

# 2020 Newport RI City Council Candidates Questionnaire

TO: 2020 CANDIDATES FOR NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: ALLIANCE FOR A LIVABLE NEWPORT  
SUBJECT: ONLINE COUNCIL CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE  
DATE: July 29, 2020

As ALN has done for every local election since 2008, a City Council candidates' questionnaire has been created as a means of assisting Newport voters in making their election choices. The accompanying Word document contains questions for this year's City Council candidates selected from submissions ALN has received.

At Large candidates are asked to respond to six (6) questions and Ward candidates to the same six (6) plus a seventh (7) Ward-specific question. Candidates are urged to limit their response to each question to no more than five hundred (500) words (unless otherwise specified) and to enter those responses online via Google Forms. Candidates can either enter their responses directly on Google Forms or formulate responses first using the Word document and then transferring those to Google Forms.

Responses must be received no later than the end of the day on August 8, 2020. As soon as possible after that date, all responses will be uploaded at the same time to the ALN website ([www.newportalliance.org](http://www.newportalliance.org)) and made available for public viewing with accompanying notifications to the public through ALN's email subscriber list (approximately 600 subscribers) and through advertising and promotion on local radio, print, and online media.

This year ALN is delighted to be joined with our 2020 Election partners, Newport This Week, The League of Women Voters, The Newport Chamber of Commerce, WADK Radio, Newport Buzz, and Channel 18 Community Television. This collaborative will be conducting live "Zoom" public forums to which you have already been invited.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the Google Forms procedures, please send an email to [info@newportalliance.org](mailto:info@newportalliance.org) and you will receive a quick response by email or phone, depending on the nature of the question. Do you still need help with the form or process? Contact Chip Leakas ALN board advisor (401)339-0777 mobile generally 9am-9pm

ALN commends each of you for choosing to run and serve for the Newport City Council and looks forward to hearing from you as to the pressing issues and challenges Newport faces today.

2020 CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE  
Questions For All Council Candidates (At Large and Wards)

Email address \*

First Name, Last Name \*

Elected Council Office you are seeking: \*

1.) Do you support the November ballot question for Newport to issue more than \$100million of bonds to be used to expand The Pell School and replace Rogers High School? If no, explain your reasons. If yes, what do you say to Newport residents and business owners concerned about the impact on their property taxes? If yes or no, what action(s) would you promote if the ballot question is defeated? \*

I do support the ballot to expand the Pell School and replace Rogers's high school. I believe better schools lead to more community pride and ultimately better communities. Better schools also offer an incentive for young families to stay in the city and raise their children here. I can absolutely understand the concern of taxes among residents and business owners; looking at numbers can be overwhelming. However, bettering our schools is an investment in the future of the city that everyone can benefit from. Better school districts lead to higher home values and more year-round residents for local businesses

2.) Traffic and parking problems in Newport persist and seem to be getting worse despite being the subject of countless studies and ad hoc committees. What specific measures (other than forming more committees and conducting more studies) would you promote to alleviate the problems? \*

I'm a proponent of a possible "shared streets" model; closing streets down to vehicles at a certain time and letting vendors and restaurants expand especially given the current circumstances with the pandemic and the strain it has put on businesses. I also think ride-share drop off and pick up stations are a must. Parking lots on the outside of town that offer free shuttle service to downtown stops could also be a possible solution to this issue.

3.) Newport's economy is closely tied to tourism. The risk of that dependence has been made abundantly clear by the COVID pandemic. What, if any, alternatives do you see to the reliance on tourism? Based on your answer, what specific actions should be taken to further promote tourism and/or what specific actions should be taken to expand the economy beyond tourism? \*

A large part of the local economy is based on tourism and hospitality and I believe it will always be a large part of the economy given our beautiful surroundings. However I think that the economy can be diversified by making the city more attractive to small and large businesses alike with further development of the North End. I believe that tax incentives for small business and possibly free city advertising for local businesses can help Newport's economy to prosper.

4.) The closure of the Visitors Center was announced recently. What do you propose should be done with the property? \*

I believe in making positive changes for our community. Whether it be a community center, a concert venue, a space for local vendors (like the armory used to be)... At the end of the day it's the local voters' decision!

5.) A Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) template is being considered as part of the North End Urban Plan (NEUP). What would you like to see included in the CBA template? What measures will you promote and support to put the NEUP on a clear path to implementation? \*

I am open to new ideas regarding the NEUP. I would like to see more housing as well as more open space options. Some measures I will support will be the developer follow-through; holding any developer to the standards they propose. I believe the developer we choose has been invested in the community for the long term whether it be creating jobs or community funding. I will work to hold everyone accountable.

6.) What do you most want Newport voters to know about you? (Limit response to a maximum of 250 words.)

I'm a tireless worker, relentless problem solver and a team player. Above all, I am a family and community-oriented person. There is a quote from Jane Goodall I try to live by, "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

7a.) Question For Third Ward Council Candidates ONLY ::: Ocean Drive is the scene of traffic problems, speeding, illegal parking, and (primarily at Bretton State Park) loud noise and trash. Although these problems are at their worst during the summer months, they persist to some degree throughout the year. What specific measures would you promote to deal with these problems?

7b.) Question For Second Ward Council Candidates ONLY ::: The intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Memorial Boulevard is the scene of congestion and multiple accidents every summer. The traffic overflow from the north to Memorial is now affecting Red Cross and Gibbs as well. What measures should be adopted to handle this problem?

7c.) Question For First Ward Council Candidates ONLY ::: The preferred plan for the Pell Bridge Offramp Realignment is now known. What measures should the City of Newport plan and enact to minimize disruption to the surrounding neighborhoods both during construction and, more importantly, after project completion?

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