



2023 LOCAL ELECTION VOTER GUIDE: LAWRENCE, MA

Frequently Asked Questions

When do I vote?

Election Day is November 7th

Where do I vote?

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/WhereDoIVote/>

Polling Locations are open 8am- 8pm

What if I am not registered to vote?

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>

Note: *Deadline to register to vote for the elections is 10 days prior to the said election day.*



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A note from our organizing crew...

For the 2023 local elections cycle the organizing crew at UTECH prioritized getting to know the candidates in the local municipal elections in the Merrimack Valley.

We first did research on all of the candidates running for Mayor, and City Council in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill. We then drafted questions that we would like to ask the candidates and created the candidate questionnaire distributed them to all of the candidates in the race and asked them to return with their responses. The responses in this guide are from those who returned the questionnaire.

We also hosted candidate meet and greets for all of the candidates who were willing to participate. Please take a look at our voter guide and share widely.

Happy Voting,
-UTECH's Organizing Crew



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

Councilor at Large

Question	Celina Reyes
<p>Are you going to address and help with the homelessness issue in the city?</p>	<p>Yes- I've worked very close with coordinators of homelessness programs, to find out different programs to better combat homelessness. I am also working with the mayor and having multiple conversations in hopes of getting funding allocated to these programs, to better fit the different types of homelessness.</p>
<p>Are you going to help combat gentrification?</p>	<p>Yes- I am very open to having conversations about this, because I do want more opportunities to be created, but we do not want rent for those who live in the area to get out of control. I have been a part of many conversations about this, and hope a consensus can be come to.</p>
<p>Do you have a plan to combat rising costs of housing?</p>	<p>Yes- I've had many conversations with community members about this, and have brought this us to lawyers and representatives, in hope of making housing affordable to all.</p>
<p>Do you have plans to improve DPW and the trash issue in the city?</p>	<p>Yes- During my time, we've had many conversations, meetings about the city's cleanliness, and have worked with/ further support DPW and better take care of the city.</p>
<p>Do you have plans to implement needle drop off boxes?</p>	<p>Yes- Here in the city, we're usually referred to a certain department for needle drop boxes, but we are hoping to locate strategic locations for these boxes set ups.</p>
<p>Do you have any solutions to address the addiction crisis in our community?</p>	<p>Yes- We've been working with the department of health to see which additional programs we can implement in our city to aid this issue. This is a large and constantly evolving crisis, and we are continuing to work in aims for its solutions.</p>
<p>Will you prioritize the safety of our kids and families in public spaces such as parks?</p>	<p>Yes- I've been a part of the remodels of many parks, as well as its vigilance. We've implemented rules to better the safety as well as increase patrols around them.</p>



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

Councilor at Large

Question	Celina Reyes
<p>Do you have a plan to address food insecurity?</p>	<p>Yes- I've worked in different organizations since the pandemic to help distribute food and nutritional products to families at home, as well as had conversations with our senator and representatives in hopes of bringing better solutions for people and families who need aid in nutrition</p>
<p>Lawrence has a community fridge that can be used by the food insecure, will you implement anything similar or new to this in your community?</p>	<p>Yes- We have different organizations who do food distribution, and recognize that it is still a large issue. We have identified that it is a need to implement these types of programs and it is a constant conversation.</p>
<p>Do you have any plans to combat the mental health crisis?</p>	<p>Absolutely, I know that it is a health crisis highly effecting all ages, and I've brought to the attention of representatives and senators that mental health resources are often not covered by insurance. This is a conversation that needs a lot of attention, and we will continue to strive for its solution.</p>
<p>Do you have plans to improve our school systems and make them more safe?</p>	<p>Yes- I have always thought that our public schools should have programs like the vocational schools to help our students learn new skills for their futures and careers. I also believe that we need more security and public safety in schools. I have aided in implementing more secure features like cameras and more security staff.</p>
<p>Do you have a plan to address the violence in our community?</p>	<p>Yes- I am in constant communication with the chief of police as well as the officers in charge of different districts in our city.</p>
<p>Will you listen to youth voices in your position?</p>	<p>Yes- I always welcome youth to my meetings, office, and have worked with youth apart of different schools and sports, in order to listen to what they believe our city's next steps should be, as they are the future of our city.</p>
<p>Do you support youth programming for young people returning from incarceration?</p>	<p>Yes- All of our youth deserve 2nd and even 3rd chances to help advance our communities. I am very open to hearing ideas and projects to help further support them to better their lives, and help give them access to resources they may not have.</p>



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

City Council District Race

Question	Wendy Luzon- District B	Jessica Aquino- District B
<p>Are you going to address and help with the homelessness issue in the city?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>It requires a multi- faceted approach that includes housing, services, prevention, and collaboration. As your candidate, I am dedicated to working tirelessly to address homelessness in Lawrence, ensuring that everyone in our community has a safe and stable place to call home.</p>
<p>Are you going to help combat gentrification?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Absolutely, combating gentrification is a critical issue that requires thoughtful and proactive measures to ensure that our community remains inclusive, diverse, and affordable for all residents.</p>
<p>Do you have a plan to combat rising costs of housing?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>With a comprehensive and community-focused approach, we can make meaningful progress in ensuring that housing remains affordable for all residents of Lawrence.</p>
<p>Do you have plans to improve DPW and the trash issue in the city?</p>	<p>Yes- Putting more public trash cans in our community, improving the system for getting rid of large trash, and working with contractors to improve the trash removal system.</p>	<p>Requires a comprehensive approach that involves infrastructure upgrades, community engagement, education, and proactive measures to prevent littering and illegal dumping.</p>
<p>Do you have plans to implement needle drop off boxes?</p>	<p>This has not been in my plans prior but I would love to bring this to the attention of the City Council if I am voted in.</p>	<p>I had not thought of this given it is a new issue of concern. However, this solution at first glance does not appear to be complex in nature. I would like to know more about the process, and ensure the budget and systems are in place to have such an issue be addressed within the city budget.</p>
<p>Do you have any solutions to address the addiction crisis in our community?</p>	<p>We need to work with the state and federal government to invest funding into programming for those suffering from substance use disorder.</p>	<p>There must be something in place to assist with tackling the crisis. I'd like to know who the key players are, and would want to know how we can enhance what already exists. Furthermore, the solutions must be both immediate impacting and long-term focused.</p>
<p>Will you prioritize the safety of our kids and families in public spaces such as parks?</p>	<p>Yes- It is important that the city seek and utilize federal grant funding available to us to make more public green spaces that are safe and fun for kids. We also need to make sure that these spaces are well maintained by our DPW.</p>	<p>By implementing a comprehensive approach that involves law enforcement, community engagement, and infrastructure improvements, we can create public spaces that are not only beautiful and inviting but also safe and secure for everyone in Lawrence.</p>



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

City Council District Race

Question	Wendy Luzon- District B	Jessica Aquino- District B
Do you have a plan to address food insecurity?	Yes- We need to work with established organizations within our community to make existing nutritional resources more accessible. We also need to work with these organizations to eliminate the humiliation associated with accessing these resources.	Addressing food insecurity is a multifaceted challenge that requires a coordinated effort from government, nonprofits, businesses, and the community. My goal is to ensure that no one in Lawrence goes hungry, and by implementing these strategies, we can work toward a more food- secure and resilient community.
Lawrence has a community fridge that can be used by the food insecure, will you implement anything similar or new to this in your community?	This is something I would love to learn more about and see if we can make plans to adopt more of these across the city.	Addressing food insecurity is a multifaceted challenge that requires a coordinated effort from government, nonprofits, businesses, and the community. My goal is to ensure that no one in Lawrence goes hungry, and by implementing these strategies, we can work toward a more food-secure and resilient community.
Do you have any plans to combat the mental health crisis?	We need to be creative and implore state and federal leaders to invest in making more of these services available in our community. One thing we can do within Lawrence is trying to combat the stigma around getting the behavioral health need.	My goal is to create a city where mental health is prioritized, stigma is reduced, and everyone has access to the care and support they need to thrive. Together, we can make meaningful progress in combating the mental health crisis in Lawrence.
Do you have plans to improve our school systems and make them more safe?	Yes	Improving our school systems and enhancing safety measures requires a collaborative effort involving educators, parents, students, and the broader community.
Do you have a plan to address the violence in our community?	Our local government needs for social services and resources as well as different outlets for youth to deter them from activities that can lead to violence. This can mean creating more programming, finding creative ways to get illegal weapons off our streets and also creates social service positions within our police departments to stop violence cycles.	My goal is to work collaboratively with residents, community organizations, and law enforcement to create a safer, more peaceful Lawrence for all of our residents.
Will you listen to youth voices in your position?	Yes	Their energy, creativity, and passion are assets that can drive positive change, and I am dedicated to ensuring that their voices are not only heard but also respected and acted upon in my position.
Do you support youth programming for young people returning from incarceration?	Yes	By investing in these youth programming initiatives for young people returning from incarceration, we can help them rebuild their lives, reduce the likelihood of re-offending, and strengthen our community as a whole.



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

City Council District Race

Question	Eufemia De La Cruz- District F
Are you going to address and help with the homelessness issue in the city?	Yes
Are you going to help combat gentrification?	Yes
Do you have a plan to combat rising costs of housing?	Yes
Do you have plans to improve DPW and the trash issue in the city?	Yes
Do you have plans to implement needle drop off boxes?	Yes
Do you have any solutions to address the addiction crisis in our community?	Yes
Will you prioritize the safety of our kids and families in public spaces such as parks?	Yes



2023 Lawrence City Council Voter Guide

City Council District Race

Question	Eufemia De La Cruz- District F
Do you have a plan to address food insecurity?	Yes
Lawrence has a community fridge that can be used by the food insecure, will you implement anything similar or new to this in your community?	Yes
Do you have any plans to combat the mental health crisis?	Yes
Do you have plans to improve our school systems and make them more safe?	Yes
Do you have a plan to address the violence in our community?	Yes
Will you listen to youth voices in your position?	Yes
Do you support youth programming for young people returning from incarceration?	Yes