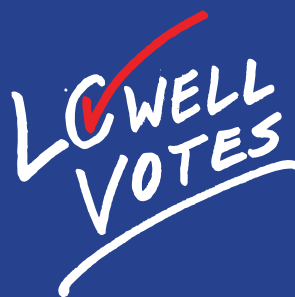


# 2017 Election Guide



Updated: 10/25/17

**Polls Open Nov 7 7am - 8pm**

## How do I check my registration status?

You needed to register by October 18, 8:00 pm to vote in this election. We recommend checking your status to make sure there are no problems when you go to your polling place. Check this by:

- Visiting <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/VoterRegistrationSearch/MyVoterRegStatus.aspx>
- Calling the Lowell Election Department: 978-674-4046

## Where do I vote?

It depends on where you live and the voting precinct you live in. You can find your polling place by:

- Calling the Lowell Election Department: 978-674-4046
- Entering your address online at: [www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.aspx](http://www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.aspx)
- Asking a neighbor who lives on the same side of your block.

## Can I vote by mail?

Yes. If you will be out of town or can't go to the polls because of a health issue, you or a family member can fill out an application for an absentee ballot. You can do this anytime up to noon the day before the election. Get an application at:

- Lowell Election Office - 375 Merrimack Street
- Online at [www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleabsentee/absidx.htm](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleabsentee/absidx.htm)

## Do I need an ID to vote?

Only people voting for the first time need an ID to vote in Massachusetts. We recommend every voter bring an ID with their current address on it, like a driver's license, passport or recent utility bill or bank statement.

## Can I have someone help me vote?

Yes. If you need help with translation or marking the ballot (because English is your second language or you have a disability), you can bring someone with you to help you vote.

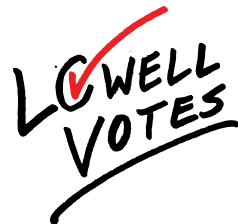
## Can I bring a voter guide into the voting booth?

Yes. You can bring a voter guide, notes, or anything else you need to help you remember who to vote for. Just make sure to not leave it in the booth when you leave!

**Candidates Appear  
in Ballot Order**

# City Council Survey Answers

**18 candidates.  
Nine incumbents.  
Nine challengers.  
A charter up for review.  
A high school to place.**



# City Council:

## Do you support changing Lowell's at-large system, in view of the pending lawsuit against it?

**NO**  
The outreach has begun and I will continue to listen. To this point I have seen no clear evidence that district representation will achieve making the council more diverse. I will continue to be open minded and reasearch the issue."

—Corey Belanger

**YES**  
Yes, I brought this to the forefront a year ago, byt bringing this to City council. I feel it will benefit the city and better represent our population and neighborhoods."

—Rodney Elliott

**MAYBE**  
Worcester is a Plan-E city that has had a city council comprised of a mix of at-large and district city councilors. I would be open to changing the make-up of the Lowell city council to include such a mix if the city council subcommittee concludes that it would improve neighborhood representation."

—Edward Kennedy Jr

**MAYBE**  
I am willing to listen. I like the system we have now, but maybe we need term limits instead, or maybe we need both. Change is always good."

—John Leahy

**MAYBE**  
I disagree with the lawsuit and ultimately we will win the issue. However, I support citizens voting on a measure to change to an updated version of Plan E form of government similar to Worcester, with a strong City Manager, elected ceremonial Mayor, and combination of at large and district councilors."

—James Leary

**NO**  
Personally, I like the Plan E form of government. I know of no discrimination. Put this issue on the ballot and let people decide, and I will abide by it. Unlike Cawley or LHS, people's choice on ballot is too late."

—Rita Mercier

**MAYBE**  
I support the ad hoc committee. The small percentage of minorities elected/appointed (3%) is well below the percentage of minorities in Lowell. We need to ensure that minority groups feel represented/involved. Communities have changed at-large systems to be more inclusive. Lowell may need to do so."

—James Milinazzo

**MAYBE**  
As a Councilor, I enjoy serving the entire city rather than one particular neighborhood. I am, however, open to listening to possible changes with input from the community. We should look at different ways to increase civic participation."

—Daniel Rourke

**MAYBE**  
Government works best when it is reflective of the people that it represents. I will support any changes, whether through district representation or some other well-thought plan, that would create more opportunities for a more representative council or board."

—William Samaras

**YES**  
Yes. We need to move in the direction of neighborhood representation. I do not have an ultimate solution in mind, but wish to learn from other communities' experiences with different systems to see what structure would best fit our needs."

—Joseph Boyle

**YES**  
I support a change in favor of a hybrid of at-large and ward representation in order to ensure that we hear voices from all neighborhoods."

—SokharyChau

**YES**  
I do. Lowell should move to a hybrid system, with members who run by district and at-large, like in Worcester. I love the diversity of Lowell and the contributions that all Lowellians bring. The city governance should reflect this diversity to better respond to the needs and concerns of all."

—Karen Cirillo

**YES**  
I do believe that we need to bring all our citizens to the table. Government is not for the few... it needs to represent everyone. I would support a hybrid system that could comprise of a combination of district and at large."

—David Conway

**MAYBE**  
I think that the plan E form of government works well for the city of Lowell but I am open to discussion if that is what the people of the city want."

—Daniel Finn

**YES**  
Yes. I believe the city should explore a hybrid model comprised of District City Councilors and At-Large City Councilors while maintaining Plan E with a City Manager as CEO."

—Robert Gignac

**YES**  
I am a full proponent of changing our municipal form of representation to one that fosters a greater openness and ability for the council to address the issues of the city, both specific and general. I would like our form of government changed to a hybrid of both districted and at-large members."

—Martin Hogan

**YES**  
Running for office for the first time has given me a clear understanding on how hard you have to work and the barriers to getting elected. I fully support moving Lowell to a combination of ward and at-large councilors and will make it a goal of mine to reduce those barriers for future candidates."

—Matthew LeLacheur

**YES**  
It is time to make our government reflective of the communities it serves. Everyone who calls Lowell home should have a say in decisions that impact their lives. A representative who lives in one's neighborhood, who understands its unique needs and culture, will ensure that its voices are heard."

—Vesna Nuon

# City Council: What is your position on the location of the Lowell High School & why?

CAWLEY

I support the Cawley site. I feel it is the best way to spend taxpayer dollars is to have an entirely new school that will be the best learning environment for the 21st century."

—Corey Belanger

CAWLEY

Cawley. There are several reasons, but most importantly is cost. Moving the high school out of downtown allows the City to develop this property to bring in badly needed taxes to pay for the debt on the high school project. We cannot expect taxpayers to absorb this cost."

—Rodney Elliott

DTL

I have been a strong supporter of keeping the high school downtown. The downtown location is centrally located and close to most of the services and amenities that hundreds of high school students depend on. It is also far more taxpayer friendly than the Cawley Stadium location."

—Edward Kennedy Jr

DTL

Downtown, I feel it is best for the locations and equity of all of the students. I know we can do a great job downtown for the students and parents."

—John Leahy

CAWLEY

I was a downtown proponent; but changed my opinion to Cawley when I compared the facts. A 100% new building will have less change orders. We already had two renovation projects for downtown that resulted in multiple change orders and escalating costs, which caused cuts to much needed science labs."

—James Leary

CAWLEY

Cawley - No disruption to students' education, better learning environment that meets all educational objectives, goals, and requirements, no compromised air quality or health issues, no people losing their jobs, a true athletic and educational campus."

—Rita Mercier

DTL

Downtown. It's a matter of fairness; many students walk to the current location, many social service programs are downtown. The non-reimbursable ancillary costs of building at Cawley -busing, infrastructure, Article 97 improvements- are approaching \$10M. The Cawley site will cost much more to the Lowell taxpayer."

—James Milinazzo

CAWLEY

I prefer the brand new state of the art building at the Cawley site. Cawley site provides the best location for educating all our students with no disruption and presents a safe learning environment."

—Daniel Rourke

DTL

As the former headmaster of LHS, I support building a new Lowell High School in Downtown because it is the most accessible and cost effective option. I released a full statement that is available at [samarasforlowell.com/lhsstatement](http://samarasforlowell.com/lhsstatement)"

—William Samaras

DTL

I entered the race to keep Lowell High downtown because of the superior access it provides, especially for the low-income families in the neighborhoods near downtown, both to the school and to downtown resources; and because, as Pat Mogan taught us, the city itself is a classroom."

—Joseph Boyle

CAWLEY

I believe that our students deserve a new high school, built at the Cawley site. Our children are best served if we can begin to unite and focus not just on location, or bricks and mortar, but also on the priorities of providing quality education and inspired learning experiences."

—Sokhary Chau

DTL

Downtown. LHS' central location is key to prevent students from travelling unequal, long distances & is convenient to after-school programs. My construction project management work includes renovations of occupied buildings, so I can ensure that the renovation will be a safe learning environment."

—Karen Cirillo

DTL

Definitely Downtown. With the exception of our downtown, no neighborhood has the infrastructure, the transportation system and the central location for our high school. Downtown is the most efficient, fairest, and cost effective and least disruptive location for our students."

—David Conway

CAWLEY

I am in favor of the Cawley option. I believe that this option is in the best interest of the students, staff and the city. I believe in investing in a brand new state of the art 21st century School. I also believe that it is the safest and least disruptive."

—Daniel Finn

CAWLEY

Cawley Stadium. Simply put, six to eight years of disruption to students and staff is unacceptable. Families able to afford to send their children to private schools will do so and the rest of our student population will be forced to end their K-12 academic career in a construction zone."

—Robert Gignac

DTL

I believe the best choice for the High School is Downtown. There are many reasons why Downtown is the best location, including ease of access, access to needed after-school programs, and equal educational access for all, but most importantly economic stability."

—Martin Hogan

CAWLEY

Every so often, Lowell gets to do something BIG, create a National Park, develop the nation's largest free Folk Festival, or build an arena and baseball stadium. That opportunity is here again and by building a brand new High School at Cawley Stadium we can take full advantage to that opportunity."

—Matthew LeLacheur

DTL

Lowell's history of successful renovation shows we can have a state-of-the-art building downtown, accessible for all students. Downtown offers a public library, Lowell Boys and Girls Club, Girls Inc., National Park, UTEC, UMass Lowell, MCC and more that enhance education outside of the classroom."

—Vesna Nuon

# City Council

**Corey Belanger**  
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



**Rodney Elliott**  
Pawtucketville

INCUMBENT



**Edward Kennedy Jr**  
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



**John Leahy**  
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



**James Leary**  
Highlands

INCUMBENT



**Our survey showed major concern about increases to the cost of living in Lowell, especially housing and childcare. How will you keep Lowell affordable for working people?**

This is an issue, die in part by high construction costs. I want to focus on workforce units that can be subsidized to become affordable based on income.

I know on the local level, we do as much as we can to keep taxes low and affordable. In any way I can, I will advocate to our state and federal officials to support funding for working families.

I think the Lowell School Department should explore the feasibility of providing affordable child care or day care on a city-wide basis. Affordable child care would help working families in Lowell and make Lowell a very attractive community for young families looking to buy a home.

We need to create, and keep good paying jobs here in the city. People need the respect and for us as a council to attract good paying jobs for our Lowellians.

I support working class housing at the Hamilton Innovation District, creating a balance of employment and housing. The goal for Lowell should be balance of single family homes and work class housing, resulting in improved tax capacity and keeping families who increase their income to live in Lowell.

**If you had to prioritize spending for streets for easier flow of traffic or for sidewalks and walkability, which would you choose and why?**

If its a complaint I recieve ofren from residents, its one about traffic. We will do our best to mitigate. However, walk ability is very important. In particular in connecting our neighborhoods to the downtown. I will continue to work hard to achieve this.

These two issues go hand-in-hand, but safety is a priority and we need to ensure pedestrians are safe.

Both are important. However, improving sidewalks and promoting walkability would reduce the number of motor vehicle trips people would make, which would reduce traffic and therefore improve traffic flow.

I think we are doing a good job on both. Streets are getting paved and the sidewalks are being rebuilt across the city.

Walkability would be my main focus.

**What are specific steps the city can take to address the opioid crisis?**

I have been on the forefront of this issue since the day i was elected. We are achieving tremendous accomplishments. Opiod related deaths are nearly 50 percent in 2017. As Chairman we have put forth many initiatives that are saving lives everyday. I will continue to work hard on this crisis.

I feel the City, State and federal government has to take enforcement efforts to a new level and crack down on drug dealers. More resources for education in our schools, expanded medical coverage for treatment is also necessary.

I think Lowell does more than most communities right now. However, one important step forward would be to join with the Commonwealth and demand that the large pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors be better regulated.

I think that the city is doing a lot of great work now in this area. Government, police, fire departments are working very hard to help all that are in this situation.

Continue to work and with our state and federal partners to ensure that all levels of government have resources. Also supporting programs like Team COOP (Community Opioid Outreach) which is a team which follows up with all non-fatal overdoes to offer treatment and support for all substance abusers.

**Youth Submitted Question: Why doesn't City Council reflect the diversity of Lowell? And do the candidates think that representation matters?**

I feel the Council and Boards and Commissions should be more diversified. We have outreach initiatives to achieve this currently un place. Lets not lose sight of the fact that Lowell elected the first City Councilor and the first State Rep. in the country. Lets work together to move forward .

Yes, I do think representation matters. People need to feel that they have a voice and Changing the system of government would go along way to help

Representation does matter and each member of the City Council is supposed to represent everyone in the city, regardless of the ethnicity or economic standing. It is important that everyone votes at election time.

I think that for a community to reflect itself, in its government, the whole community needs to be involved. We are almost there. All citizens must register and vote. Participation is part of the whole solution. We are doing a better job on our boards, but we must also do a better job voting.

I take this issue seriously and together with Councilors Elliott and Samaras filed a motion to create an Ad hoc subcommittee, which I am now the chairman that is looking at potential changes. We are holding public forums in the city in order to obtain feedback and recommended changes.

# City Council

## Continued

**Rita  
Mercier**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**James  
Milinazzo**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**Daniel  
Rourke**  
Pawtucketville  
INCUMBENT



**William  
Samaras**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**Joseph  
Boyle**  
Highlands



**Our survey showed major concern about increases to the cost of living in Lowell, especially housing and childcare. How will you keep Lowell affordable for working people?**

That's a most difficult question, not that easy to answer, but we must keep finding ways to bring in good paying jobs and specialize in education that fits the jobs.

I have always been an advocate of affordable housing in Lowell. We need to continue to support workforce housing to keep Lowell affordable for working families. Social service agencies like Community Teamwork provide affordable childcare programs. The State needs to continue to fund these worthwhile programs.

Housing and childcare costs dominate many household budgets. Keeping residential taxes in check while maintaining a high level of services will keep Lowell an attractive place to live and raise a family.

Keeping residential taxes low by attracting new business development to improve the commercial tax base and investing in new job opportunities and resources for working people in the city.

Promote the development of additional housing, in locations and styles that will benefit the city and the are in which it is located. Make permanent the affordable housing protections on existing units. Push for stronger enforcement of the Anti-Snob Zoning Act in the suburbs to fight the real cause.

**If you had to prioritize spending for streets for easier flow of traffic or for sidewalks and walkability, which would you choose and why?**

This issue goes hand in hand, as seen on numerous streets/sidewalks that are gateways into the city. Both streets and sidewalks are equally important and that's why we do both at the same time.

I would prioritize spending on streets. In part, because most funding programs for street improvements mandate walkability and biking be included in the planning of any street improvements. By prioritizing streets, the benefits of walkability and sidewalk improvements should happen as part of the project

Both projects go hand in hand. We need to have good traffic flow to shops, restaurants, etc to generate revenue to improve walkability such as sidewalk repairs and design conducive to persuade people to walk.

I support the Complete Streets policy, which deals with both issues. It is impossible to separate the two.

Sidewalks. The key to Lowell's success is to make it a great place to be. Increasing walkability achieves that; widening roads and promoting cut-through traffic harm our downtown and neighborhoods. People don't go to cities because they are easy to drive to, but because they are desirable.

**What are specific steps the city can take to address the opioid crisis?**

I am a member of D.A. Marian Ryan's Opioid Task Force as well as the City's Opioid Task Force. Everything that can be addressed and done has. We need more detox beds though.

With first responders and the Health Department, we developed an Opiate Task Force. Curriculum in schools teach students the impact of pain medications. Communication and resources like Narcan need to be maintained. Our first responders need resources like protective clothing to properly assist a person in crisis.

Specific steps include education and outreach programs. You cannot force recovery on a person battling addiction. They must want help and be dedicated to recovery. If someone battling alcohol/drug abuse wants help, we have steps in place to begin the recovery process.

As a city council we must continue to support our police, fire, and all first responders in their good work on the front lines of this crisis. What we now need is more support staff to help affected individuals and their families—with a particular emphasis on long term care.

Expanding health outreach efforts to troubled populations with high rates of narcotic abuse can build the relationships that allow health professionals to draw addicts into treatment. Social/health outreach workers should learn from the LPD's community policing experience how to better connect.

**Youth Submitted Question: Why doesn't City Council reflect the diversity of Lowell? And do the candidates think that representation matters?**

Because people aren't coming forward to run. They don't get involved, which they should. Rithy Uong did it, Vesna did it. Rady Mom is a State Rep. I was a housewife. If we can do it so can anyone else if they want it bad enough.

It does matter. I would hope that members of any ethnic group feel welcome in City Hall, and that their opinions matter to us. We need to increase the number of minorities in elected and appointed positions. In response to the high school issue, young people have spoken with a strong voice; this needs to continue.

I have said previously that if someone no matter what race or ethnicity puts the work in, knock on doors, get to know every neighborhood in the city and talk to others about their ideas for Lowell, he or she will have a good a chance of anyone to be successful in political office in Lowell.

As I stated in regards to the voting system, I believe the city council should be reflective of the people that it serves.

Low voter turnout, a lack of representation for certain communities and neighborhoods, and a sense that voting is meaningless reinforce each other in a vicious cycle of civic and political disengagement. It is essential that we break that cycle and provide for broader representation.

# City Council

## Continued

**Sokhary Chau**  
Highlands



**Karen Cirillo**  
Centralville



**David Conway**  
Belvidere



**Daniel Finn**  
Belvidere



**Robert Gignac**  
Centralville



**Our survey showed major concern about increases to the cost of living in Lowell, especially housing and childcare. How will you keep Lowell affordable for working people?**

It's about balance. Lowell has a good amount of subsidized housing provided by LHA, CBA, and CTI. As Lowell grows, the approval processes should include a mix of market rate and "workforce", otherwise known as "affordable" housing, so our residents don't get priced out by rising rents.

We need to bring more businesses into our many empty storefronts. This means more tax revenue for the city which lessens the tax burden on our citizens. LHS downtown will also aid in keeping Lowell affordable, because it is the cheaper option and because of its proximity to after-school programs.

It is imperative that we reach out and develop a partnership with our social services and UML-MCC-LPS to help solve the child care issue. Also, we need to continue to attract new business to Lowell, that will bring jobs and help with our tax base. These initiatives will help our working residents.

In order to keep the city affordable to the working people, we need to find ways of increasing our tax base and not depend on the residents. We need to continue to attract businesses to our city. This will take the burden off of the residents.

We have phenomenal non-profits in our community that work hard to provide affordable housing and childcare. I would work to support those agencies. I've developed a giving campaign to encourage our larger businesses to encourage employees to give to local non-profits.

**If you had to prioritize spending for streets for easier flow of traffic or for sidewalks and walkability, which would you choose and why?**

Last year, the City adopted the "Complete Streets" guidelines that give equal treatment to multi-modal transportation- vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and public transportation. We need to expand the use of our streets for all modes for people moving in a safe manner.

Lowell must focus on improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Residents should feel they belong, are safe, and that they matter. Safer streets encourage people to get outside, which makes Lowell healthier for people, the environment, and business. Cars don't shop, but people do!

We need to work on both issues simultaneously. They can't be separated. Many of our streets are in need of repair. We also have to insure that our sidewalks are safe for our residents. This should be an on going project for our council and the administration.

Although I believe both are vital to the city, give only one option I would favor the investment into our streets. With out a strong infrastructure our city will not attract new businesses will to invest in our city.

The two go hand in hand. We are an old city with narrow streets that make it difficult for vehicle and foot traffic to get from point A to point B safely. We have to invest in a comprehensive study on how to improve walkability while providing safer roads for vehicles and bikes.

**What are specific steps the city can take to address the opioid crisis?**

Success is in the team approach. The City, hospital, EMT's, Ambulance, Police, Fire, social workers, Lowell House, CTI, everyone needs to be at the table to address their part to help. Lowell has it right trying to address this terrible epidemic. There is no magic answer to this problem.

We need a proactive effort. Early intervention and collaboration with Lowell schools will help our students make better choices. I support the LPD, DARE, and CO-OP, and would speak with these groups to find out what is working and what can be improved to aid their success. Starting early is key.

Local officials and community leaders need to bond together and take bold action. Additional resources should be provided to expand the capacity of the Drug Court model. Also, continued surveillance of areas where drug dealers are present will help stop the flow of drugs at its source.

The city has taken major steps in the right direction with this crisis. The city has put together a task force, has made naran available to its first responders. Education needs to be a priority for our children.

The city has become a model for the Commonwealth in it's efforts to address the opiate epidemic. I have been pushing the issue long before it a popular item to discuss. We need to do more education in our schools which I initiated in my first term and will push to continue to improve and expand.

**Youth Submitted Question: Why doesn't City Council reflect the diversity of Lowell? And do the candidates think that representation matters?**

Every person in every part of Lowell deserves a voice. Representing those voices will be my mission as a City Councilor. I listen to people from all neighborhoods and all cultures in order to better understand the needs of our diverse community. When elected, I will make diversity our strength.

Current City Councilors are from only 2 neighborhoods. They work tirelessly for Lowell, but do not reflect its diversity. Representation matters, & changing our system to a hybrid model of at-large & district representation is best. Hearing all voices fosters a healthy, vibrant, & safe community.

Definitely. We need to do a better job to reach out to all ethnic groups and encourage them to get involved in the election process. It is important that everyone feels welcome and are part of this great city. The make-up of our boards also need to reflect the diverse population of Lowell.

Yes, representation matters. Representation is what make people's voices heard.

The City has struggled to get people to get involved in the decision making process. I absolutely believe fair representation is an issue and will push for more civic engagement at all ages.

# City Council

## Continued

**Martin Hogan**  
Centralville



**Matthew LeLacheur**  
Pawtucketville



**Vesna Nuon**  
Highlands



**Our survey showed major concern about increases to the cost of living in Lowell, especially housing and childcare. How will you keep Lowell affordable for working people?**

Lowell needs to be at the forefront of being an affordable city and keeping the cost of living reasonable for the all people and families of Lowell. This can be done by looking closely at the budget and how and where we appropriate our funds, specifically in the capital expenditures that we make.

As the father of 3 small children with 2 jobs, I understand what the ever increasing costs of living can do to an individual or family. We need to focus on growing the commercial tax base to lessen the burden on Lowell's residents. More jobs from high quality employers in the key.

Establish a municipal affordable housing trust to address foreclosed homes and those in risk of foreclosure, using available tax and finance codes to convert these properties for affordable housing development. Support an anti-wage-theft ordinance, proposed in 2013, to protect low-income individuals

**If you had to prioritize spending for streets for easier flow of traffic or for sidewalks and walkability, which would you choose and why?**

I believe that the two points are actually interdependent and I feel that working on both would be in the best interest of all Lowellians. We as a city need to make sure that our streets are safe, comfortable, and accessible for everyone, regardless of age, ability, income, or transportation mode.

Both are extremely important, but easier flow of traffic leads to a better business environment. That environment can provide the additional revenue we need to spend on sidewalks and walk-ability without raising residential taxes.

I support implementing the Complete Streets vision, more Safe Routes to School projects, and slower, safer streets throughout the city. These commitments help us design and build streets for all types of transportation—walking, bicycling, automobiles, and public transit.

**What are specific steps the city can take to address the opioid crisis?**

My work in this field will have as a hallmark to work with Lowell General, the Lowell Public Schools, the neighborhood civic associations and Lowell PD to foster open-honest dialog and education to prepare our children to avoid the first time use of any illegal drugs, and specifically the opioids.

The city is facing this head on. Team COOP (Community Opioid Outreach Program) is a fantastic tool in this battle. We designate a police officer, a firefighter and two outreach workers from the Lowell House to this program. More partnerships like this are a vital piece of the solution.

We must increase enforcement and patrols in drug dealing hotspots. Most importantly, we must divert substance abusers from the criminal justice system to treatment. Treatment for addiction must be linked to employment and housing, building a support system for those in recovery and reducing relapse.

**Youth Submitted Question: Why doesn't City Council reflect the diversity of Lowell? And do the candidates think that representation matters?**

I firmly believe that all should be represented and that it does matter! If the city was changed to a hybrid system of District/ Ward councilors and At-Large, then the representation would be more equitable to the people of any given area. I will work towards a hybrid system on behalf of all people.

Reducing the barriers candidates of all backgrounds face when running for elected office will be a goal of mine if elected. Tapping into our cultural and economic diversity will only make for better decisions for all of Lowell's residents.

Yes, I believe that representation matters. Under our current at-large system, 51% of the voters can elect the entire City Council. If the City moves towards district representation, our neighborhoods can choose councilors who understand the needs and know the issues facing its particular residents.

# Keep going for bonus web-only answers & the School Committee!

# City Council: Web-only Bonus Questions!

**Corey  
Belanger**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**Rodney  
Elliott**  
Pawtucketville  
INCUMBENT



**Edward  
Kennedy Jr**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**John  
Leahy**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**James  
Leary**  
Highlands  
INCUMBENT



**Development of the Hamilton Canal District is taking a long time, what can the city do to move this master plan along?**

This council has achieved more in 2017 then in the last 10 years. We will have shovels in the ground on 5 parcels in 2018-19. This has been accomplished by a proactive approach to attracting businesses to Lowell along with a great partnership with UML.

The City has met with some success with marketing the project to prospective developers. We need to continue down this track. Access to this District has been the major impediment. The reconstruction of the Lord Overpass and judicial center will act as a catalyst for future development.

I have suggested several initiatives that have been aimed at taking a more aggressive approach regarding the Hamilton Canal Innovation District. Also hiring a master developer is important because it gives potential commercial tenants confidence in the District as they make their decisions.

I think that right now, it is moving a lot faster than it has in a while. The administration is working hard to keep the momentum going.

The main reason the HCD is moving slowly: 1/3 of the land does not yet have infrastructure, water and sewer, in place. We have now secured grants to bring the much needed infrastructure and we should have a fully developed economic project that will have retail, employment opportunities and housing.

**Does Lowell need more affordable housing?**

Although we are well over our threshold of 10 percent we can still improve. I would like to see more focus and support to Habitat for Humanity which helps low income families achieve home ownership. It does not get much better than that. I am in full support of this organization.

I feel we have done a good job in providing affordable housing for our residents. We need to continue to strike a balance of trying to meet the needs of our community and also provide market rate housing as well.

Yes.

I think Lowell needs more workforce housing. Most people want a hand up not a hand out. At the end of the day you want to feel good that you paid your own way. Everyone should have some pride in raising a family here in Lowell.

Lowell needs a continued balance of good housing stock that includes both affordable housing and single family homes. At this time we do have a good balance; however, we need to continue to monitor and make changes as needed in order to keep this balance.

**Would you support more resources at the city level for tracking needs and supporting refugee and immigrant families?**

Lowell has been welcoming immigrants for 150 years and we will continue to do so. I have long been an advocate for services such as ESL and ELL programs so that it will break the barrier of communication.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes, we are a destination city and a welcoming city. We must help all that want to live here and make Lowell their home.

I take this issue seriously and together with Councilors Elliott and Samaras filed a motion to create an Ad hoc subcommittee, which I am now the chairman that is looking at potential changes. We are holding public forums in the city in order to obtain feedback and recommended changes.

# City Council: Web-only Bonus Questions!

Continued

**Rita  
Mercier**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**James  
Milinazzo**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**Daniel  
Rourke**  
Pawtucketville  
INCUMBENT



**William  
Samaras**  
Belvidere  
INCUMBENT



**Joseph  
Boyle**  
Highlands



**Development of the Hamilton Canal District is taking a long time, what can the city do to move this master plan along?**

They are moving this plan along, but it would go even faster if we had utility hook-ups in place. Have patience we are getting there.

The project is massive in scope. Public infrastructure needed is massive, the city has done a great job in securing funds. The state delegation delivered the Court House Project, design of the parking garage is underway. The M2D2 building with UMass Lowell is near 100% occupied; a huge win for the district.

The building of the courthouse has spurred interest in the Hamilton Canal. We now have a signature building in the plans, other sites under agreement and infrastructure to soon begin.

Recently, the Hamilton Canal Innovation District has seen a spurt in its growth. The long-awaited Judicial Center is on its way to being completed, Winn Development, S & R Construction, and Watermark are in stages of development and the UML Innovation Hub continues to be a driver of activity.

The HCD plan was conceived as a 30-year plan, and we are only halfway through that. We should not sacrifice quality for speed. We should hold out for the right projects and view progress along the appropriate time-frame. We must not confuse the ups and downs of the market with problems in the plan.

**Does Lowell need more affordable housing?**

There is always room for more but the question is where. It is quite evident that the working poor are having trouble making ends meet.

Yes, in the form of workforce housing, veterans' housing, and in some instances, housing for low to moderate income. Waiting lists for affordable housing across MA continue to grow. We've done a good job attracting market rate housing to the downtown; we need to maintain balance with affordable.

Lowell has affordable housing throughout our downtown and surrounding areas. The need for market rate renters and buyers who can bring disposable income to help the small business owners succeed is paramount to an urban city such as Lowell.

Winn Development's mixed use property in the Hamilton Canal District is a recent success story. Likewise, CBA is another great example of an affordable housing provider that also provide opportunities and a support network. I support programs that provide opportunity and growth for all.

Every community in eastern Massachusetts needs more affordable housing. Lowell's affordable housing crisis stems from regional causes. Yes, we should add more affordable units, but first we should fight to compel the suburban towns that have dumped this problem on us to do their fair share.

**Would you support more resources at the city level for tracking needs and supporting refugee and immigrant families?**

Whatever helps people feel welcome is our city, within reason, I support.

Yes-I would support more resources to assist newcomers. Collaboration between many social service agencies is key to making sure newcomers get the support needed to assimilate into society. Assimilation in such a way as to maintain their ethnic diversity which is one of Lowell's strengths as a Gateway City

I would support any initiatives and support of refugee and immigrant families in Lowell. The more help we can provide, the more apt those who come to Lowell succeed and become part of our community.

Lowell is a Gateway City that does it right. We have many agencies that work in cooperation to support refugees and immigrant families. The city works and should continue to work cooperatively with the many nonprofits such as CTI, CBA, International Institute, CMAA to meet the needs of the people.

Yes. Resources spent smoothing newcomers' transition to American society will be paid back tenfold in greater productivity and a faster transition to self-sufficiency.

# City Council: Web-only Bonus Questions!

Continued

**Sokhary  
Chau**  
Highlands



**Karen  
Cirillo**  
Centralville



**David  
Conway**  
Belvidere



**Daniel  
Finn**  
Belvidere



**Robert  
Gignac**  
Centralville



**Development of the Hamilton Canal District is taking a long time, what can the city do to move this master plan along?**

The are two major developments: Winn Development to build 135 units with 20% "workforce housing" and S&R Construction building a 4 story commercial building. There's report that Sal Lupoli may now be building a 20 story building. The City needs to keep this district a priority going forward.

The Genesis Healthcare loss was a big wakeup call to the HCD's potential. We need to collaborate with businesses to find win/win opportunities for this ambitious and accelerating expansion. My construction project management experience will help turn the Lowell master plan into reality.

The Hamilton Canal Innovation District Project presents a great opportunity for Lowell. The investors need to see that the infrastructure is in place. This will help to move the project forward.

Yes, the process has been long but the area is being to show signs of life. The Judicial Center has become a reality and other businesses have begun to show interest in investing in that are.

Over the past few months we have seen some major developments in the district with Winn Development, S&R Construction & Watermark all committing to move forward with developments in the area. The City needs to develop a comprehensive marketing plan to attract the development in this area & downtown.

**Does Lowell need more affordable housing?**

Again, this is about balance. Lowell has more affordable housing than any of the surrounding towns. We do need more to continue to support the residents of Lowell with housing options we can afford. As we build market rate housing, the approval processes should include affordable housing.

Affordable housing should be a priority so no one struggles to find housing. My work in construction project management uniquely qualifies me to meet with developers, construction managers & the Housing Authority for solutions to this crisis. Our citizens deserve the best life experience possible.

Affordable housing is greatly dependent on Economic Development. We need to be aggressive in attracting more business to our city. It will result in relief of taxes and make housing more affordable.

Yes, Lowell needs both affordable and moderate housing.

Lowell needs more HIGH QUALITY affordable housing.

**Would you support more resources at the city level for tracking needs and supporting refugee and immigrant families?**

Yes, immigrants have always been important to Lowell. A combination of resources from the city, state, and federal government could be used to support new families so they can become valuable contributors in our community. Everyone needs to work together so it is seamless.

We must support those who come here for shelter and safety. I support the Safe Communities Act and DACA. The Acre was once called the American Gateway to Immigrants and the whole city should be seen that way. ALL people of Lowell should feel safe and know they are an important part of our community.

We need to collaborate with our city resources and partners to find the process that are needed to assure a smooth transition to our city.

The city has many organizations in place to assist with this population. We as a city need to work with and take the advisements from these organizations.

Yes. In order for the City to be able to provide adequate resources to incoming refugees and immigrant families, we need to be prepared to receive and have proper systems in place to ensure they can become successful members of our community.

# City Council: Web-only Bonus Questions!

Continued

**Martin  
Hogan**  
Centralville



**Matthew  
LeLacheur**  
Pawtucketville



**Vesna  
Nuon**  
Highlands



**Development of the Hamilton Canal District is taking a long time, what can the city do to move this master plan along?**

We need to break the cycle and elect members that mean business and will work to attract business. I feel that this area is ripe for the development of some technological and IT centric companies that would bring not only the revenue but also the improvements to the technological state of our city.

The Hamilton Canal Innovation District is the most important economic development project Lowell has undertaken in decades. We must remain focused on the right kind of development and not settle for inadequate solutions. Jobs and commercial activity are the key to that area and downtown's success.

I support the City's original plan for a mixed-use, mixed-income district for a good blend of residents and businesses that will support the Downtown. Encourage local developers and contractors to offer apprenticeships and employment for people of color, youth, and women to expand equal opportunity.

**Does Lowell need more affordable housing?**

Yes but several levels & I feel that affordable housing needs to be spread out throughout the area of Lowell and not clustered in certain sections as was the design from the 1970's – 1990's. We need to afford all people the ability to prosper and be part of our growing community.

We need to re-balance the mix of housing in our city. Too much of the affordable housing is centered in downtown. We should focus on working with non-profits like the Coalition for a Better Acre and similar groups to identify and update underused buildings appropriate for affordable housing.

Yes, I believe Lowell needs a balance of mixed income housing, affordable and market rate. We need to make sure Lowell remains affordable for current residents as well as young working professionals who cannot yet afford market rate housing but would like to live in a historic, urban community.

**Would you support more resources at the city level for tracking needs and supporting refugee and immigrant families?**

Should I have the privilege of being elected, it is important to me that I represent everyone in our City equally. I would work to better track the needs of everyone, not just the immigrant and refugee families, but all Lowell's residents. We need to work to increase/improve our services to all!

Lowell has always been an immigrant city and that remains true today. Our ability to welcome and integrate newcomers into our schools and our neighborhoods is one of our greatest strengths. I would support partnering with non-governmental groups focused on refugee and immigrant services.

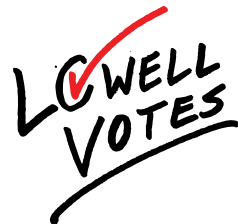
I support adopting a trust ordinance to codify the current police department policy of not questioning immigration status when engaged with residents. The City should improve engagement with Limited English Proficient speakers; I would support utilizing resources for translation services or staff.

## Find a candidate online with our web roundup!

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# School Committee Survey Answers

Ten candidates.  
Four incumbents.  
Six challengers.  
Two seats up for grabs.  
A charter up for review.  
A high school to place.



# School Committee: Do you support changing Lowell's at-large system, in view of the pending lawsuit against it?

“Yes”

YES

—Andy Descoteaux

“

YES

With or without the pending lawsuit, I support changing Lowell's at-large system for the School Committee and the City Council.”

—Jaqueline Doherty

“

Yes, I believe in change”

YES

—Robert Hoey

“

YES

A hybrid of At-Large as well as District seats for the Lowell City Council and Lowell School Committee would give our city the benefit of both true city wide perspectives as well as the increased understanding and representation of our individual neighborhoods and their specific concerns.”

—Connie Martin

“

YES

Cambridge has a Plan E form of government. This system of proportional representation allows an at-large system to be representative and encourages diversity in leadership. It is important to have more balanced representation on all our city boards and commissions.”

—Timothy Blake

“

YES

I do think that Lowell could benefit from broader neighborhood representation on the School Committee. This becomes even more critical as the next SC will investigate the possibility of neighborhood elementary and middle schools.”

—Noelle Creegan

“

DID NOT RESPOND



—Dominik Lay

“

MAYBE

I wouldn't say the system we have now is not working. I think its a good idea to look at different proposals to see if the neighborhoods could be better represented. All options should be looked at including having seven members elected by the people and the chair voted on by the elected members.”

—Dennis Mercier

“

YES

I welcome the opportunity to look at expanding the chances for more people to be involved in the elected positions.”

—Gerard Nutter

“

NO

I don't feel that changing our system will increase chances of certain minority groups getting elected. We need more civic involvement, especially voting, at election time.”

—Daniel Shanahan

# School Committee: What is your position on the location of the Lowell High School & why?

“Cawley.” **CAWLEY**

—Andy Descoteaux

“We must keep LHS downtown because it is the fairest, most cost-effective option, and it will result in a centralized, state-of-the-art facility that honors our history, is accessible to resources, and does not add costly infrastructure, field replacement, and transportation expenses we can't afford.” **DTL**

—Jaqueline Doherty

“I want the high school to stay downtown because I want to make sure we have enough money to be able to maintain ALL of the schools in our city. Don't forget that we have approximately 16,000 students to worry about, not just 3,000. Also, I believe that 350 to 400 million dollars is ridiculous.” **DTL**

—Robert Hoey

“I support Option 3; renovation with eminent domain taking of the office building on Arcand Dr. is the best option for LHS. From a financial standpoint the central location limits bussing expenses and the enhanced accessibility and fairness the central location offers is critically important to me” **DTL**

—Connie Martin

“No disruption. Safety. Security. New construction at Cawley Stadium provides all three. As a principal, I understand the negative impacts of the slightest disruption. Kids learning in a construction zone for six years is not the ideal educational environment.” **CAWLEY**

—Timothy Blake

“A new HS at the Cawley site will best serve our city in the short and the long term. Building new will take away risk of exposure to hazardous materials and allow for an education without disruption. The DT property can be redeveloped or repurposed for other uses, potentially generating tax revenue.” **CAWLEY**

—Noelle Creegan

“DID NOT RESPOND”

—Dominik Lay

“I support building a new high school at the Cawley site. We should be moving forward to build for the future and a new modern school will serve as a great educational campus for years.” **CAWLEY**

—Dennis Mercier

“I favor the downtown location from both a financial perspective and it central location.” **DTL**

—Gerard Nutter

“My preferred location is the Cawley site. 3 years of constructions vs. 4-6 years. No disruption in learning environment due to construction. Student/teacher/staff safety during construction. Slightly more expensive option for taxpayers gets new construction vs. renovation.” **CAWLEY**

—Daniel Shanahan

# School Committee

**Andy Descoteaux**  
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



**Jaqueline Doherty**  
Highlands

INCUMBENT



**Robert Hoey Jr.**  
South Lowell

INCUMBENT



**Connie Martin**  
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



**Timothy Blake**  
Belvidere



**Are you concerned about the proportionally low number of teachers and staff of color in our schools? If so, what should we do to change?**

I am not concerned with the low numbers. I am more concerned that we hire the BEST and most QUALIFIED teachers for our students. Our ability to find and hire minority teachers is further hampered by the fact that the number of high school students entering into colleges for education is dwindling

Yes, I am concerned about the lack of diversity in our school staff. I supported increased funding for targeted recruitment, made a motion to develop an internal pipeline of talent that included an educational pathway for our paras, and asked for an update to track progress on these initiatives.

Yes, we need to look harder at attracting quality candidates from diverse backgrounds. However, we have high quality diverse teacher candidates among our paraprofessional staff. I think its important to support those staff members in becoming teachers and getting them licensed.

Our primary goal is to place the most talented, and effective professionals in every open position. There is a strong benefit to having our staff reflect the same range of diversity as our student population. I support investing in current staff, such as Paras to bring them into teaching positions.

As a principal, I have increased the number of minority staff members in my school. It makes a big difference for the school culture and learning environment. I would devote considerable time as a School Committee member to making sure this happens in Lowell.

**Lowell schools currently try to address racial and economic segregation by busing kids from one part of the city to another. Do you think Lowell should be considering neighborhood schools instead?**

The time has come for us to return to neighborhood schools. We need to make sure that the diversity issues within each neighborhood are addressed so that we can remain under the desegregation order.

We should review our two-zone system to see if we can improve efficiencies and save on transportation costs, but I would only support a change that maintains diversity and balance in each school, and offers all neighborhoods equal access and choices.

I believe in neighborhood schools 100%, and that is the way that I would vote.

I am open to any rezoning plan that could reduce the amount of money we spend on bussing, but we cannot abandon our commitment to maintain school communities that are not overly weighted with any one ethnic, linguistic, or socio-economic group simply because of the demographics of our neighborhoods

At a Citywide Parent Council meeting over a year ago, the school department presented a new busing plan that addressed segregation and included neighborhood schools. Since we can honor diversity within our neighborhood schools, the time is right to move to neighborhood schools.

**What do public schools need to prioritize to prepare Lowell's children for leading successful lives?**

One of the things we need to do is make sure we prepare them for what jobs there are going to be available here in the 21st century by having them attend a high school that is built to meet those needs and not one that was built in the 19th century.

We must provide our children with a rigorous education that challenges them to do their best while enabling creativity and exploration of other areas that may interest them. We must educate the whole child along with teaching acceptance, respect, collaboration, and kindness.

Focusing in on providing adequate technology to prepare them for their future whether it be in college or in the work place.

We need to focus on efforts to reduce class sizes. Achieving smaller class sizes is not an easy task; it requires not only increasing our teaching working force but also expansion of our physical capacity. Our district needs to investigate returning to our previous Class-size Reduction protocol

Critical thinking skills. Teamwork. Empathy. The jobs our children will pursue in the near future do not exist today. We need to teach our students to not only master Math, Science, Reading, Writing, and History, but also habits of mind such as critical thinking, teamwork, and empathy.

**Youth Submitted Question: Do you believe Lowell Public Schools are funded enough to support the children properly?**

Our children and therefore our public schools are the future of this city. If we want to have a citizenry that is capable of sustaining the needs of our community, we need to have more support from all sectors; public and private, city and state.

The state's funding formula is outdated and insufficient, and it is the basis for the city's contribution. With more funds, we could offer wraparound services for those who need it, have more time for recess, arts, music, sports, and other programs to engage students more fully in their education.

We need more money from the state and our city. I also believe the school committee is under funded in the cash contribution from our city. The superintendent is focusing in on indirect cost also known as the maintenance of effort agreement which was written a decade ago by Jay Lang.

We'll never have enough money to fund our schools to reach our full potential. It is challenging to operate in such a reality, but that is the difficult job of all members of the school committee. We must consider every educational dollar that we spend to ensure that we get the most positive impact.

Superintendents have told me that for decades schools have been underfunded. Schools need more professionals working with our youth. Kids need positive role models and the more we can have in our schools, the better.

**Do you believe that enough is done to engage with refugee and immigrant families as they enter the public school system?**

We are doing a remarkable job at reaching out to ALL our immigrant families. I believe that that is one of many Lowell Public Schools' strongest points.

We need to expand our approach to family engagement despite the challenges of limited time and resources, as well as communication and transportation difficulties. We must make it a priority to find new ways to welcome our families into our schools because it directly relates to student success.

I believe that we do the best that we can with the resources that we have.

We must do more to engage with families and particularly with refugee and immigrant families. We need to be more creative in reaching out to families, not just flyers + robo calls, but also to cultural and faith organizations to help us make respectful and impactful connections with every family.

In my experience as a principal, my teachers have gone to the homes of our English Language Learner students. Going to a student's home to meet the family engages the family into the school community. Home visit efforts should be supported in our schools.

# School Committee

Continued

**Noelle Creegan**  
Belvidere



**Dominik Hok Y Lay**  
Highlands



**Dennis Mercier**  
Pawtucketville



**Gerard Nutter**  
Centralville



**Daniel Shanahan IV**  
Centralville



**Are you concerned about the proportionally low number of teachers and staff of color in our schools? If so, what should we do to change?**

I am concerned in the lack of diversity among our teachers & staff. We need to develop a specific recruiting plan that helps find diverse candidates as well as consider ways to develop students starting in high school.

Did Not Respond.

Difficult question, the school department needs to be very active in ensuring we are recruiting and work harder at community outreach so we are getting more applicants.

I am not concerned I am just hoping that we can hire a more diverse staff. The HR department is trying and I think we need to work to continue that effort.

The priority is hiring the best candidates, based on qualifications, experience and other factors. However, we certainly need to be cognizant of this fact and ensure that we are posting open teaching positions in a manner that notifies and attracts minority teachers.

**Lowell schools currently try to address racial and economic segregation by busing kids from one part of the city to another. Do you think Lowell should be considering neighborhood schools instead?**

I believe that the time is right to consider smaller zones for schools. In order for this to work, all schools will need equitable resources. Smaller zones would mean less travel time for students as well as stronger, more cohesive neighborhoods.

Yes Lowell is very different than it was 30 years ago, I don't think the need to segregate is necessary. I feel its time for more zones and neighborhood schools.

69% of parents currently enrolling students with their first choice being in a neighborhood school we know going to a neighborhood school has some challenges but we need to look at those challenges and see how they can be addressed fairly for all.

Based on the age of the desegregation decree order, it is certainly time to re-visit the issue, since I believe our neighborhoods' demographics have changed dramatically over the years and compliance may be achieved by re-zoning that more closely resembles neighborhood schools.

**What do public schools need to prioritize to prepare Lowell's children for leading successful lives?**

Academic success is a big priority. Test scores & school ratings are on the rise district wide; placed resources are having a positive impact. Another top priority should be to identify & develop student strengths and talents beyond the standard curriculum.

Early education is the key to a child's future. It's the foundation of their educational journey. We should consider expanding and increasing number of Pre K classrooms. Given the opportunity and the tools to learn Lowell's children will continue to lead successful lives.

Besides the basics of English and math we need to have them ready for using technology and also for basic finance many high school students don't know how to balance a checkbook or write a check we need to work on that.

The quality of its teachers, since they are on the front line in preparing Lowell's children, through education and as role models, for college or a career after high school.

**Youth Submitted Question: Do you believe Lowell Public Schools are funded enough to support the children properly?**

No. LPS are underfunded from the state (a statewide issue). We need our state legislature to work harder to secure more funding for our students. Locally, Lowell must continue to fund the schools to at least the state minimum level. The SC has to be accountable for how funds are used.

No, although the City has increased funding under the current administration, funding from the state should be increased. We also need to allocate the funds we received better focusing on increasing teaching staff.

We are fortunate to receive a large amount of Chapt 70 funding and the city has exceeded its NET School Spending requirements, we need to make sure all those dollars are being spent wisely.

Our schools are funded enough, as demonstrated by the fact that minimal cuts were made to the classroom, but we must continue our efforts to increase funds to the classroom and look to make cuts elsewhere if possible.

**Do you believe that enough is done to engage with refugee and immigrant families as they enter the public school system?**

I believe that Lowell has a greater ability to welcome immigrant and refugee families due to the supports that are currently in place. A continuum of outreach will aid families in assimilation and connection.

Yes I think the Lowell school department does a great job engaging and working with all families entering our public school system

Yes and I think our new parent information coordinator will be a strong advocate to reach out to parents and try to ease the transition into our system

I have no personal knowledge on this subject matter and any belief I have would be a guess. There is always room for improvement of our efforts to assist refugee and immigrant families.

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Partner  
Organizations



Email: [info@lowellvotes.org](mailto:info@lowellvotes.org)  
Phone: 978-452-7532 ext. 808  
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Lowell Votes is a nonpartisan community group dedicated to increasing the number of people who vote in Lowell through education.

[www.lowellvotes.org](http://www.lowellvotes.org)

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