

# 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?

# Matt O'Malley

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

Simply put, I want to serve my community. This city has given me some incredible opportunities, and I want to make sure that every person — in every neighborhood — is able to have the same access and equity of opportunity that I received. As a lifelong resident of Boston, I have lived, worked, or volunteered in every corner of the 6<sup>th</sup> Council District. I have worked in both the public and private sector, and have volunteered countless hours in varying organizations in building stronger neighborhoods. I have the unique blend of energy and experience to build a better Boston for all.

## 2. Affordable Housing

Yes. These ambitious goals will help facilitate more affordable housing and allow for more opportunities for homeownership in Jamaica Plain.

## 3. Development

I support more mixed-use housing and development, stronger environmental protection and preservation, and better support and cultivation for our local business districts. If elected, I will work to ensure that the community voice is heard in development, open spaces are protected, and Main Streets business districts continue to thrive.

## 4. Environment and Energy

I support increasing the number of hybrid vehicles in the City's fleet, funding weatherization and solar expansion for the city buildings, expansion of renewable projects, and placing and exploring the idea of developing wind turbines in and around some of the harbor islands. Additionally, I would support the efforts led by Councilor John Connolly in creating an Environmental Science Academy within the BPS, and adding a district-wide green curriculum to our schools. Finally, I would support the expansion of local agricultural efforts and commerce, fostering and encouraging more locally owned food sources and markets.

## Youth Violence

### 5. SPECIFIC STEPS

I support increasing and implementing proved success that helped foster the so-called Boston Miracle of the mid/late 1990's: more community police officers, more youth outreach workers, better communication among public safety

stakeholders. Community Policing works, we need to have more cops walking and biking the streets. We need to foster stronger relationships between public safety officials and community groups, crime watches, and civic associations. Moreover, we need to look at working with the Sheriff's Department and Parole Board in developing stronger reentry and reintegration policies. Finally, we need to look at ways of treating drug addiction with recovery and educational programs. The council can and should play a role in directing funding for these crime prevention measures.

### 6. VISION

I want every kid to realize his/her worth and give them the hope and tools to achieve their dreams. If we are able to strengthen the school system, we'll be making significant progress in providing opportunity for our youth. We also need to be developing worthwhile after-school and weekend programs for high-school kids, including job and internship opportunities. We need to emulate the Saturday Success School — a weekend tutoring/mentoring program at Boston Latin School — at every high school in the city. We need to close the digital divide by allowing web-based classes, instruction, and development, in every neighborhood and community center. We need to give the youth of Boston a little spark that will allow them to soar.

## 7. Accountability, Transparency

I support easier accessibility and understanding of all financial transactions involved in the city's budget (having the city's entire budget available for viewing on the web). I support televising all City Council hearings and School Committee meetings on public access channels. I would favor continuing Council President Ross's roving council meetings that could take place in the evening at rotating neighborhoods.

## 8. Charter Reform

Yes. I hope to serve on the Council's Charter Reform Ad-Hoc Committee and would welcome an open process with the public in determining what changes could be made. One idea I would like to explore would allow for a hybrid school committee made up of a membership that is half elected/half appointed. This model has been used to great success in the District of Columbia.

## Education

### 9. EDUCATION BUDGET

Under most circumstances, I oppose closing schools. However, times, student population, and the state of the physical plant might warrant it. Before we closed any school, I would make sure that we had the resources and space to provide alternate opportunities for the current student body.

#### *10. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION BUDGET*

I support an increase in the number of seats for neighborhood schools and would use the revenue gained in a reform of the transportation to build and better fund underperforming schools. We can and ought to use the funding saved in building thriving schools in every neighborhood.

#### *11. RACE TO THE TOP FUNDING*

I would use the potential tens of millions of dollars to be gained in RTF in hiring more teachers and lengthening the school day by one hour.

### **12. Jobs**

I would emulate the model used in the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department of an aggressive recruitment process in ensuring a work force that looks like the city. We can do this by holding job fairs and forums in every neighborhood and look at our high schools and colleges reaching out and engaging potential workers.

### **Labor**

#### *13. FIREFIGHTER ARBITRATION DECISION*

I was pleased that the council was able to facilitate concessions between the city and Local 718. While I support collective bargaining and arbitration, I do not believe that any public employee should be rewarded with financial incentives for passing a drug test.

#### *14. CITY COUNCIL ROLE IN LABOR NEGOTIATIONS*

I would like to see the council play a stronger role in negotiating and finding common ground on contract disputes. I believe that the council should have a seat at the table during table negotiations rather than simply having to ratify or deny a contractual agreement.

### **15. Race and Diversity**

As mentioned in the jobs question, I believe that there are other ways in which the city can do diversify its workforce.

By stronger and aggressive outreach to all neighborhoods, and by meeting metrics that would enable a better citywide distribution within the workforce, we can make sure that city workers better reflect the city's diversity. If I were lucky enough to win, I would start by hiring a council staff that reflected the diversity of the district.

### **Budget Policy**

#### *16. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY*

As mentioned in the transparency question, I would put the entire city budget on-line, as well as all bid proposals.

#### *17. MUNICIPAL CONTROL OVER HEALTH PLAN DESIGN*

No. Changes to health insurance benefits should continue to be negotiated through collective bargaining.

#### *18. BUDGET PRIORITIES*

I would fight for funding to protect libraries and community centers and would place more funding into the Boston Public Schools, crime prevention initiatives, economic development, and green projects. I believe that we need to aggressively collect Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) fees from certain colleges and universities as a means of closing the budget shortfall. Additionally, we need to close corporate tax loopholes as a means of creating other revenue streams.

### **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**