comfortable than private automobile transport within our city is the only way to get people out of their cars in large numbers.

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

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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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

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

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

Again, free transit is the only way to go!

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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

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

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

I’ve been calling for this for years and worked to eliminate minimum parking requirements from the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). We need to put the entire city on a schedule to remove minimum parking requirements!

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?

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Please explain. [300 character limit]

Yes and we should tax the wealthiest among us to help fund such a program.