

Ruben Ramos for Mayor

1. PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTION:

As mayor, I will make improving street safety one of my top priorities, especially when it comes to e-bikes and commercial delivery riders. I was the sponsor of the “Tests and Vests” ordinance, which requires delivery riders to wear numbered safety vests, so enforcement is possible when violations occur. Unfortunately, the current administration has failed to properly implement this law, and that failure has made our streets less safe for both pedestrians and riders.

I believe enforcement and accountability go hand in hand with good street design. Vision Zero cannot just be about paint and plans. It must include consistent and fair enforcement for drivers, cyclists, and e-bike riders. I will strengthen code enforcement, ensure the proper rollout of safety programs like Tests and Vests, and create clear education campaigns for all who use our roads, so everyone understands their responsibilities. My goal is a safer Hoboken where delivery riders can work responsibly, pedestrians can walk confidently, and families can feel secure on every block.

My broader vision for transportation in Hoboken is about balance, safety, and fairness. I want to make it easier for residents to move around safely whether they walk, drive, ride an e-bike, or take public transit. That means better traffic enforcement, smarter curb management, and a fairer parking system that respects residents. I will expand residential parking options and improve signage.

For commuters, I will strengthen coordination with NJ Transit, PATH, and the ferry companies so Hoboken has affordable and reliable choices. My five-dollar commuter ferry proposal is an example of how we can reduce congestion while making life more affordable for working residents.

Finally, I will make sure residents are part of every major transportation decision. Whether it is redesigning an intersection or adding new infrastructure, every project should include real public input and measurable safety goals. My mission is simple: build a Hoboken transportation system that puts safety, common sense, and residents first.

2. FISCAL POLICY & BUDGET:

My philosophy on tax policy is simple: government must respect the people who fund it. As mayor, I will make sure every dollar spent by the city delivers real value to residents. That means balancing the budget responsibly, eliminating waste, and improving transparency so the public knows exactly where their money is going.

For too long, City Hall has focused on flashy projects instead of the basics. My “Back to Basics” approach means prioritizing core services like public safety, clean streets, and reliable infrastructure before adding new spending. I will push for an early release of the budget each year so residents and the council can review it in full and understand the long-term impact of each decision.

I believe there are major opportunities to improve efficiency. Many departments still rely on outdated systems and paper-based processes. By modernizing technology and automating simple administrative tasks, we can cut costs without cutting services.

Finally, I will make sure the city stops using one-time revenues or federal relief money to cover recurring expenses. Those short-term fixes only make next year’s budget worse. My goal is to restore discipline, stability, and trust in how Hoboken manages taxpayer dollars, so residents see that their city is being run with care, honesty, and competence.

3. HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT:

Hoboken must grow in a way that strengthens the city we already have instead of overwhelming it. As mayor, I will make sure every development project is financially responsible, protects existing infrastructure, and delivers real benefits to our residents. That means holding developers accountable for contributing their fair share toward schools, parks, and flood mitigation when new projects are approved.

PILOT agreements should be the exception, not the rule. I have always fought to make sure that PILOTs do not come at the expense of Hoboken’s public schools or taxpayers.

I also support maintaining Hoboken’s rent control ordinance because it protects long-time residents and working families. However, enforcement must be fair, consistent, and transparent. I will make sure landlords and tenants have access to clear, accurate information about their rights and responsibilities.

The goal is balanced growth, development that adds to the city’s value, not just its skyline. Hoboken can welcome progress while still protecting affordability, character, and the quality of life that make this city home for so many.

4. SANCTUARY CITY:

I believe Hoboken must always be a city that treats every person with dignity and fairness, while also upholding the law and protecting public safety. Our police should focus on keeping our neighborhoods safe, not on acting as federal immigration agents.

If someone, regardless of their immigration status, commits a crime and is found guilty, they must be held accountable under the law. My administration would fully cooperate with federal authorities when there is a public safety threat or a criminal conviction that

requires coordination. What I will not support is using city resources to target or question residents simply because of their immigration status.

As a former state legislator and current councilman, I understand the importance of balancing compassion with responsibility. Hoboken's role should be to build trust between law enforcement and the community. Public safety depends on cooperation, and that means treating all residents fairly while ensuring that anyone who breaks the law faces the consequences of their actions.

5. HOMELESSNESS:

Homelessness is a serious issue that deserves compassion, coordination, and accountability. As mayor, I will make sure the city partners closely with the Hoboken Shelter and other local organizations that provide critical support, including food, job placement, and mental health services. These organizations have done important work for many years, and they need the city's full cooperation to continue helping people get back on their feet.

There has been talk at different times about moving the Hoboken Shelter, but that is not realistic. The city lost a court case in the past that confirmed the shelter's right to operate where it is, and any attempt to move it would not only be costly but legally unwise. Instead of fighting old battles, I want to focus on making the area safer and better managed for everyone, those who use the shelter and the residents who live nearby.

One key part of that plan is maintaining a visible safety presence during peak hours to make sure the area stays safe and orderly. The city can also use Community Development Block Grant funds to support security and outreach programs around the shelter. We need a balanced approach that supports those in need while also respecting the surrounding neighborhood.

Homelessness is not solved by ignoring it or pushing it somewhere else. It takes real coordination, clear expectations, and consistent follow-up. As mayor, I will make sure Hoboken leads with both compassion and common sense.

6. PUBLIC EDUCATION:

As both a public school teacher and a parent, I believe every child in Hoboken deserves access to an excellent education, no matter which public school they attend. My long-term vision for education is one where the city, district schools, and public charter schools work together instead of competing with one another. We have to focus on the students first, not on labels or politics.

I have always been a supporter of Hoboken's public charter schools because they offer families additional options and innovative approaches that help children learn in the way that suits them best. Each public charter in Hoboken has its own strengths and learning style, and that variety makes our city's overall public education system stronger. I will continue to support collaboration between all our public schools through shared spaces, shared programs, and joint efforts to improve academic opportunities for every child.

I do support school choice within the public education system. Families should have the freedom to choose the program that fits their child's needs, whether it is a district or a charter school. I do not believe a voucher system is the right solution for Hoboken. Our focus should be on strengthening and expanding quality public education options rather than diverting resources away from them.

Education has always been personal to me. As mayor, I will continue to be an advocate for every student and every teacher, and I will make sure the city is a strong partner in supporting safe, high-quality, and equitable learning environments for all.

7. GOVERNANCE & TRUST:

As mayor, I will lead a transparent and accountable administration that always puts residents first. Hoboken belongs to its people, and they deserve to know how their city operates, how decisions are made, and how their money is spent. Transparency will not just be a slogan in my administration, it will be a daily practice.

One of my first steps will be to require that all city contracts, major expenditures, and redevelopment agreements are posted online in a clear and searchable format. I will also make sure the city's budget is published earlier in the year, so residents and the council have real time to review it before a vote. Public meetings will include full disclosure of all materials being discussed, not just summaries.

On OPRA, my policy will be simple: the city will comply fully and promptly with every lawful records request. Residents should not have to fight or wait months for information that belongs to them. The only exclusions will be those that are legally required to protect personal privacy, security, or active investigations. Beyond that, information should be open and easy to access.

When it comes to hiring, I will end the culture of political favoritism that too often drives city appointments. Every position in City Hall, from the mayor's office to the departments, will be filled based on merit, qualifications, and integrity. Job postings will be public, interviews will follow clear criteria, and final selections will be documented and explained. I will also expand opportunities for Hoboken residents to apply for city jobs through local outreach and partnerships with schools and workforce programs.

A government earns trust through openness and fairness. My administration will operate with both, accountable to the people, transparent in its actions, and committed to serving every resident honestly and effectively.

8. NON-PARTISAN REPRESENTATION:

Hoboken's municipal elections are non-partisan for a reason, city government should focus on results, not party politics. As mayor, I will represent every resident of Hoboken, whether they are Democrats, Republicans, independents, or unaffiliated. My only goal is to make our city safer, cleaner, and more affordable for everyone who lives here.

Throughout my time in public service, I have always worked across party lines to get things done. When I served in the State Assembly, I worked with both Democrats and Republicans to deliver over thirty million dollars in school construction funding for Hoboken. On the City Council, I have supported good ideas no matter who proposed them, because local government is about solving problems, not scoring political points.

My administration will reflect that same approach. I will appoint people based on their ability, experience, and dedication to the community, not their political registration. I will also continue to meet regularly with residents, civic groups, and neighborhood associations to make sure every voice is heard.

Politics will never come before the people of Hoboken. My focus will always be on listening, solving problems, and working together to build a city that works for everyone.

9. CITY FOCUS:

As mayor, my focus will always be on Hoboken and the day-to-day issues that affect our residents most. I will make sure city government returns to the basics, public safety, clean streets, reliable infrastructure, and fiscal responsibility. While national issues like climate and immigration are important, my job as mayor is to deliver real results here at home. That means fixing what is broken, maintaining what works, and planning responsibly for the future.

I believe local government should lead by example when it comes to sustainability and preparedness. I will continue investing in flood mitigation, green infrastructure, and energy efficient projects that protect residents and save money in the long run. But I will never allow national debates to distract from the core responsibilities that make daily life in Hoboken better.

Recreation is one of those core responsibilities. Hoboken families deserve more places to play, gather, and stay active. I will make building a community pool and recreation center one of my administration's top priorities. That project has been discussed for years but never completed. I will make sure it is designed in a way that serves both kids and adults, and I will pursue partnerships with the county, the schools, and the private sector to make it financially responsible. Every major recreation project will go through a full public review so that residents have a real voice in shaping it.

Rodent control is another area where the city must do better. The long-term solution is a coordinated one — regular street cleaning, sealed trash containers, consistent enforcement of health codes, and cooperation with building owners to keep properties clean. I will increase inspection frequency and use data to track where problems occur so the city can respond faster. Success will be measured by cleaner streets, fewer complaints, and visible improvement across every neighborhood.

My philosophy is simple: focus on what matters most to the people who live here. Clean streets, safe parks, and honest government are not partisan goals. They are the foundation of a city that works for everyone.

10. CANNABIS:

I have long believed that any policy on cannabis in Hoboken must be approached with both responsibility and fairness. When the city changed the buffer rules from 500 to 600 feet in 2022, I voiced concern that the law was being used in ways that could harm legitimate operators unfairly. I also publicly said that cannabis dispensaries were never intended to be allowed in certain residential zones, such as C-3 areas in my ward, and that expansion into those zones should not be permitted without community input.

Going forward, I would review all existing licenses and dispensary placements in light of impact studies, zoning compatibility, and fairness. Any new approvals must include a robust public review period, clear criteria for location, and oversight through community host agreements requiring security, noise control, and responsible sidewalks management.

On public marijuana use, I believe it should be treated no differently than alcohol. It should be prohibited in public places where it would disturb others, especially near schools, parks, and sidewalks. Enforcement should be consistent and transparent. No one should use cannabis in places where others are involuntarily exposed.

In short, cannabis can be part of Hoboken's economic future, but only if it is regulated with respect to neighborhoods, public safety, and the voice of residents. Under my

leadership, we will make sure the rollout is fair, thoughtful, and aligned with the character of our city.

11. ENVIRONMENT:

Protecting Hoboken from flooding, and pollution will be part of my agenda, but my approach will be practical, transparent, and focused on results. The city has spent large amounts of time and money on environmental lawsuits in recent years, and while holding polluters accountable is important, litigation should never come before progress. As mayor, I will make sure our focus stays on solving local problems, not just filing lawsuits.

I will continue to support efforts that strengthen Hoboken's flood protection, improve drainage, and expand infrastructure. Projects like Rebuild by Design have proven that when we invest in smart planning, we protect both our neighborhoods and our economy. I will make sure that every environmental initiative we undertake has a clear goal, measurable results, and benefits residents can actually see.

When it comes to working with companies and developers, my approach will be collaborative but firm. The city will enforce environmental standards consistently, and any project that impacts stormwater, soil, or air quality will be required to meet the highest modern standards. At the same time, I will encourage public-private partnerships that bring innovation and investment to our environmental goals instead of relying only on costly litigation.

Hoboken has made real progress in building resilience, but there is more to do. We need cleaner streets, stronger infrastructure, and smarter use of our waterfront and open space. My administration will focus on real results that protect residents today and safeguard Hoboken for generations to come.

12. COMMERCIAL REVIVAL:

Small businesses are the heart of Hoboken's economy and the foundation of our neighborhoods. As mayor, my goal will be to make Hoboken a place where local business owners can thrive instead of getting buried in paperwork, delays, and confusing regulations.

My strategy for revitalizing Hoboken's commercial areas starts with cutting red tape and improving how the city works with business owners. Right now, opening a new business in Hoboken can take months because of slow approvals and poor communication between departments. I will create a Small Business Support Office that guides new owners through every step of the process, from permits to inspections, so they have a single point of contact who helps them open faster.

I will also review all fees and licensing rules to make sure they are fair and reasonable, and I will streamline outdoor dining and seasonal vending policies to help businesses attract more customers. Partnerships with the Hoboken Business Alliance and local property owners will be key to filling empty storefronts and bringing new energy to every neighborhood, not just downtown.

Commercial revitalization is also about keeping our streets clean, safe, and inviting. That means stronger code enforcement, better lighting, and reliable trash collection. I will make sure city services support our businesses, so customers feel welcome and comfortable shopping local.

Hoboken's small businesses built this city. My administration will stand with them, listen to them, and help them grow. When local businesses succeed, the entire community benefits.

13. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Hoboken is a great city with enormous potential, but to reach that potential we need leadership that listens, leads with respect, and focuses on the basics. As mayor, my commitment is to put residents first and deliver the kind of government they deserve, one that is transparent, responsive, and accountable every single day.

I have spent my life serving this community, as a teacher in our public schools, as a member of the State Assembly, and as a councilman. I know how government works, and I know how to make it work better for the people of Hoboken. My approach will always be about solutions, not politics.

We need to get back to taking care of what matters most — clean streets, safe neighborhoods, responsible budgeting, and support for families and small businesses. I believe in working with everyone, regardless of party or background, to make Hoboken the best version of itself.

The residents of Hoboken deserve a mayor who listens, follows through, and delivers. That is the kind of leadership I will bring to City Hall.

Alfredo Veloce for Council

1- Public Safety & Transportation

What is your plan to improve auto safety and reduce vehicular incidents in Hoboken? How would you assess the effectiveness of the city's "Vision Zero" program, and what, if any, changes would you propose?

The plan for reducing vehicular incidents in Hoboken (over 200 last year resulting in injury) revolves around enforcement. It is almost impossible to walk through Hoboken without witnessing at least one car or e-Bike running a stop sign or red light. To effectively enforce this type of issue, along with distracted driving (texting, under the influence, DWI) we need to support our law enforcement officers by providing better technology (radar, sensors, cameras). There are also some design issues still; corners where stop signs are missing, traffic lights that are out of sync, and places where we can add a turning light (ex. by the uptown car wash).

I would consider the effectiveness of "Vision Zero" as mixed; while zero traffic deaths in the last eight years should be celebrated, the recent uptick (year over year 50% change) in accidents means that there are some areas that we are still failing. We should be using data to determine the intersections or streets with the most incidents, assessing why that is the case, then implementing solutions (like some mentioned above) that could help reduce accidents in those areas.

What is your comprehensive vision for transportation that addresses the needs of both commuters and residents, including solutions for parking and the flow of bike messengers and pedestrians?

As someone who has spent their whole life in this city, I am a user of every mode of transportation. I use my bike (non-electric) to commute to Jersey City two days a week, use public transportation (bus) to commute the other three days, drive at least once a week for larger errands or when leaving town, and walk daily. Therefore, I think any transportation policy should account for all of these methods so any comprehensive policy should incorporate all stakeholder input. This includes some of the enforcement and infrastructure design recommendations mentioned above, along with just getting back to basics by making sure our streets are paved and sidewalks are fixed and ADA compliant (to help seniors and those with disabilities), while working with developers on this maintenance to keep costs low for the city.

Parking has always been an issue in Hoboken. We have limited space in our square mile town and it is only getting worse with increased development. There are several small solutions we need to incorporate including but not limited to: returning several spots around town that are taken by things like bike stations (moving them to the wider sidewalks), having the parking utility ticket vehicles in the wrong places (out of town cars on resident side of the street), and removing the “corner sticks” that prevent pickup and dropoff in some areas. The larger impact solutions would be: requiring developers to build enough parking for the amount of units they have (it can be done, look to the Citadel on 7th and Jefferson), evaluate wider sidewalk areas where we can make perpendicular / diagonal parking instead (increasing spots in those areas by almost 2 to 1), and see where we can go vertical with public parking lots / garages to add spaces.

2- Fiscal Policy and Budget

Please outline your philosophy on tax policy and budget management. What specific areas of the city budget do you believe are in need of improvement or could be optimized for efficiency?

My degrees are in finance and economics, with an MBA in International Business. I have spent nearly a decade working in the financial industry at a large bank, with roles such as procurement, financial analysis, and the current being in project management. My philosophy is that any spending should be carefully considered, data driven, and should include a cost benefit analysis. The main goal is to keep taxes low, or at least keep increases under inflation, but this will require a few changes to the current budget management.

In the current city budget we pay over \$17m a year in debt service and over \$10m in “other expenses”. These are major concerns that we need to reevaluate because we currently borrow more than we should.

The first thing I would do on the council is ask for a forensic audit, so we can see where we are spending every single dollar in this city (not just the topline reported numbers by each department) and see if there is any waste we can cut. The more impactful change will come from my approach to decision making (example outlined below):

At the start of each fiscal year, we will take the municipal tax levy amount from the year prior (including the approved increase if there was one) then subtract the guaranteed expenses for the current year (salaries, pensions, contracts). The remaining balance is what we have to spend throughout the year on projects, prioritized by need. Any other fees or fines (parking or non-parking related) could be used for discretionary spending. Every single vote I make, and dollar spent, will be

calculated as a percentage of that remainder mentioned above. Unless there are alternative methods of funding (federal/state/county or even non-profit grants), that is the maximum we can spend in that given year. Using this method we can reduce debt, can build a surplus, and use that for any potential unexpected emergencies (instead of issuing new bonds).

We need to get to a place where we are fiscally responsible by not spending unlimitedly, and we need to be good stewards of our residents' and businesses' tax money. Tax increases of 4% or higher (4.5% was just approved this year) are not sustainable.

3- Housing & Development

Given the challenges of urban density, what is your plan to manage financially responsible development and the use of PILOT agreements in a way that protects existing infrastructure and justifies their fiscal impact to Hoboken's taxpayers?

PILOTs should not be used for luxury buildings, only for affordable income buildings where it makes sense to do so. From my time on the rent board this year, I see firsthand how useless PILOT agreements can be if owners who break the contract are not held accountable. We have existing buildings (Clock Towers, Church Towers, Marineview) that were built for low income Hobokenites and primarily public service and city workers. With acts like

Warehousing (purposefully keeping apartments vacant in these buildings to capture higher rent) and by circumventing income verification and waitlist requirements, we are failing our veterans and first responders in town. So before we build any new development, the financially responsible thing to do would be to get the current affordable income building situations under control. This could be accomplished by enacting stricter penalties for property owners who disregard their PILOTs and make sure new agreements have better terms for police, EMS, veterans, and firefighters. This will limit the fiscal impact to Hoboken's taxpayers by reducing the number of new affordable buildings needed by making sure the current ones are operating correctly.

We want to keep Hoboken as a place where people of all socioeconomic backgrounds could live, ESPECIALLY our service workers who are getting priced out. I have police officer friends who are starting families and cannot live in the city they grew up and work in because of the failure of our current PILOT agreements. We want public service members to live in the community they serve because it will make Hoboken a safer and more connected place.

Once this is handled, we can evaluate where it makes sense to build new housing and use the national and statewide programs available to minimize costs for

residents.

What is your position on Hoboken's existing rent control ordinance? What changes if any would you wish to see?

The rent control ordinance (Chapter 155) is something politicians historically do not want to touch. Given that I now have a much deeper understanding of the ordinance, I know what needs to be changed. The current ordinance is confusing for both landlords and tenants, leaving corner cases up to interpretation and including some unclear language. For example, there is nothing written in the ordinance for lived-in apartment owners when they move out, and there is leftover language that is no longer applicable (such as one time exemption scenarios). Aside from the cleanup that is needed, there are some adjustments that need to be made to both further protect tenants, but also to make things more fair for smaller local landlords as well. Every board meeting I am taking notes and contemplating changes based on the scenarios we encounter, so that we can get these fixes implemented on day one.

4- Sanctuary City

Please define your position on Hoboken's status as a sanctuary city. Given a scenario where an undocumented person commits a crime, is found guilty, and prosecuted, what would your administration's policy be regarding cooperation with federal agencies such as ICE?

To my knowledge Hoboken is not an official "Sanctuary City"; I do think it is important to not discriminate against people based on race or identity. That being said, I have zero tolerance for violent crime (rape, murder, armed robbery), so if someone (undocumented or not) is convicted of any of those heinous acts and found guilty, yes we would not interfere with our police's ability to aid federal law enforcement. I will stress the importance of upholding our constitution and making sure people receive their 5th amendment right to due process in any scenario because rule of law applies to both citizens and politicians.

5- Homelessness

What is your approach to addressing homelessness in Hoboken, and what is your plan for providing services and shelter to the city's homeless population?

Homelessness is a complex issue and it has been ignored for too long. The low income housing problems mentioned above and unfinished veteran housing (American Legion project on Willow) are both key factors that will help resolve part of the homeless population issue. Better programs regarding rehabilitation, disability relief, and workforce reentry can also assist the unhoused people in town. We can leverage local

volunteers for some of these programs (outside of just the feeding and donations). This should be applicable to the people who need assistance in Hoboken currently and not from neighboring municipalities. In the meantime, especially with the school nearby, an officer or two should be monitoring that area daily.

6- Public Education

What is your long-term vision for the future of public education? How would you make that vision a reality, and what role do you see charter schools playing in that plan?

My long-term vision for the future of public education in Hoboken is to keep the majority of children in our town in our school system (as opposed to leaving to nearby cities like JC and NYC) and ensuring our offerings and test scores continue to improve. To make this vision a reality, we need buy-in from parents and city officials, we need to keep hiring and training competent faculty, and we need to make sure they have the resources they need to continue to provide a better education.

I attended several schools in our city, including the High School, and the size of the school has almost doubled since I left. Parents are contributing and the school is genuinely improving. With more people moving into town, we just need to make sure we are optimizing existing space to handle the uptick in student volume for both the public and charter schools.

Do you support school choice? If you do, would you support a voucher system?

Support school choice in a limited capacity, think we should be accommodating Hoboken students first and foremost. Not in support of a voucher system as it costs additional taxpayer dollars and is selective.

7- Governance & Trust

What specific steps would you take to establish and maintain transparency and accountability in your administration? What would be your policy on OPRA responsiveness? Exclusions?

Transparency is the most important thing in government, we serve the people, not the other way around! Every decision that is made should have detailed and public reasoning behind it, conflicts of interest need to be disclosed, and reporting (on everything from crime to spending) should be routine and accessible. Transparency

also comes from opening up two way feedback channels and improving communication with the residents. We need to hold corrupt politicians and city officials accountable and prevent them from abusing their power with stricter regulations, punishments.

OPRA responsiveness should be within a few days, using technology to streamline the application process and make responses more efficient. Only personal messages (like those between spouses) should be excluded (unless that spouse is also a city official). Individual's personal information, like addresses and SSN, should be redacted.

As a city council member, what would your hiring process be for positions within the city?

Hiring processes in the city should be fully merit based, no handouts or favors. Decisions should be based on credentials and relevant resumes of potential applicants to each role, with voting explanations mandatory from the councilmembers. Councilmembers should recuse themselves if there is any potential conflict of interest. Even if you vote with integrity, it is important to uphold our processes by removing yourself when someone you know personally applies for a city position (like a friend or family member).

8- Non-Partisan Representation

Recognizing the November election is a non-partisan municipal race, how would you ensure that your administration represents the interests and concerns of all residents, regardless of political affiliation?

We live in a square mile city, no matter what party you align with we have mostly the same issues. Always considered myself an independent so it is natural for me to see people for people on both sides of the aisle, listen to concerns and feedback, and not discriminate based on party affiliation. If I am elected, it is to represent all of Hoboken, there is no door I would shut and no concerns I will not take seriously. Political party is not even a question for me, putting Hoboken and the community first will always be my objective. The best type of administration I can imagine is one with mixed perspectives for all voices to be represented in city hall.

9- City Focus

What would be the primary scope of your focus as a council member, and how would you balance addressing national issues like climate and immigration with the more immediate, localized needs of Hoboken residents?

My primary scope of focus on the city council is on the local issues. There is overlap between local and national problems, but the main objective is to put Hoboken first and work on problems we face here. It is important to be aware of what is going on at the federal level, especially for federal grants and funding, as well as complying with any new laws. Even the projects or challenges we face that have to do with national topics (like the ones mentioned above) it is still important to view them through a localized lens and prioritize the needs of Hoboken citizens.

Our community has a recognized need for more recreational opportunities, including the potential for a public swimming pool. What is your plan for evaluating and addressing this need?

We need to improve access to all recreational activities, making our booking tools more intuitive and efficient so everyone can use our public spaces. For recreational programs, we can expand offerings based on interest and demand. Bookings should prioritize Hoboken residents and any fees collected from reserving public space should go directly toward recreational facility maintenance and expenses.

Specifically, our plan for public swimming spaces involves leveraging what we already have in town. The YMCA on Washington Street is in early stages of a restoration, this building already has the setup for a pool and that should be a priority for the plan (a fully open to the public indoor swimming pool). Additionally, the Hoboken High School pool should be open to the public when not in use by the school (or at least to families in the district). We also need to work on establishing a better relationship with Stevens Institute of Technology to bring back summer swim programs. More ambitious goals are, converting the splash pad at North West resiliency park to a full size swimming pool (it is a large enough space and the splash pad only uses a portion of it) and the infrastructure should be in place already. Other than that, we can reevaluate where best to build a new swimming pool in town, though it is a more costly option than any of the aforementioned.

Addressing the persistent problem of rodents is a top concern for many residents. What is your long-term plan to tackle this issue, and what metrics will you use to measure the success of city services?

Rodents are unsanitary and directly impact the health of our city. To contain this issue we need to work closely with our Health department to identify hotspots in town and with local exterminators to terminate any pockets. It is also a priority to keep our city clean, that means making sure all public garbage receptacles are working and refreshed daily. The city also needs to enforce current garbage disposal and parklet cleaning laws. This means individuals and businesses should be held responsible for improperly disposing of trash or allowing parklets to harbor infestations. There is a

new ordinance that calls our trash covers for buildings and restaurants, these boxes are already in use in places in town (across the street from Dino and Harry's there is one) and could help keep rodents out if they are cared for properly, but we need to add enforcement measure if they are not in working order.

To improve transparency and illustrate success of these operations, like New York, Hoboken should publish the comprehensive and aggregate data of rat complaints received to the public. This data should be made available on a dashboard on the city's site and reported quarterly at council meetings, it should include not only the complaint but response time and if the issue was resolved or not. It may be worth consulting a local pest control company for an annual infestation inspection (until the problem is quelled) and in the same assessment determine the best course of action for those infestation sites.

10- Cannabis

What are your thoughts on the city's current plan for six cannabis dispensaries?
How would you characterize the rollout process to date, and what is your position on public marijuana use within city limits?

Recreational marijuana is a hot topic in town now, personally I am not anti-dispensary. There was a market for it in town even when cannabis was illegal. I think they provide a legal, safer, and more controllable alternative to illegal drug activity that has already taken place (would like to see the data on how that has diminished since these were opened). This alternative should reduce crime and violence related to illegal drug deals and also controls the quality of the substances people are taking (reduce the amount of fentanyl related overdoses). Not to mention, the businesses can be limited and provide another source of tax revenue. I do think public use laws should be similar to that of alcohol (cannot drink outside, be publicly intoxicated, or drink and drive).

All of that being said, the rollout process to date has been very sloppy. Without comprehensively thinking about where these would be placed and other zoning issues, the ordinance has changed multiple times and it seems that the numbering (six dispensaries and six hundred feet from schools) has been arbitrary. We need to make more data driven decisions, what does the research tell us about the impact of cannabis dispensaries on our neighborhoods? That should have been the first step before approving any business plans and going forward should be the basis for any change in the ordinances.

11- Environment

The previous administration spent a significant amount of time and money on legal action against companies regarding environmental issues. Do you plan to follow

in the same footsteps, and what is your overall approach to environmental policy for Hoboken?

It is important to me that we protect Hoboken's natural spaces and also strictly limit the amount of pollutants that are released into our air and water. When my parents were growing up here the air and water were full of lead, asbestos, mercury, and other toxic chemicals as Hoboken was an industrial town. This led to serious adverse health problems in our community. So while I do not think we need to follow the current administration's path, we do not have national ambitions, focusing on keeping litter and pollution down on the local level is a top public health and quality of life priority to us.

12- Commercial Revival

What is your strategy for promoting commercial revitalization and supporting local business throughout the city?

Small businesses are the heart of our city; they provide jobs, pay taxes, and expand the offerings available to residents of our city. Washington street is the epicenter of business in Hoboken and should be promoted more to attract people from outside of town to shop, we do not want to see perennially vacant storefronts here. There are several key issues that limit the success of local stores in Hoboken: it takes way too long to open (in some cases 12-18 months), the permit process is slow, rent is expensive, and the city does not help much after a storefront is opened.

We want to assign a case manager to each new business to help navigate the opening and application process. We will incorporate technology where possible to streamline the permit granting process and reduce time. That assigned case manager will help the business on an ongoing basis after it is opened to help get exposure to events in town, as well as connect with other Hoboken-based businesses to navigate challenges like legal issues or emergency repairs. We need to make sure there is an effective and efficient zoning / planning board in place by appointing people who have experience in the local business, it should not take over a year to open businesses in town! I would personally like to establish a Local Business and Landlord Coalition (LBLC) that can connect these two groups and try to create a synergy between them, local landlords are not the enemy, and we are all on the same team (wanting the best for Hoboken). It is not enough to just get businesses open, we want to do anything we can to make sure they can stay competitive, especially with the rise of corporatization in town.

13- Additional comments or anything that you would like to add.

I spent my whole life in this community, my family goes back three generations, and I was excited to join Team Ramos this year because we want to make sure we are putting

Hoboken first and getting back to focusing on the basic issues we all face. Republican, democrat, or anything else; we all share the same square mile and all want to be safe in our community, be able to afford where we live, and improve the quality of life! We will work with everyone in town, make their voices heard, and create a transparent administration that serves the people, not the other way around.

Councilman Ramos put together the most well rounded slate possible (four people at different stages of life with different perspectives and experiences in our city), he welcomes different opinions and we are ready to put our skills to work for Hoboken!

Please feel free to contact me anytime by email veloce4hoboken@gmail.com or on Instagram [@voteveloce](https://www.instagram.com/voteveloce) if you want to introduce yourself, share concerns, or have more in depth questions on my answers above. We also have a campaign headquarters at 736 Washington street where you can find us most days. Look forward to meeting with you all and greatly appreciate your time and consideration this election season and beyond! Thank you!

Britta Winans Ouano for Council

1- Public Safety & Transportation

What is your plan to improve auto safety and reduce vehicular incidents in Hoboken? How would you assess the effectiveness of the city's "Vision Zero" program, and what, if any, changes would you propose?

I want to start by clarifying that I'm not running for mayor. I'm running for City Council, and my role would be to advocate for residents while working with the administration to make sure policy is implemented in a way that makes sense for Hoboken.

When it comes to traffic safety, I agree with Councilman Ramos' approach: we need common-sense solutions that actually work for residents. Vision Zero has an important goal - keeping our streets safe - but you can't civil engineer a city into discouraging people from owning or driving cars. As long as we live in New Jersey, people are going to have cars, and we need to plan around that reality instead of against it.

Vision zero has been rolled out with a lack of an education campaign. Residents see changes on their blocks - parking spots taken away, intersections reconfigured - but there's not enough communication about why those changes are being made or how they prevent injuries. People deserve to understand the "why," not just wake up to cones and new paint.

I also disagree with eliminating parking spots and loading zones. People need to be

able to pull over sometimes without blocking a lane of traffic. Taking that flexibility away makes the city less efficient, not safer.

The better path forward is balance: continue making targeted Vision Zero improvements based on data and community feedback, but at the same time, invest in upgrading and modernizing our parking structures. We can't solve traffic safety by shrinking the city for drivers without also expanding capacity where cars are already part of daily life.

So my plan is about both/and - supporting the safety elements of Vision Zero while also advocating for smarter investments in parking and traffic flow. That's how we make our streets safer without making our city less livable.

What is your comprehensive vision for transportation that addresses the needs of both commuters and residents, including solutions for parking and the flow of bike messengers and pedestrians?

I support a balanced vision for transportation - making Hoboken safer and easier to navigate for commuters, residents, and businesses alike. I support Councilman Ramos's push for creative, cost-effective solutions that meet people where they are.

A great example is the \$5 Ferry plan - a subsidized transit day with help from the city, NJ Transit and NY Waterways. Cities like Boston and San Francisco have piloted subsidized transit days with success, and we can bring that same energy here to give people real alternatives to driving and if successful, expand upon the number of days a week this could be feasible.

At the same time, we need to address e-bike congestion. I'd like to see us follow NYC's lead by setting fair wages for delivery workers, which in turn reduces the oversupply of riders on our streets. And delivery riders should have designated hubs where they can wait between orders - off sidewalks and out of traffic.

On the local level, we must modernize our parking infrastructure. That means upgrading existing garages, building new ones where it makes sense, and revisiting how street permits are allocated so residents aren't squeezed. Can't forget about modernizing the Hop shuttle - making it more reliable and better connected to ferries and PATH so it truly serves as a solution.

More affordable ferries to ease PATH and tunnel congestion, safer and more orderly streets by managing e-bikes and pedestrians, and modernized parking and local transit, like the HOP, for residents. That's how we meet the needs of commuters while protecting the quality of life here in Hoboken.

2- Fiscal Policy and Budget

Please outline your philosophy on tax policy and budget management. What specific areas of the city budget do you believe are in need of improvement or could be optimized for efficiency?

My philosophy on budget management is simple: be transparent, spend wisely, and make sure every dollar improves quality of life in Hoboken.

We need dedicated funding for safety projects so Vision Zero improvements aren't stop-and-start. Parking revenues should be clearer, with residents seeing exactly how that money is reinvested. Capital projects must be efficient and coordinated so we're not redoing work later.

Everyone knows there can be value engineering done to trim costs on the budget - but what we should be spending equal time discussing is how to drive revenues into this city via businesses and visitors.

Finally, regular reporting by ward will show where money goes and whether it's working. That's how we build trust and deliver better results.

3- Housing & Development

Given the challenges of urban density, what is your plan to manage financially responsible development and the use of PILOT agreements in a way that protects existing infrastructure and justifies their fiscal impact to Hoboken's taxpayers?

I believe Hoboken can grow responsibly - and that growth, when managed well, is good for the city. Some neighborhoods don't have the density to support the shops and services residents want, and thoughtful redevelopment can change that.

Financial agreements with developers can help, but only if they offset strain on infrastructure and deliver clear benefits to the community. That means green construction, parking that entices visitors, and spaces for retail, recreation, and small businesses.

I'm pro-build, but growth must come with accountability. Every deal should show a real return for residents, so as Hoboken grows, everyone benefits - not just developers.

What is your position on Hoboken's existing rent control ordinance? What changes if any would you wish to see?

Hoboken has one of the most complex rent control ordinances in New Jersey. I believe

in protecting tenants from unfair increases, but landlords also need to cover costs and reinvest in their buildings - otherwise, tenants lose out too. We should do more to educate residents about their rights, and make sure redevelopment balances protecting renters with adding modern, efficient housing. This isn't about being pro-tenant or pro-landlord - it's about keeping Hoboken livable, affordable, and sustainable.

4- Sanctuary City

Please define your position on Hoboken's status as a sanctuary city. Given a scenario where an undocumented person commits a crime, is found guilty, and prosecuted, what would your administration's policy be regarding cooperation with federal agencies such as ICE?

My approach is Hoboken First. Our responsibility as a city is to protect the safety, quality of life, and resources of the people who live here. New Jersey is already a sanctuary state, so whether Hoboken calls itself a sanctuary city doesn't change the state-level protections that exist.

That said, I don't believe Hoboken's limited resources should be used to carry out federal immigration enforcement. That's the job of the federal government, not our local police department or City Hall. Our focus needs to remain on keeping our streets safe, our neighborhoods clean, and our services strong for Hoboken residents.

At the same time, I don't believe someone who is in this country illegally should have access to the same local amenities, resources, or benefits as a Hoboken taxpayer. If an undocumented person commits a crime, is found guilty, and prosecuted, I support cooperating with federal agencies in those circumstances. Public safety comes first, and no one who breaks the law should be shielded from consequences.

So to me, this is not about national labels - it's about making sure Hoboken stays safe, strong, and focused on serving the people who live here legally and contribute to our community.

5- Homelessness

What is your approach to addressing homelessness in Hoboken, and what is your plan for providing services and shelter to the city's homeless population?

Homelessness is a deeply human issue, and my approach begins with empathy. People experiencing homelessness deserve dignity and access to basic services that can help them get back on their feet. Hoboken is fortunate to have a long-standing shelter, but it's

important to remember that the shelter is not city-run - it's privately owned and operated by a church. Because of that, the city's role should be one of partnership and accountability.

Just like any business in town - whether it's a bar, a restaurant, or a fitness studio - the shelter has a responsibility to manage what happens outside its doors. That means taking responsibility for lines, loitering, or crowd control so that surrounding neighbors and businesses aren't unfairly impacted.

At the same time, I believe in drawing a firm line. If someone is unhoused but commits a crime in our city, they should not be entitled to the same services and support as someone who is law-abiding. Hoboken resources must first and foremost protect our residents' safety and quality of life.

My approach is twofold: continue supporting service providers who help the unhoused find stability, while also holding them accountable for how their operations affect the neighborhood. And for individuals who break the law, the priority shifts to public safety. Compassion and accountability can coexist.

6- Public Education

What is your long-term vision for the future of public education? How would you make that vision a reality, and what role do you see charter schools playing in that plan?

My long-term vision for education in Hoboken is about choice, quality, and opportunity. Every family should feel confident that whether they choose public, charter, or private schools, their child will have access to a strong education that sets them up for success. School choice is not about dividing us - it's about making sure every student, at every age, has a path that works for them.

To make that vision a reality, we need to invest in facilities. Too many of our buildings are outdated and not keeping pace with the needs of modern education. Classrooms, labs, gyms, and libraries should reflect the future, not the past.

But just as important as facilities are the people inside them. The best programs come from the best people. We need to continue to attract and retain experienced, talented teachers and staff, and give them the support they need to thrive. When we have strong educators, they can innovate from the inside out, upgrading curriculum, developing new programs, and helping our kids grow into contributing members of society.

Charter schools play a role in that ecosystem. Alongside public and private schools, they provide parents with choices, drive innovation, and serve as an option that fits different student needs. The key is ensuring all schools - charter, public, or private - are held to high standards and work in partnership, not competition, to elevate education in Hoboken.

Better facilities, better teachers, better programs - that's how we produce better students, and ultimately, a stronger community.

Do you support school choice? If you do, would you support a voucher system?

I absolutely support school choice. Families in Hoboken should be able to decide what's best for their children - whether that's public, charter, or private school. Each plays an important role in giving parents options and creating opportunities for kids.

When it comes to vouchers, though, I think we have to be careful. A voucher system means public education dollars would follow the student to a private school. While I understand the appeal, in a city like Hoboken where our public and charter schools already need investment in facilities, staff, and curriculum, I don't want to see resources drained away from them.

My focus is on making sure our public schools are so strong that parents feel confident sending their kids there, while continuing to support charters and respecting private school choices. The best way forward is upgrading facilities, attracting top teachers, and building programs that raise the bar for every student - not creating new funding fights between schools.

So yes, I support choice. But my priority is making Hoboken's schools - public, charter, and private - places where families want to be, without taking dollars out of the public system that serves the majority of kids.

7- Governance & Trust

What specific steps would you take to establish and maintain transparency and accountability in your administration? What would be your policy on OPRA responsiveness? Exclusions?

Transparency is the foundation of trust in government, and it's something I, Ruben, and the rest of our council-at-large team believe in deeply. I would push for clearer contracting rules, strict compliance with all state laws, and stronger oversight so decisions are made in the public's best interest—not

behind closed doors.

We should also avoid unnecessary OPRA requests by proactively posting contracts, budgets, and other commonly requested documents online. That way residents don't have to jump through hoops to understand how their tax dollars are being spent. For the requests that do come in, I support adding resources and modern tools to help turn them around faster and more consistently.

If we want to rebuild trust in local government, we need to remove barriers, comply fully with the law, and make transparency straightforward and accessible for every resident.

As a city council member, what would your hiring process be for positions within the city?

My hiring philosophy is simple: whoever is most qualified gets the job. I believe positions within the city should be filled through a fair, transparent process that prioritizes qualifications, experience, and commitment to serving Hoboken.

That means setting clear job descriptions, ensuring openings are posted publicly, and making the process competitive so that the best candidates rise to the top.

At the end of the day, residents deserve a city workforce that's professional, efficient, and responsive. That only happens when we hire based on merit and give qualified people the chance to prove themselves.

8- Non-Partisan Representation

Recognizing the November election is a non-partisan municipal race, how would you ensure that your administration represents the interests and concerns of all residents, regardless of political affiliation?

Hoboken's elections are nonpartisan for a reason - filling potholes, improving schools, addressing flooding, or managing development has nothing to do with Washington politics.

My responsibility as a Council member would be to represent all residents - all parties - by focusing on the local issues that actually affect people's daily lives: safety, affordability, parking, transportation, and schools.

I believe in pragmatic solutions, not partisan fights. My promise is that every decision I make will be through the lens of what's best for Hoboken residents, not what's best for one political party.

9- City Focus

What would be the primary scope of your focus as a council member, and how would you balance addressing national issues like climate and immigration with the more immediate, localized needs of Hoboken residents?

My primary focus as a Council member will be the things that impact Hoboken residents every single day - public safety, affordability, traffic, schools, small business vitality, and quality of life. Those are the issues people feel when they step outside their front door.

National issues like climate change or immigration are important, but those are better addressed at the state and federal level where the real policy and funding tools exist. Here in Hoboken, my responsibility is to make sure our infrastructure is resilient, our streets are safe, and our resources are spent wisely.

So my approach is Hoboken First - staying grounded in the immediate needs of our community while partnering with state and federal agencies when their policies or dollars can help us locally. That way, we stay focused on results that residents can actually see and feel in their daily lives.

Our community has a recognized need for more recreational opportunities, including the potential for a public swimming pool. What is your plan for evaluating and addressing this need?

Too many families feel shut out of our current system - costs are high, access is limited, and kids spend more time on screens than being active. Ruben's plan to open up schools, parks, and city buildings for more programming is a step in the right direction, and the foundation that will lead to a dedicated recreation center for our community.

A rec center would mean more than just sports, it would offer arts, fitness, and wellness programs that serve kids, teens, adults, and seniors. To me, that's what quality of life looks like: giving every resident accessible spaces to stay active, connect, and build community.

I like the idea of a pool, but it doesn't seem like a priority for an immediate budget line item - but I'd like to see it happen sooner than later. We should also take a hard look at how neighboring towns have approached this. Weehawken built a public pool and structured memberships so that residents have affordable, guaranteed access before outsiders do. That's a smart model we can learn from - making sure Hoboken

residents are prioritized in both cost and availability if we invest in something similar.

Addressing the persistent problem of rodents is a top concern for many residents. What is your long-term plan to tackle this issue, and what metrics will you use to measure the success of city services?

Sidewalk cleanliness goes beyond dog waste - it's also about litter and debris piling up when trash isn't collected often enough. Residents remember when Hoboken had trash collection on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Those days were cut from the schedule, and since then we've seen more overflow, more litter on our sidewalks, and even rodent problems. Reintroducing Tuesday collection would go a long way in keeping our streets cleaner and healthier.

We also need to revisit recycling. Hoboken currently has a single-stream system, but it's split: bottles and plastics on Mondays, cardboard on Thursdays. It used to be two combined pickup days each week, which worked better, especially now with the explosion of Amazon and delivery packaging. Most buildings simply don't have the capacity to store cardboard for nearly a week waiting for pickup. We should revisit the combined pickup option twice a week and re-explore the way our single-stream system is structured to reduce sidewalk clutter and help tackle the rat problem.

And it's not just about curbside collection, our public trash cans are constantly overflowing. A better quality of life requires strict scheduling and smarter deployment of city workers to make sure public receptacles are emptied efficiently and consistently. When residents and visitors see trash bins spilling over, it sends the wrong message about our community standards.

With more frequent trash collection, smarter recycling practices, and stricter city management of public waste infrastructure, Hoboken can finally tackle litter and debris head-on and deliver the clean sidewalks residents deserve.

10- Cannabis

What are your thoughts on the city's current plan for six cannabis dispensaries? How would you characterize the rollout process to date, and what is your position on public marijuana use within city limits?

Marijuana is now a legal substance in New Jersey, just like alcohol. And in Hoboken, we have roughly 120 liquor licenses in town and we don't put arbitrary caps on those. So I don't see why cannabis dispensaries should be treated any differently.

The city's current plan for six dispensaries is fine in my view. At the end of the day, these are taxpaying businesses, many of them small businesses, and like

any other business, if there isn't enough demand, they won't survive. If there is demand, they'll thrive - and contribute to our economy. That's how the free market works.

As for the rollout, I think it could have been managed with more transparency and community education, so residents better understood what these businesses would look like and how they'd be regulated. The lack of upfront communication fueled unnecessary anxiety.

On public use, I don't support marijuana use in public spaces. Just like you can't walk down Washington Street with an open beer, you shouldn't be able to do it with cannabis. Consumption should be limited to private residences and state-licensed lounges if those are ever approved.

So for me, it's about consistency and fairness. If we're not micromanaging bars, we shouldn't micromanage dispensaries. They're legal, regulated, taxpaying businesses - and Hoboken residents deserve to benefit from their contribution.

11- Environment

The previous administration spent a significant amount of time and money on legal action against companies regarding environmental issues. Do you plan to follow in the same footsteps, and what is your overall approach to environmental policy for Hoboken?

My approach is always going to be Hoboken First. The city has limited resources, and I believe they should be used where they have the greatest and most immediate impact on residents - things like safer streets, better infrastructure, and keeping taxes stable.

When it comes to environmental issues, I don't see myself setting broad policy agendas - that's better handled at the state and federal level where the real enforcement tools and funding exist. Here in Hoboken, my responsibility would be to make sure our community is protected from things that directly affect us, like flooding, resiliency projects, and ensuring our air and water are safe.

If legal action against a company is the only way to protect Hoboken residents, I'd support it - but I don't see pursuing litigation as the city's primary role. My focus will be on practical, local steps that safeguard Hoboken today and position us well for the future.

12- Commercial Revival

What is your strategy for promoting commercial revitalization and supporting local business throughout the city?

This isn't an either/or conversation - chain retailers and mom-and-pops both matter to Hoboken. Big retailers bring stability with long leases, taxes, and jobs, while small businesses give our city its character.

Recent closures on Washington Street show it's not just about rent - it's about the overall business environment and how we support businesses across all neighborhoods, not just one corridor.

The real issue is how hard it is to open here. Red tape, slow approvals, and lack of transparency hurt everyone, especially small businesses. That's why I support Ruben's proposal for a business support department with dedicated New Business Navigators to streamline the process.

Hoboken should welcome both big and small retail, and also attract corporate offices through smarter zoning. That strengthens our tax base, creates jobs, and still preserves our small-town feel while keeping our economy resilient

13- Additional comments or anything that you would like to add.

The standard way of doing business in Hoboken shouldn't be crisis management, we need to get back to basics. I'm on Hoboken's side first, from toddlers to seniors and everyone in between. One of the best parts of this journey has been connecting with so many people I hadn't met before, and hearing firsthand what matters most to them.

If you want to see Hoboken thrive, I invite you to stop by our HQ at 736 Washington Street, learn more, and join the conversation. And on Election Day, I'd be honored to have your support along with our team: Ruben Ramos 7G, Laura Miani 5H, Britta Ouano 6H, and Al Veloce 7H.

Laura Miami for Council

1- Public Safety & Transportation

What is your plan to improve auto safety and reduce vehicular incidents in Hoboken? How would you assess the effectiveness of the city's "Vision Zero" program, and what, if any, changes would you propose?

I support the current 20 mile and hour speed limit. We still have accidents involving cars, bikes, and e-bikes. Vision Zero should include e-bike enforcement. E-bikes should observe the same traffic rules as other motorized vehicles and laws should be enforced. A more efficient and visible police force should ticket cars and e-bikes who violate traffic laws.

What is your comprehensive vision for transportation that addresses the needs of both commuters and residents, including solutions for parking and the flow of bike messengers and pedestrians?

I have lived in Hoboken for over 30 years, and our transportation systems have not kept up with our growing population. A comprehensive plan would be to work with NJ Transit to have the Willow/Clinton line operate "off peak" and on weekends. We should explore a "morning rush hour" bus that goes north on Madison and into NYC. We should explore the rollout of \$5 ferries for Hoboken residents and work with NY Waterway to provide buses for commuters on this side of the river. 15th Street should be 2 ways for its entire length and we should have a light rail stop on the West side of 15th. I am supportive of a municipal parking garage in the area of 15th and Park/Willow and to incentivize residents who do not move their cars frequently (less than 3x per week) to park in a garage that is closer to where they live. E-bike delivery drivers need to observe traffic laws and if not they should face expensive fines. Pedestrians should feel safe walking across the street when they have the traffic light, not wait because e-bikes running red lights has become so commonplace.

2- Fiscal Policy and Budget

Please outline your philosophy on tax policy and budget management. What specific areas of the city budget do you believe are in need of improvement or could be optimized for efficiency?

I have a degree in finance and have had continuing education throughout my career. With respect to the budget, approximately 80% of our expenses are known and can be forecasted... salaries, pensions, insurance. We should have the proposed budget much

earlier. We should also be able to estimate revenues to some extent. We should look for ways to automate, as well as eliminate waste and redundancies; while still providing the services that residents expect.

3- Housing & Development

Given the challenges of urban density, what is your plan to manage financially responsible development and the use of PILOT agreements in a way that protects existing infrastructure and justifies their fiscal impact to Hoboken's taxpayers? *PILOT agreements should be analyzed to determine the benefit of the project to Hoboken.... Does the agreement provide affordable housing, recreational space, amenities that benefit residents and offset the loss of taxes? We need to make sure that PILOT agreements are being enforced. For example an affordable housing project should hold to agreements such as means testing, wait lists, prioritizing those in most need.*

What is your position on Hoboken's existing rent control ordinance? What changes if any would you wish to see? *The rent control ordinance has taken steps to ensure that landlords register rental properties and that they cannot have excessive rent increases. However we still have a supply/demand issue where rents continue to remain high. I think residents need to understand their rights as tenants, so transparency is important as well as education.. I would look to see the impact that Air BnB is having on the overall rental picture in Hoboken. I would also review the current rent-setting policy to ensure it works effectively during economic downturns. Under the existing framework, a landlord who temporarily lowers rent risks permanently reducing the legal rent level, which can unintentionally encourage warehousing rather than keeping units occupied. We should explore a more balanced formula that allows flexibility in times of economic hardship while discouraging vacancies and keeping housing available for residents.*

4- Sanctuary City

Please define your position on Hoboken's status as a sanctuary city. Given a scenario where an undocumented person commits a crime, is found guilty, and prosecuted, what would your administration's policy be regarding cooperation with federal agencies such as ICE? *Hoboken is a "fair and welcoming" city. I think diversity is good for our City and I don't think individuals should be fearful due to immigration status or profiling. Given a scenario where a crime is committed and a person is found guilty through due process, then we should cooperate with federal agencies.*

5- Homelessness

What is your approach to addressing homelessness in Hoboken, and what is your plan for providing services and shelter to the city's homeless population? *I think we need to be compassionate about homelessness, but*

also acknowledge that we can't feed everyone. The homeless shelter was founded by clergy in 1982 and it predates several schools that moved into space in the Rue building at 301 Garden and also 301 Bloomfield. I think we need to partner with the shelter to provide crucial services to the unhoused, inclusive of working to train people to get back on their feet, or provide services in the case of mental illness. However, the shelter website says they have 50 beds and serve 500 meals daily. Meanwhile Hoboken residents are disturbed by an increasing homeless population in Church Square Park and downtown. We need to work with the Shelter to help them do their work, while evaluating if we are also feeding people from outside of Hoboken and also ensuring our residents are safe in Church Square Park and surrounding areas.

6- Public Education

What is your long-term vision for the future of public education? How would you make that vision a reality, and what role do you see charter schools playing in that plan? The public education system in Hoboken has improved dramatically in the time that I have lived here. We need all of our schools here... public, public charter as well as Independent and Parochial schools. Hoboken High School should be considered a "choice" by residents who are considering the various high schools in our area, including in NYC and in NJ. (High Tech, County Prep, McNair and St Peter's Prep for example). I see students going through public and charter schools going to excellent high schools and colleges. We have an exploding population so we need to plan for more schools so that our educational programs remain robust.

Do you support school choice? If you do, would you support a voucher system? I support school choice.

7- Governance & Trust

What specific steps would you take to establish and maintain transparency and accountability in your administration? What would be your policy on OPRA responsiveness? Exclusions? We expect to be transparent and accountable to residents. City Contracts can be on the City Website.. OPRA requests should be responded to in a timely fashion (7 business days)

As a city council member, what would your hiring process be for positions within the city? I worked as an Executive Recruiter and helped place people in a variety of roles. We need to have a transparent process where we post jobs, hire qualified people, and eliminate "cronyism". I also think some big companies in Hoboken should be encouraged to hire qualified people right here in Hoboken.

8- Non-Partisan Representation

Recognizing the November election is a non-partisan municipal race, how would you ensure that your administration represents the interests and concerns of all residents, regardless of political affiliation? *Most issues in Hoboken are non-partisan. I think we need to listen to residents to learn what concerns are and have open dialogue. If resident concerns are about Hoboken; our schools, our roads, development, empty store fronts, they affect everyone and political affiliation should not matter.*

9- City Focus

What would be the primary scope of your focus as a council member, and how would you balance addressing national issues like climate and immigration with the more immediate, localized needs of Hoboken residents? *My primary focus would be to promote safety and protect quality of life. I used to feel very safe in Hoboken, now I do not. I am concerned about an uptick in crime, as well as a daily concern that I will be hit by another e-bike (I was hit by an e-bike in July). Quality of life includes better transportation and a more coordinated approach to construction, road paving, water main improvements etc.*

With regard to Immigration, we are fair and welcoming, our police should keep our City safe. If someone regardless of immigration status commits a crime, and has due process, we would comply with the law. Climate is very important especially given our proximity to the river and we want to protect the environment, however as a City Council we should focus on local issues.

Our community has a recognized need for more recreational opportunities, including the potential for a public swimming pool. What is your plan for evaluating and addressing this need?

Recreation is crucial, we have been promised a pool for many years and it has not happened. Ruben has announced ideas for a new rec center at 15th and Jefferson that would work in a public-private partnership. This would require community input and if the residents vote for a community pool I would be supportive of a pool. Further we need to ensure the system for signing up for recreational programs is clear and transparent.

Addressing the persistent problem of rodents is a top concern for many residents. What is your long-term plan to tackle this issue, and what metrics will you use to measure the success of city services?

With respect to the rodents, we have taken measures to improve the situation and I think it has improved but we need to remain vigilant. We need frequent trash pickup and restaurant owners need to be sure they are following health laws.

10- Cannabis

What are your thoughts on the city's current plan for six cannabis dispensaries? How would you characterize the rollout process to date, and what is your position on public marijuana use within city limits?

I am not opposed to dispensaries, the City agreed to six, with no more than 3 per Ward. The rollout process has been extremely flawed, in my opinion. Going forward I would ensure the 600 foot buffer zone is enforced, and I don't believe they should be in residential areas. In terms of public marijuana use I believe it should be similar to laws regarding alcohol usage. With anything else, I believe we should have transparency, public input and enforcement.

11- Environment

The previous administration spent a significant amount of time and money on legal action against companies regarding environmental issues. Do you plan to follow in the same footsteps, and what is your overall approach to environmental policy for Hoboken?

I would try to reduce the number of lawsuits overall, I would like to see better ways to partner. Regarding policy, we do need to continue to strengthen our infrastructure to ensure that Hoboken does not continually flood. We have done this with smart development, water retention systems, flood pumps and separating water/sewage and we need to keep moving in that direction.

12- Commercial Revival

What is your strategy for promoting commercial revitalization and supporting local business throughout the city?

One of the great things about Hoboken is our small business community. However we need to streamline the process for opening a new business and also evaluate fees and licensing rules. Also we need to reevaluate parking and other issues that are affecting the business community. Recently we have had larger chains closing in Hoboken: Athleta, Blue Mercury, Vitamin Shoppe. We have a very dense population with very desirable foot traffic, we should be able to partner with businesses so they survive and thrive here.

13- Additional comments or anything that you would like to add.