

## #3

**COMPLETE**

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Page 1: Community Council questions for Mayoral and City Council candidates

**Q1 PUBLIC SAFETY: How will you address the opiate addiction epidemic?**

6. My priority will be to save lives by getting addicts off the streets and into treatment. The heroin epidemic and all drug abuse is a complex public health issue and requires a multi-faceted public health approach. Which begins with the decriminalize of all drug addiction and abuse followed by the implementation of harm reduction (medically assisted treatment, needle exchanges, safe spaces), intervention(street outreach, counseling), and prevention(community and school-based education) programs. I will request that a percentage of asset forfeiture funds(administered by the police chief), collected and confiscated during drug arrests be allocated to programs and services addressing the epidemic. I will also support applications for grant funding for medically assisted treatment, intervention and prevention programs.

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**Q2 NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION: How will your administration help community councils hold property owners accountable for blight?**

Dealing with blight and absentee landlords are essential to providing support to Community Councils maintaining neighborhoods that their current residents wish to reside, as well as, communities that are attractive to new residents. To empower Community Councils to directly engage in holding absentee landlords accountable, I propose a program I call, Accountability in Housing program that includes: a landlord registry (any individual or entity that rents property in the City of Cincinnati), requirement of any individual or entity purchasing property from the City or using City funds to attend the Landlord Program, concentrated code enforcement on properties that receive 3 or more complaints, generating a list of repeat code violators (3 code violations), aggressive collection of fines and use eminent domain after non-response or repairs after 6-months. I support the expansion of the Vacant-Foreclosed Property Registration.

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**Q3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EQUITY: How will you invest in neighborhood business districts in a way that bridges the developing equity gap?**

Neighborhood business districts should reflect the cultures and desires of residents living in that neighborhood. I would empower community councils to identify the needs and desires of the neighborhood residents. To ensure that equitable investments are made into distressed communities, I propose the development of an Equity Development Fund. The Fund would provide investment dollars for start up and expansion of businesses in distressed neighborhoods.

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**Q4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EQUITY:** What will you do to ensure there is adequate supply of affordable housing in Cincinnati?

2. I will work to implement an assessment tool that will allow City Council to rate developers and projects based on criteria the City's needs. One area of ranking will be developers and projects inclusive of affordable housing. I will work to reduce the length of time tax abatements are offered, for example, reducing 10-year abatements to 15, as well as, re-directing a percentage of tax payments to create an Affordable Housing Fund(AHF). The AHF would provide financial assistance to working families and individuals for them to acquire affordable and sustainable homes. Council must also make policies that reduce and eliminate barriers to housing, such as conviction and criminal history questions on job and housing applications that negatively impact low and moderate-income people. I would propose a policy change that incentivized inclusionary zoning making it more appealing to developers to include affordable housing. Also requiring a percentage of new and re-developed housing to be affordable.

**Q5 GOVERNANCE, REGULATION & INCLUSION:** What will you do to increase and provide stability to Neighborhood Support Program funding stream?

. I would fight for an immediate increase of NSP funding from \$6,800 to \$10,000, the original amount funded to each Community Council when the program first began. To stabilize funding and ensure that NSP funding is increased yearly to keep up with inflation, I would propose funds from property sales be directed to the NSP program, as well as, lobbying the State to restore funding to local governments. I would make NSP funding along with the Office of Citizen Engagement and Neighborhood Investment a priority line item to ensure it is routinely funded at an acceptable level.

**Q6 GOVERNANCE, REGULATION & INCLUSION:** How will you help community councils gain more influence in development decisions ?

Through an Office of Citizen Engagement and Neighborhood Investment, Community Councils would have the support to organize and engage more residents in decision-making processes. More engagement means that Community Councils would be able to gain more valuable information from residents which can help create strong neighborhood plans. Neighborhood plans should be used to create a priority list for development. This list could then be used to match developers with neighborhoods that are desirable of their type of development rather than developers identifying locations that they want to develop based on their development needs or plans. Community Councils should be included in beginning conversations between developers and City Council or the Mayor.

**Q7 GOVERNANCE, REGULATION & INCLUSION:** What will you do to create a culture at City Hall that promotes civic engagement, and is responsive to neighborhood plans and citizen concerns?

Staff, fund and implement citizen participation and engagement programs through an Office of Citizen Engagement and Neighborhood Investment that are incentivized for citizens and government employees, and are easy to access and aligned with citizen concerns, use familiar, accessible technology, employ a variety of ways to communicate to citizens and receive their feedback. I would support initiatives that empower citizens to lead. Move a Council meeting to a more accessible time, such as one monthly evening meeting at 6pm, develop participatory budgeting, and provide technical support to community councils to organize and do intentional outreach to residents especially the lowest represented groups. Lastly, I will keep neighborhood office hours and bring City Hall business to the community

**Q8 TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE:** What is your plan for improving frequency and reliability of our bus system?

I will take a major leadership role to ensure that we have reliable and affordable public transit system. My plan begins with increasing the appeal of public transportation to all citizens making it a desirable choice. I support the restoration and upgrade of bus stops including restoring benches and shelters and Followed by an audit of routes to determine which routes are expandable or are able to be eliminated. To enhance frequency, I would consider establishing bus lanes, increased distance between high frequency routes to expedite bus travel.

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**Q9 TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE:** What will you do to improve multi-modal infrastructure that includes pedestrian and cyclist safety?

I will take a major leadership role to ensure that we have reliable and affordable public transit system. My plan begins with increasing the appeal of public transportation to all citizens making it a desirable choice. I support the restoration and upgrade of bus stops including restoring benches and shelters and Followed by an audit of routes to determine which routes are expandable or are able to be eliminated. To enhance frequency, I would establish bus lanes, increase distance between high frequency routes to expedite bus travel. I have vision for a multi-modal, fuel efficient regional transit system that includes rapid-transit and connects Cincinnati neighborhoods with northern suburbs and Northern Kentucky. The costs of operation will be shared among surrounding municipalities, cities, townships, and corporations. I support increasing bike lanes, encouraging and incentivizing carpooling,, expanding streetcar to uptown after stabilizing METRO.

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**Q10 TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE:** How will you champion environmental sustainability?

I will champion environmental sustainability by personally practicing the environmentally sustainable ideals and principles in my daily life. As an elected official, I will support prioritizing projects that are LEED certified, built with renewal energy and eco-friendly products. I support urban farming and land use for green space.

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**Q11 Name of candidate**

Lelsey Jones

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