

JP Progressive Candidate Questionnaire

150 word maximum, no minimum. We will publish your answers in their entirety in the web version of this Candidate Survey. In the printed version, we reserve the right to edit for length, but not for meaning or intent.

1. Why do you want to be a District City Councilor?

2. Affordable Housing

The community planning process for the Forest Hills Improvement Initiative set a goal of having 50% housing on publicly-owned land and 30% on privately-owned be affordable. Do you support these goals?

3. Development

What type of development should be prioritized in Jamaica Plain and Boston, and how will you use your office to help move these projects forward?

4. Environment and Energy

If you are elected, what are three specific actions you would propose for the City of Boston to promote energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and improve green space in Boston?

Youth Violence

5. Given the resurgence of youth violence in the city, what specific steps would you take to ensure the safety of youth in our city?

6. What is your vision for youth in the City of Boston, and what do we need to do to get there?

7. Accountability, Transparency

What are 2 proposals you would recommend to improve accountability and transparency in city government?

8. Charter Reform

Do you believe the City Charter should be reviewed and revised? If no, why? If yes, what would your priorities for review or change be?

Education

9. We know the FY12 City budget will include the closing of some public schools. What will your priorities be when approaching this decision?

10. The cost of the City's school transportation plan is of concern to many and proposals to revise it will be debated during the FY12 budget process. What is your proposal for revising the BPS transportation plan?

11. Boston is slated to receive about 25% of Race to the Top Funds. The state will issue guidelines about how districts should use the funds. If you had an opportunity to weigh in, how would you advocate BPS invests that money?

12. Jobs

Most job growth in Metro Boston has occurred in Boston suburbs, while minority populations have been growing in the central city. Black and Latino residents have faced unemployment rates 3 times the rate of white residents and Asian residents twice that of whites. What single new or existing policy would you support that would have the greatest impact on unemployment and job disparities in Boston?

Labor

13. Earlier this year, an arbitrator awarded the firefighters a \$19M contract over 5 years; do you think City Councilors were obligated to support the decision?

14. As the City goes into negotiations with the other unions (e.g. teachers, police) in the City, what role do you think the City Council can play?

15. Race and Diversity

Affirmative action policies have recently been watered down by court decisions at the federal level. What are some creative policies other than affirmative action that the city could implement that would support and retain diversity within its workforce?

Budget Policy

16. What are 2 suggestions you have for making the City budget process more transparent?

17. Health care costs continue to rise and the City has limited power to address this. The State has the power to manage the benefit design of employees without Union negotiation but the City does not. City employee labor unions have opposed these changes, saying it undermines their collective bargaining power. Would you support the home rule petition (filed by the Mayor) granting the City this authority?

18. During the FY11 budget process, 4 libraries and 8 community centers were closed and many of our lowest paid city workers (librarians, custodians) were laid off. What city services or department budgets will you work to protect or eliminate in next year's budget?

Lightening Round (Yes or No)

19. Many workers in Boston are organizing to form unions, especially in the hospitals. Will you publicly support their efforts to organize?
20. Do you support the death penalty?
21. Do you support same sex marriage?
22. Do you support anti-discrimination laws that protect someone from being fired, or denied housing, education, or access to public facilities (including bathrooms) based on their gender identity?
23. Are you pro-choice?
24. Would you support a state constitutional amendment implementing a progressive income tax?

ChunFai Chan

1. Why do you want to be a District City Councilor?

We need to have a continued democratic participatory government where a diverse range of voices is heard to ensure that all Boston residents are fairly represented. This participation is necessary to ensure that our tax dollars are transparent and well spent because we have only a finite amount of resources and revenues to meet the needs of all Boston residents. This is why I am running for to be a District City Councilor.

2. Affordable Housing

I do support more opportunities for affordable housing initiatives throughout the city of Boston. The demand for affordable housing has consistently been higher than the supply. Any proposal to alleviate these demands is welcomed.

3. Development

We need a mixed use of housing and businesses/retail to promote a healthy economic environment in Boston. Small businesses are the engine of the economy and we need to be conscious of that as well as be conscious that there is a need for affordable housing in all of our neighborhoods.

4. Environment and Energy

First of all, when we do build affordable housing, we need to make sure that this housing is energy efficient and if possible environmentally friendly to leave a smaller carbon footprint. Second, we need to encourage more bike lanes in the city especially in high traffic areas like on Massachusetts Avenue. Third, we have to use incentives to further recycling efforts like using the funds from redeeming bottle, cans, and glass for school books to encourage children to read more.

Youth Violence

5. SPECIFIC STEPS

First of all, we need to keep the Street Workers program. They are first line of defense in terms of violence prevention in the city. Trust between the community and the police needs to be earned not given. In recent incidents, this trust has improved, but it does not mean that the work is done. We also need to have families and the community to get involved in a young person's life. That means being there for them not as their friend but as their care giver, provider, and guardian. The Parent U program was a good idea to get families involved in their child's life.

6. VISION

Young people are the future of our city. We have a generational responsibility to empower our young people to be our future leaders. This is done by having longer school days and by having learning activities year round especially during the summer months for them to empower their leadership and talents to fulfill their potential.

7. Accountability, Transparency

First, goes back to what I talked about regarding democratic participatory government. Residents need to take part and engage in order to hold city government accountable. Without this, city government gets stale. Second, by holding office hours within District 6 (and not just in one area within District 6) bring the role of government back to the greater community.

8. Charter Reform

The city charter should be revised and Councilor Tobin is leading the efforts to look into the issue. Having said that, there should a hybrid school committee where the mayor appoints a certain number of the seats and the community elects a certain number. Second, there should be a hard look at term limits for both the City Council and the Mayor. Third, we need to re-examine by just having the Office of Mayor disbursing money for all city operations except money for schools and for loans.

Education

9. EDUCATION BUDGET

With an ever-increasing high school drop out rate and also with the closure of libraries, this is not the trend that we should continue. This will increase class sizes and place a larger burden on the other schools in the system. It also mean that we need to make hard choices to maybe increase or diversify our revenue streams as well as make sure that when we do increase revenues that it is transparent and accountable to the residents of the city of Boston. What residents cannot stand is to see that our tax dollars are perceived to be not well spent.

10. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION BUDGET

The key to lowering our transportation costs is to start providing quality schools in all of our neighborhoods. The turnaround schools implemented this year across the city of Boston are a start. If these twelve turnaround schools become successful in improving the quality of the education, then we can gradually draw down our transportation costs because that can convince families that schools in their neighborhoods DO work. Having neighborhood schools then can have a positive effect on improving parental involvement in the schools. Now, how about the jobs of the bus drivers? There are many opportunities within the schools themselves that would need their assistance whether it is being school monitors, after school staff, support staff,

or even staffing in schools where they are integrating expanded day programs.

11. RACE TO THE TOP FUNDING

Two things that we can do to invest these funds. First thing, invest in trade schools and vocational schools. We have to realize that the builders of the future need to be trained and there is a greater need in terms of staying economically competitive. Second, invest in expanded school day and school year. We need to take a look at the brain drain that happens during the summer time whether it is providing summer jobs for youth or expanding the number of days to the school year. With this, there has to be more extracurriculars like music, computers, physical education, and dance programs for our young people.

12. Jobs

There needs to be a continued enforcement of the Boston Residents Job Policy. Second, a hybrid community college/job training program needs to be implemented because we are going to an ever-changing job market and that means that new skills need to be learned on the education front as well as in the training front. That means reaching out to our community colleges to collaborate with our job training programs. Third, in terms of our future, trade and vocational schools need to be expanded so that our young people do have the skills to compete for the jobs in our community.

Labor

13. FIREFIGHTER ARBITRATION DECISION

The City Councilors should never have been put into that position in the first place. However, we have to realize in the future that our collective interests outweigh the interests of just one entity. It is okay to collectively bargain for the hard work and services that are done by professionals in our neighborhoods. Watering it down to petty disagreements and bitter feelings are what residents are tired of and angry about. It should be all about YOU contributing to the community and we need to build a culture of being ALL ABOUT YOU in the city or we will continue to blame each other and point fingers that does nothing but to perpetuate decisions that are misinformed or are excessive.

14. CITY COUNCIL ROLE IN LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

The City Council can play a significant role by having the residents of Boston take part in the negotiations because they have a stake in either public safety or the quality of the schools that they send their children to. Councilor Connolly showed excellent leadership in this by inviting the residents

of Boston to take part in a hearing regarding the Boston Teachers' Union negotiations with the School Department. This is how the City Council should work for the people. It's not always about attending events, it about advocating for your constituents because you are representing their interests, their concerns, and their stake in the city.

15. Race and Diversity

We need to have a policy where promotions are based on one's qualifications, hard work, and talents. It should not be based on whom a person knows. That is how we would be able to support and retain diversity. Also we need to encourage leadership opportunities in the community so that there are diverse voices for our residents.

Budget Policy

16. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

First, before putting it to a vote, take the city budget to the neighborhoods so that residents have a say in the process. Second, we need an independent voice in city government similar to the Congressional Budget Office who would look at the spending in a non-partial, nonpartisan way so that our tax dollars are not being used as a political tool.

17. MUNICIPAL CONTROL OVER HEALTH PLAN DESIGN

The unions must be part of the process and should be not shut out if there is going to be a decision one way or another. That is not how we should work together. Even if we agree or disagree on how to implement the benefit design everyone should be at the table because it is all about everyone and not just a few individuals.

18. BUDGET PRIORITIES

There are always going to be tough choices when it comes to the budget. That is the price we will pay for fiscal responsibility and financial well-being. However, one thing we need to look at is that there has to be less disparity between our highest paid and lowest paid city workers. We also need face reality that our resources are not a bottomless well and we need to be mindful of that in the next few years and in our long-term future.

Lightening Round (Yes or No)

- 19. Support union organizing. **Yes**
- 20. Support the death penalty? **No**
- 21. Support same sex marriage? **Yes**
- 22. Support anti-discrimination laws **Yes**
- 23. Pro-choice? **Yes**
- 24. Support progressive income tax? **Yes**