



Progressive Framingham/MetroWest 2023 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Brandon Ward

Office Sought: Framingham District 2 City Councilor

Website: www.wardforframingham.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wardforframingham>

Twitter: [@brandonward](https://twitter.com/brandonward)

Instagram: [@bfward](https://www.instagram.com/bfward)

What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?

1. Supporting K-12 public schools, universal pre-K, dual language programs, and career pathways for all residents through higher ed prep and job training programs.
2. Making Framingham, and city government, more equitable, inclusive, welcoming, and transparent.
3. Increasing affordable housing options and public transportation access for the city's most vulnerable residents.

What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to see adopted in Framingham?

I'm interested in exploring new and innovative ways to expand access to affordable housing (in addition to the work already being done by the Framingham Housing Authority). There are many potential ways to do this, but one route I'm particularly interested in exploring is the creation of a Community Affordable Housing Trust similar to those existing in Cambridge and Boston (and being proposed in Somerville).

1. Same Day Registration is one of the best-proven methods of increasing voter participation in elections. Do you support allowing voters to newly register or re-register at the polls on Election Day and during the Early Voting period? (Y/N)

YES.

2. What steps would you propose to reduce income and wealth inequality in Framingham?

Creating affordable pathways to home ownership. Removing barriers and red tape for small businesses to start and thrive. Providing access to free transportation, education services, and job training programs for low-income residents. When appropriate, ensuring city council and municipal government serves as a check & balance on real estate developers and corporations.

3. Do you support local government investment in the fight against climate change including solar panel programs, purchasing electric or hybrid vehicles, and encouraging composting? (Y/N)

YES.

4. Do you support Metrowest communities including Framingham adopting the opt-in stretch energy code that would increase sustainability in construction? (Y/N)

YES.

5. Do you support or oppose the expansion of charter schools in Massachusetts? (Y/N)

I support school choice, and I support charter schools when properly run. I also believe firmly in properly funding the Framingham Public School system.

6. Do you believe that Black Lives Matter and support police accountability measures and policies that will protect black lives? (Y/N)

YES.

7. Do you support a careful examination of the role of school resource officers (SRO) in Metrowest schools in the context of potential psychological harm done to students of color? (Y/N)

YES.

8. How would you expand affordable housing in Framingham?

Supporting increased municipal funding for the development of affordable housing. Supporting the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units in Framingham. Supporting the creation of a Community Affordable Housing Trust. In certain cases, supporting zoning changes to allow for increased construction of duplexes.

9. Do you support local measures to address misinformation coming from crisis pregnancy centers? (Y/N)

YES.

10. The Supreme Court's Dobbs decision has threatened abortion access throughout our country. Do you agree that Massachusetts should take the lead on protecting the right to reproductive health for all residents? (Y/N)

YES.

11. The Supreme Court recently sided with a web designer who argued she had the right to refuse service for a same-sex marriage. Do you support legal mandates that mandate businesses to provide good and services without regard to a person's background including sexual orientation, race, and gender? (Y/N)

YES.

12. What impact do you feel social media has on participation in local elections? How can we encourage greater participation in local elections?

This won't be a novel opinion - but social media has been shown to be incredibly effective in engaging and mobilizing individuals around political issues and causes, i.e. voting in elections. At the same time, social media can be incredibly detrimental to encouraging individuals to step forward for public office, i.e. running in elections.

For me, the easiest way to encourage greater participation in local elections is to work to empower individuals to see and realize their own power and potential as community leaders and activists. I have been doing this type of work for the last 7 years with graduate students at the Harvard Kennedy School, and I'm excited to now do the same with local nonprofit and municipal leaders as the Executive Director of Leadership MetroWest.