

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) 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 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 *

paulmarshall@3rdwardcitycouncil.com

First Name, Last Name *

Paul E Marshall

Elected Council Office you are seeking: *

Council "Third Ward" ▼

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? *

To invest in our future, our economy, our City, we must invest in our schools. Newport has a growing potential in creating a safe and prosperous learning experience. I have seen the positive impact of accessible education through the new Pell Elementary School and other successful non-profit organizations throughout the City. Additionally, as someone who has grown up in the Newport, graduated from Roger's High School, and is now raising a son who will attend school in a few years, I will continue to fight for both our student's and faculty's needs and ensure our schools are a safe environment for learning. This will involve listening and assessing the gaps in our students' education and seeing what we can do as a community to better help them reach their potentials. Investing in school infrastructure is a net positive for the community and has proven benefits in stabilizing the property market by enticing future families and business owners to move here, work here and raise a family here.

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? *

Transportation is accessibility, yet, Newport is geographically designed to have traffic issues. I plan to alleviate these issues by promoting safe, alternative modes of transportation. Although this question asks that we avoid conducting studies, it does not note that our last traffic study was completed in the early 2000s, so to update and adjust for this gap, I do think it is necessary to conduct a study. With that in mind, I have already taken an active role in working with the City on building its Transportation Master Plan, which utilizes real data to evaluate current preferred modes of transportation, predict future trends, and pinpoint areas of concern. With this future data, we can implement inclusive and accessible programs like an expansion of public transportation and other multi-modal travel alternatives. Not only will this alleviate the city's traffic issues, but it will also allow our community to have increased accessibility to local amenities and will further provide sustainable economic gains to Newport.

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? *

Having worked in Newport's hospitality industry for over ten years, I have seen how heavily reliant Newport's local economy is on tourism. However, Newport has the potential to become a prosperous economic center year-round. As a Planning Board member, I have assisted in setting long-term goals for economic development. I plan on continuing to help the City build a more robust economy by supporting programs that provide perennial economic opportunities, such as expanding professional work programs and incentivizing businesses to stay year-round. This attraction of both work and business opportunities will maximize where our residents and visitors alike can contribute to our local economy and fully enjoy what Newport has to offer.

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

The first step would be gain a better understanding of the legal contracts in place with the Visitor Center, the City, RIPTA, and/or other entities. Once that is understood, one suggestion, if applicable, would be to transform the property into a year-round farmer's market to promote our locally grown produce. The Visitors Center is a uniquely situated building in a highly trafficked location that should continue to be used as a resource for our community. The Visitors Center is a uniquely situated building in a highly trafficked location that should continue to be used as a resource for our community, so I suggest that we convert the property into a year-round farmer's market to promote our locally grown produce. There are health, economic, environmental and equitable community benefits in converting this facility to a farmer's market. First, from an equitable standpoint, the Visitor Center is our public transit hub but it also has a fully operational parking lot, with even electric car charging stations. This allows for all residents to have access to the market. Secondly, a farmer's market promotes healthy eating, which results in a healthier community. Third, buying local helps support our local economy. Without the support of the community, local farmers would struggle to stay in business. Fourth, supporting local farmers reduces the environmental impact as the produce will not have to be transported long distances, artificially ripened or genetically modified. Lastly, this building doesn't have to be mutually exclusive to farmers and can be ever-evolving through the seasons by also promoting our thriving local artists. Based on these reasons, this building could provide our community with benefits that are hard even to quantify.

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?" *

As we look towards the future, I hope to help steer city-wide decisions through an equity and inclusion lens. Newport has struggled with equity throughout its history. As a city, it is our duty to consult with our community to ensure we fully understand the impact of our municipal decisions. As a member of the City of Newport's Planning Board, I have committed to this effort by advocating for a Community Benefit Agreement in new development projects as well as having helped begin a process to set long-term, equitable goals in the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. If elected, it will be a priority to make sure we allocate the necessary support and budget to completing beneficial community projects recommended in the North End Urban Plan. Newporters deserve a city that reflects their needs, and I will continue to help Newport make the necessary strides towards a more equitable and inclusive future.

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

I want Newport voters to know that I am also a Newporter. I was born in Newport, grew up living in every ward throughout my childhood, graduated from Roger's High School in 2007, and I'm now raising my son, Forrest, here. Newport is my home, my passion, and my life and has been for multiple generations. I recently found out that my great-grandfather was a civics teacher at Roger's High School. Imagine if he knew a descendant of his was running for public office. These are the types of stories that make Newport a locally-focused, community-driven City. If elected, I hope to ensure that Newport continues to grow in a conscientious, equitable and sustainable way.

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?

Ocean Drive is an iconic part of our City. It is both a visual and accessible asset to both the local and transient communities. But there are problems pertaining to safety and environment on Ocean Drive that concern me. As someone who frequently bikes and or walks parts or all of Ocean Drive, safety is a huge concern. As an advocate for the Green and Complete Streets program within the City, I believe that facets of this program can be implemented to Ocean Drive to make the area more pedestrian and bike-friendly. The results, if implemented, as proven in other cities, would provide benefits in mobility, community and environment. While trash is also a key concern of mine, I believe that the essential fix to this problem is to reinforce messages of moral responsibility and make it easy for users to dispose of waste properly. Other environmental concerns I have pertain to sea-level rise, flooding and stormwater management. In taking a proactive leadership role in climate resiliency on Ocean Drive, we can continue to utilize this community benefit for generations to come.

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?

N/A

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?

N/A

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