

# 2023 Salem City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Progressive Salem

Name: Ty Hapworth

Office Sought: Councillor at Large

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## **PUBLIC SECTION**

*The public part of the questionnaire contains a mix of yes/no and open-ended questions. Please keep all answers to open-ended questions to no more than 150 words. A non-response to a yes/no question will be treated as a no.*

### **(A) Your Candidacy**

1. What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?
  - a. Affordable Housing
  - b. Climate Action
  - c. Leading with integrity
  
2. What qualifies you to hold this office?
  - a. I have been a leader both in the private sector and US Army. I love this community and it has been my honor to serve for 4 years as Councillor at Large.
  
3. What do you see as the role of the City Council in Salem?
  - a. Our approach to the job should be selfless. Our primary responsibility is to comprehend the challenges confronting both our community and our neighbors. Our duty is to address these challenges by refraining from taking things personally, avoiding disputes with critics or each other on social media, and abstaining from factionalism. Moreover, it is crucial for us to express our stances clearly, drawing from our individual moral principles and comprehension of the potential solutions. Over the past four years, I have dedicated significant effort to being a model of the public service I expect from my elected representatives and

embodying those qualities I believe are essential from a responsible government official.

4. What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to see Salem adopt?
  - a. Communities such as Sommerville, MA and Columbus, OH have taken big steps to address zoning. I believe our current zoning is completely inconsistent with the needs of this community in regard to affordability, housing production and our historic neighborhoods.
5. What does community service mean to you?
  - a. Being a part of the solution, rather than just pointing out problems. This can be as an elected official, member of a board, or as a volunteer. We are so fortunate to have so many interested in public service in Salem!

## **(B) Civil Rights & Community Engagement**

1. Name an accomplishment you're particularly proud of that helped to achieve and advance racial justice or equity.
  - a. The establishment of the Race Equity Commission.
2. What steps would you take, if elected, to engage all the diverse communities of Salem in policymaking, and what past actions of yours should give voters confidence that you will follow through?
  - a. I communicate in many different methods from visits at homes, to neighborhood meetings, phone calls, Email, Facebook, Instagram, Threads and Reddit. I answer every email I receive, regardless of if it's from a supporter or not. I want every resident of Salem to know that their voices matter the most, that we are their neighbors and always here to help.
3. The future of democracy depends on robust youth engagement. Describe how you engage youth formally in your work as city councilor, or would plan to do so if elected.
  - a. I have spoken with classes on multiple occasions to discuss the role of the council, what high school students can do to get engaged and how our local government works. I will also be working with Salem's Girl Scouts this fall to help them earn their democracy badges.
4. What do you think it means to be an ally of the LGBTQ+ community?

- a. I think it's important to send the message to our all our neighbors that we are a community that supports each other. Right now, our LGBTQ+ neighbors, particularly those in the Trans community, need allies more than ever. I have organized supplies for the last four years to paint Salem's crosswalks in June, increasing the numbers from 2 to 9 and adding a transgender pride crosswalk this past June. I believe these crosswalks help with visibility and inclusivity of our LGBTQ+ community.
- 5. If a resolution had come before the council to support access to driver's licenses and extending in-state tuition rates & aid to undocumented residents how would you have voted and why?
  - a. Yes. I believe all residents, regardless of status should have access to equal opportunity to pursue education, use our roads safely and ultimately contribute to our community.

**(C) Budget & Revenue**

- 1. What opportunities do you see for the city to raise revenue?
  - a. New growth via infill. By some estimates 40% of downtown Salem is surface parking. This land near amenities, including public transportation, should be used for housing production, including significant affordable and senior housing as well as housing for Salem's educators.

**(D) Education**

- 1. What are your top priorities for reducing persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in the Salem Public Schools?
  - a. As a City Councillor, schools are outside of my scope. But as a father, it is important to me that my kids attend schools that are diverse and thriving. I believe that communities that work to diversify their curriculums to reflect a broad range of experiences, and those who work to foster an inclusive environment where everyone can feel free to be themselves regardless of background, economic status, sexual orientation, or gender have created the most successful environment for learning.
- 2. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools in Salem? **YES/ NO**
  - a. No. Every child has different needs, and every parent needs the option to choose the school that best fits those needs. Salem's public schools are excellent, but public charter schools also provide a great option for many students. Charter schools can offer innovative educational approaches and provide options for parents and students in areas

where traditional public schools sometimes cannot. However, their expansion should not come at the expense of our public schools, and it should be done in a way that ensures equitable access while holding these schools accountable for their performance.

3. What steps would you take to raise the school rating for the Salem Public School System as a whole?
  - a. Again, this is outside of the City Council's jurisdiction. As a parent, I am happy with the direction our schools are moving and appreciate the efforts of Dr. Zrike and our school committee to get us there!

## **(E) Public Safety**

1. Would you advocate for the reallocation of money from the Salem Police Department budget to be reinvested in communities? **YES/ NO**
  - a. **If Yes, how would you “refund” the police and reallocate resources?**

No. Every community needs to allocate limited resources in a way that makes sense for their individual needs. In Salem we have a strong Police Department that has worked hard to support the Progressive goals of this community. Particularly our Community Impact Unit which has done commendable work supporting the most vulnerable members of our community.
2. Do you support the legalization of overdose prevention centers? **YES/ NO**

Yes
3. What steps would you take to address homelessness in Salem?
  1. Legalize Single Room Occupancy. This is a vital housing need which is illegal in most of Salem neighborhoods and is disappearing nationwide. I have recently introduced an order to discuss SRO's.
  2. Allocate resources to our CIU to help them continue to address these issues.
  3. Address tenant protection concerns. I have supported and am excited to vote for our Condo Conversion Ordinance to protect renters and our rental stock.
4. What steps can the city take to address pedestrian safety?
  - a. We must fully embrace the Vision Zero strategy, committing to eliminating traffic-related fatalities and severe injuries. This approach emphasizes data-driven analysis and targeted interventions in high-risk areas. Additionally, we must continue implementing traffic calming measures like speed bumps and narrowed lanes to reduce accidents. Ensuring safe and accessible sidewalks, compliant with the ADA is vital.

5. (Did you) Would you have voted in favor of the sanctuary for peace ordinance?  
YES/NO  
a. Yes

## **(F) Environment & Transportation**

1. What steps would you take to reduce dependence on cars and better facilitate the ability of Salemites to get around by walking, biking, or using public transit?  
a. We need to work to connect our bike lanes to ensure there are no unsafe routes for adult riders and especially children. This is often the reason folks will choose to drive rather than bike. Additionally, we should continue to support the bike share program, Salem Skipper and the future South Salem Commuter Rail Station.
2. What are your plans long term to address the city's aging water pipe infrastructure?  
a. Continue to support and fund our hard-working and dedicated public works department and its employees.
3. What are your top three policy priorities for making Salem a climate-resilient city, and how would you ensure that equity is at the center of any such efforts?  
a. Green infrastructure enhancements. We should prioritize the planting of street trees and the installation of permeable paving and sidewalk materials.  
b. The transition to renewable energy sources should be a major focus.  
c. Climate resilience demands community wide engagement and education. We should develop programs to raise awareness about climate change and its impacts.  
To ensure equity we should focus on neighborhoods which have historically received fewer green infrastructure investments and ensure that the benefits of climate resilient policies are shared by all residents regardless of their socioeconomic status.
4. Do you oppose the creation of new fossil fuel infrastructure in Salem? **YES/ NO**  
a. Yes
5. Do you support the fare-free trolley program? **YES/ NO**  
a. Yes

6. Do you support the expansion of the City's curbside composting pickup program? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Yes
7. Do you support the offshore wind project? **YES/NO**
  - a. Yes
8. Do you support continuing the existing Blue Bikes program? **Maintain / Expand / Eliminate**
  - a. Expand
9. Do you support the City's partnership with Boston Harbor Cruises offering ferry service to and from Boston? **YES / NO**
  - a. Yes
10. Do you support Salem adopting Vision Zero, which guides our transportation policy towards eliminating all traffic fatalities and making our roads safer for all users? **YES / NO**
  - a. Yes

## **(G) Housing**

1. Do you agree or disagree that Salem should do more to encourage housing production of all types, including both market rate and income-restricted? If so, how can the City encourage housing production?
  - a. Agree. We need to revamp our zoning code to make it easier to create infill housing, including the need to make it easier for small developers to build in Salem. This includes reducing or eliminating parking minimums and allowing for dense, historically appropriate construction by right.
2. What opportunities do you see for leveraging city-owned land for expanding market rate and Affordable housing?
  - a. As discussed earlier, there are a number of city owned lots, particularly downtown, which would be better served as affordable housing. I have and will continue to support the creation of housing in these spaces.
3. Do you support rent stabilization? **YES/ NO** if yes how would you help stabilize it?

- a. Yes. I would support Rent Stabilization if it were ever an option in Salem and the state of Massachusetts, which it currently is not. In the meantime, I will continue to support the tenant protections offered by the condo conversion ordinance still in progress.
- 4. How do you plan to address the intersection of homelessness and soaring housing prices?
  - a. By making it easier to build housing at all levels, including the legalization of Single Room Occupancy.
- 5. Do you support a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase ordinance, enabling tenants to purchase a building if the owner seeks to put it on the market? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Yes
- 6. Do you support implementing an inclusionary development policy (IDP) in Salem at 10% as has been discussed to date? **Yes at 10% / Higher % / Lower % / Not at all**
  - a. Yes, I would like to see it higher with higher density bonuses.
- 7. Do you Support the ending of mandatory minimum parking requirements for new construction? **YES/NO**
  - a. **Yes**
- 8. Do you support requiring that a majority of new affordable units be built on-site, in order to ensure communities are diverse and integrated? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Yes
- 9. Across the city, there are projects for large-scale supportive housing that are being fought by local communities, such as Lee Fort Terrace, Lifebridge, etc. Do you support pushing forward with these specific projects and others like them? **YES/ NO**
  - a. I vigorously supported Lee Fort Terrace and think that is a phenomenal project. Lifebridge's project is still far too early in the process to yet offer support. I will have a hard time supporting a project that includes the demolition of the Italian American Church which is still an important part of the fabric in that neighborhood. I support Lifebridge's mission and have hopes that the project will ultimately succeed!

**(H) Economic Opportunity**

1. What steps would you propose to reduce Salem's income and wealth inequality, especially the racial wealth gap?
  - a. By advocating for fair wage policies, affordable housing initiatives, and targeted economic development programs to create equal opportunities for all residents and prioritizing and strengthening essential services like education and healthcare to promote economic equity throughout the city.
  
2. Do you support requiring city contractors to give their employees at least two weeks' notice before changing their schedules and to compensate workers for late schedule changes? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Yes
  
3. What steps can the Council take to achieve greater diversity in City contracting?
  - a. We should consider the implementation of inclusive procurement policies as a means to actively bolster and empower minority-owned businesses. In addition, we should prioritize the establishment of transparent metrics for diversity and inclusion, institute regular reporting mechanisms, and actively engage in partnerships with organizations committed to advancing minority entrepreneurship.
  
4. The cannabis industry is expected to grow in Salem in the coming years. What steps should the City take to make sure that it grows in an equitable way, in which the communities most impacted by the drug war are able to benefit?
  - a. Salem should focus on implementing policies that promote equitable development. This includes measures such as social equity programs, fostering minority-owned businesses, and reinvesting in communities disproportionately impacted by the drug war to ensure that the benefits of this industry are broadly shared.

## **(I) Democracy**

1. How can Salem increase turnout in municipal elections?
  - a. Salem is very in line with many Massachusetts communities when it comes to voter turnout, but we would love to see it improve. Our most walkable wards, (1 and 2) tend to have much higher turnout than our least walkable ones. Continued improved access to polling locations by improving our multi-use paths and placing polling locations nearby accessible locations as well as other initiatives that improve accessibility,



such as free rides to the polls, are key. I would also support Election Day becoming a national holiday or moving voting day to a weekend.

2. How can the council increase transparency?
  - a. I think this council has done an excellent job ensuring access to our meetings remotely and in person, both during the pandemic and after. Additionally, we have made some adjustments to the council layout to improve accessibility. Continuing to ensure that our decisions are always made with an eye toward increasing transparency and access should be a priority.
  
3. What are you personally doing to increase turnout in this upcoming election?

Every year I hang vote reminders on every registered voter's door that I'm able to get to. This typically numbers in the thousands. Additionally, I'd like to consider myself one of the hardest working campaigners, hitting as many doors personally as I am able to, going out knocking every night that I'm free and communicating with folks via Reddit, Facebook and Instagram about the importance of voting.
  
4. Do you support allowing non-citizens with legal status the right to vote in municipal elections? **YES/ NO**
  - a. We should have a community-wide discussion about this. This is a complex issue with important considerations, and we should engage in a thoughtful dialogue, considering the perspectives of all before making a decision.
  
5. Do you support allowing 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote in municipal elections? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Extending voting rights to 16- and 17-year-olds in municipal elections should be carefully considered. It's essential to engage in a thoughtful dialogue with the community, assess the potential benefits and implications, and weigh the readiness of younger citizens to participate in the democratic process before coming to a decision on this matter.
  
6. Would you support Charter Change to allow for Ranked Choice Voting in Salem? **YES/ NO**
  - a. I am open to being convinced. As of right now, I am inclined to say that this is solving for a problem that doesn't exist in Salem and I see no need to put added stressors on our elections office. I would prefer to see them working to increase access.
  
7. Do you support making hybrid access to public meetings permanent? **YES/ NO**
  - a. Yes

**(J) Additional Comments**

*(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.)*