



Bike Newton Candidate Questionnaire

Questionnaire Intro:

Bicycling concerns are inextricably linked to a number of issues, including transportation and recreation generally, but also to concerns of climate, housing, land use, health and wellness, healthy aging, affordability, commuting, and mobility justice. This Candidate Questionnaire, developed by the Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition and Bike Newton, is designed to explore how candidates for public office view and approach these interconnected issues.

Candidate Name: Marc Laredo

Office Sought in Election: Mayor

Campaign website: www.laredofornewton.com

Campaign social media accounts:

<https://www.facebook.com/laredofornewton>
[instagram.com/laredofornewton](https://www.instagram.com/laredofornewton)

Tell Us Your Story

1. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly?

- Car
- Green Line
- Commuter Rail
- Bus

- Bike
- Mobility Device
- Walking
- Ride Share
- Moped/Motorcycle
- Scooter
- Carpool

I use multiple forms of transportation: car, walking; biking and running for exercise, and ride share when traveling. For many years, I took the commuter bus to and from Boston

2. Do you think Newton has sufficient safe cycling options in our city? If not, what do you see as some of the biggest challenges related to safe bicycling in Newton?

Newton has made great strides in investing in bike lanes all over our city. We have also invested in safer intersections and upgraded traffic signals across the city, which also makes it safer for cyclists. Much of the credit for this goes to strong advocacy from the cycling community, including Bike Newton. Newton is an old city with many narrow roads which make it challenging to create bike lanes that are physically separated from cars or separate bike trails, which I believe are the safest options. However, as we rebuild roads, we are always looking to add bike safety options, and as Mayor I will continue that practice.

3. What specific actions will you take to address these challenges?

The Newton Walk, Roll, and Bike Network Plan calls for numerous steps that I believe are sensible and my administration will act on:

- Connecting people to key destinations by expanding walking, rolling and biking networks that reach schools, parks, recreation centers, civic institutions, transit stops, and village centers with low-stress, comfortable routes.
- Advancing accessibility for all users by ensuring sidewalks, curb ramps, and crossings meet ADA standards, prioritizing access for older adults, children, and people with disabilities.
- Enhancing safety and comfort by improving streets and crossings with traffic calming, signal operations, and design changes that reduce conflicts and make walking, rolling, and biking feel safer and more comfortable.
- Using resources efficiently by coordinating bicycle and pedestrian improvements with the City's road paving program, mitigation from new developments, and other emergent

opportunities, making it possible to deliver projects more effectively and cost-consciously.

4. Do you support the completion and implementation of Newton's Walk, Roll and Bike Network Plan? If so, how will you work to support the completion of this plan??

Yes - see answer above.

5. If you could choose where to place protected bike lanes or separate trails, what would be your top priority locations?

I would like to see more children biking to school, which is healthier for them and also would reduce traffic throughout the city on weekday mornings. I would solicit recommendations from our residents for ideal locations.

6. Bicycle infrastructure and safety improvements cannot be implemented without adequate funding. Would you support an annual allocation from the City of Newton budget of at least \$1 million per year dedicated towards implementation of the Walk, Roll, and Bicycle Network Plan?

I cannot make any financial commitments until I am Mayor and can take a comprehensive review of our finances. There are many competing interests and much uncertainty, especially with reductions in federal funding.

7. Emissions: Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Massachusetts (40%). At the same time, congestion rates have quickly returned to pre-pandemic highs. Do you see the issues of climate and transportation as connected, and if so how would you work to align them?

I see the issues of climate and transportation as connected. I will be a strong advocate for the MBTA to upgrade our commuter rail stops and expand service throughout the state, so that commuters have a more attractive way to commute to Boston and other areas along the Worcester/Framingham line. I also will advocate for the restoration of bus service that was reduced during Covid.

8. Resiliency: Infrastructure in Massachusetts needs to be built to withstand our climate future — our bridges and roads, as well as bus and transit service, are crucial in the event of climate emergencies and in meeting long term climate goals. What specific actions will your office take to influence local and state agencies to improve our climate resiliency and meet our climate goals?

At the local level, we will continue to invest in road safety and maintenance. I will be a strong advocate for upgrading our commuter rail stops so that they are fully accessible and double-platformed so that service can be increased. I will also push for our pre-pandemic bus service to be restored. I am pleased that the MBTA has been improving safety and speed on the Green Line.

Here in Newton, we will identify areas of vulnerability for those who live, work and visit Newton so that we can make the necessary investments to protect people and property. This will entail better stormwater management to reduce the risk of localized flooding; investing in tree canopy to cool the air, sequester carbon, increase biodiversity, and absorb stormwater; daylight buried streams to improve water quality and reduce flood risk; and more.

9. Access to Health and Wellness: Walking and biking improve mental and physical health; however many recreational destinations are out of reach for people with disabilities, or for people without a personal automobile. How will you work to provide access to recreation for all people?

The Go-Go Newton program provides rides to Newton seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals. I would do more to ensure that all who are eligible for this program are aware of it. The Bluebikes program reduces barriers to bicycling, so there may be steps we can take to ensure more people are aware of it and how to use it.

10. "Vision Zero" is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Do you believe that Newton should adopt Vision Zero?

- Strongly Support
- Somewhat Support
- Neither Support nor Oppose
- Somewhat Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

Explanation:

Serious crashes and injuries or deaths are often preventable, and we should be working to improve our transportation network to address these issues.

11. Automated Enforcement (i.e., speed cameras and red-light cameras) is one key strategy that has been proven to effectively reduce speeding, improve safety, and remove racial bias in traffic enforcement in other states. Would you support automated enforcement legislation that allows Newton to opt-in to a speed or red-light camera program?

- Strongly Support
- Somewhat Support
- Neither Support nor Oppose
- Somewhat Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

Explanation:

While I understand that cameras can help with traffic enforcement, we must be careful to ensure that we protect our civil liberties.

12. The school trip by car in Newton contributes roughly thousands of trips per day to Newton's streets. This contributes to substantial auto congestion around drop-off and pick-up times. Is this an optimal configuration for our schools, roads and sidewalks? If not what would you propose?

We can do more to discourage traveling to school by car and encourage traveling to school by foot or bicycle. I believe that as we continue to invest in the safety of our roads, including upgrades to traffic signals, intersection design, and traffic calming, we will see more children walk or bike to school.

13. Safety around schools has been a top priority for city transportation planners. Many of our new schools have been designed to protect children walking and biking to school, and additional changes have been made around existing schools--particularly eliminating drop-off loops for parent/guardian cars. Do you support these changes? If so, do you have any proposals to extend/improve these changes??

I support these changes and will continue to support them as we build new schools.

14. A significant safety concern is drivers of private vehicles who violate school campus rules or city and state traffic ordinances. Our police department is unable to enforce because officers are often covering crossing guard locations (hiring remains an issue). How can you as a member of the School Committee help to alleviate this issue?

I will work with our new police chief to increase enforcement of our safety rules around our schools to send a clear message that our children's safety is paramount.