



Mpiima Mugambe Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Lynnwood City Council Position 5

What are your top three priorities to achieve in your term?

Affordable Housing and Homelessness, Public Safety and community policing, Mental Health and Social Services

How will you boost housing options, particularly for families of all incomes to live where they work? How will you engage the public for new shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, permanent supportive housing? How do you weigh community objections with the housing goals for your jurisdiction, while encouraging engagement from neighbors?

Affordable housing is at the core of my work. As a social worker who works with people in crisis, I know that it is almost impossible to truly help people who are not housed, first, before any of the other issues that they may or may not have are addressed. On council I will prioritize affordable housing and the promotion of mixed-use zoning in order to increase housing supply as much as possible. Some of this will come in the form of adapting already existing structures (via creating middle housing options or mixed-use options) or adding in small structures onto already existing properties (such as accessory dwelling units), but much of this will also come in the form of incentivizing affordable housing with developers by offering them tax breaks or subsidies when they prioritize affordable units over more profitable options. In all of this, transparency is key. It is important that we listen to neighbors who don't want to see the character of their neighborhoods lost, but it is



also our job as leaders to make decisions that are in the best interests of what the city needs to be able to grow sustainably and equitably.

Do you support adding progressive revenue sources? Which ones would you support to fund your priorities? Or what cuts would you make to balance budgets facing increasing strain under Trump?

100%. Washington has an affordability crisis, but it also has a fairness crisis. Right now, it is working people and lower-income earners who bear the brunt of our tax system. As “progressive” as our state touts itself to be, we have one of the most inequitable tax systems in the country. It is imperative that we change this. This will mean raising funds for critical services by taxing the wealthy and big businesses. It should also mean slightly lowering sales tax as it is working people who unfairly pay the bulk of that burden. We can do this via property taxes on high-value properties and also on high-earnings. Even if some of this is outside of the scope of a city council, those local elected leaders must still do what we can to lobby our county-level and state-level elected leaders to make the tough votes needed to change this system.

What do you think is the most important strategy your jurisdiction can pursue to limit cost increases and make the region affordable to live in? How would you go about implementing that strategy?

All of this needs to start with a housing-first strategy. This means increasing housing supply but also creating systems that keep people housed, even when they cannot



afford to pay rent, as doing so is cheaper in the long run than what it costs to deal with the societal impacts of homelessness. I am also a dad to four young children and I want to make sure that I am building a city that they will be able to afford to live in when they become adults. The other thing that always ties into housing is transit. Easy access to transit can keep people working, which can keep them housed. Easy access to transit can also keep people safe from the risks associated with long commutes and the added cost burden of having to own a vehicle. Housing is a transit issue and transit is a housing issue and in no city is that more clear than in Lynnwood where the expansion of the light rail has made living in Lynnwood more desirable, which has increased housing demand and, therefore, increased costs, which will exacerbate the homelessness crisis if we don't have the right policies in place.

Traffic deaths are rising across Washington state, with pedestrians composing an increasing share statewide. What is your approach to making our streets safer for all users?

I would love to see Lynnwood become a city that is known around the region for its beautiful bike paths that keep both bikers and walkers safe from cars and that also add character and recreational options for families to enjoy. On top of that, there are still many neighborhoods across Lynnwood that lack proper sidewalks and crosswalks. Making Lynnwood more walkable and bikeable is a win for our climate goals, our health goals, and for the overall happiness and wellbeing of our residents. People need to matter more to policy makers than cars and that is the mindset that we must have when tackling this issue.



What is your approach to improving public safety over the next five years? How will you actualize it?

I have volunteered with the Lynnwood Citizen Patrol many times. I am also an anti-police-violence activist. I do not see these things as contradictory. Most communities want a strong, ethical police presence in order to feel safe. As policymakers, it is our job to ensure that we go about this the right way. That means hiring officers who look like the people they are policing, with the same backgrounds and cultural understandings. It also means holding officers accountable for their actions and providing them with proper training needed to do the job while at the same time next expecting officers who carry guns to also do the jobs of social workers and mental health workers. Some emergency calls require guns in order to keep communities safe but many do not and we need our emergency responders to be able to know the difference. We need to properly fund our police but not at the cost of other equally important programs, and with that funding comes the responsibility of ensuring that our police programs are being run ethically and humanely.

What have you done/will you do to increase collaboration at city hall and ensure all residents are included?

I want to meet our constituents where they are and bring them into more of a participation role with regards to city government. This will mean hosting office hours and community events to educate the public about the issues currently being decided by city council. This also means prioritizing transparency above all else. Residents have a right to know how every dollar that the city has is spent. They have a right to be able to easily provide input on how their city spends its budget and



prioritizes its programs. Having elected officials on city council who are representative of the city's communities will help the public understand how to better engage with city officials.

What actions should the city take to address the climate crisis?

Every issues that we have plays into the climate crisis. Building sustainability and the housing crisis go hand-in-hand. Increasing transportation options will decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Doing more to help residents understand where their food comes from is also a climate issue. I would, personally, love to see Lynnwood open a local farmer's market and help our residents better access healthier, local food options that are both good for them and good for the planet (and that support local farmers at the same time). We need to prioritize building efficiency, upgrading our vehicle fleet, and doing an even better job of promoting public transit use.

What is your financial sustainability plan for the city?

Lynnwood is in a unique spot right now because the addition of light rail to our city will benefit our local business community, as well as attract new residents. With this new benefit must come a lot of responsibility that we make good decisions in this moment. We want to attract the right kinds of businesses that will benefit our communities but also give back to them in the form of taxes so that our city's individual taxpayers do not wind up being taken advantage of. We will need to reinvest that increase in revenue in a way that further improves our infrastructure and sets us up for a strong, long term future that can be enjoyed by generations to come. We need to not just plan for the comforts of now but the quality of life that we want to leave behind.



What are your top transportation goals for the city, and how will you get them done? What is your plan to improve walkability, bike safety, and accessibility in your community?

The best transportation system is one in which residents view public transportation as the easiest, default option. This means that our transit systems need to be known for being fast, reliable, clean, safe, comfortable, and easy to access. They must also be affordable without having to jump through the hoops of filling out inconvenient and not easily accessible forms in order to get the rate that is often offered to lower-income transit users. Families should be able to plan their schedules around the long term reliability of our public transportation system and right now that goal isn't fully realized yet. With this comes doing a better job of connecting bike paths and walkways to public transit stops and then making those stops more comfortable and accessible for people who are waiting for buses to arrive, and then ensuring that reliability is prioritized so that people don't feel like they are always waiting around for a system that isn't reliability on time. People won't default to a system that they don't have faith in and building that trust will take time.

Do you support camping bans or sweeps? If elected, how would you adapt or change current law/policies to protect and support our neighbors?

No. As a social worker I do not think that sweeps or bans move us towards the goals that we are aiming for. They also increase trauma and can cause people experiencing homelessness to cycle into the bad system even further. I would like to see us take a more compassionate approach that also offers easy, straight forward solutions. The often overlooked necessities of everyday life for a housed person can seem impossible to maintain while homeless. This can come in the form of not being able to hold on to key papers or documents that are needed if you are trying to rebuild your life. I would like to see Lynnwood do a better job of offering accessible



services that can store important documents for our unhoused neighbors so that they don't risk losing them while living on the streets. The same can be said for supporting programs that can help those experiencing homelessness set up mailboxes and find places to shower or to find the proper attire needed to wear during a job interview. There are so many better things that we can do with city money than sweep homeless encampments, adding additional trauma to those who are already in crisis.

In what ways could your city's comprehensive plan go further, and what would you push for to improve it during your tenure?

The Lynnwood Comprehensive Plan could do a better job of highlighting the diversity and diverse needs that exist throughout our city. Lynnwood is a minority majority city with many cultures, income levels, and backgrounds represented among our residents. This is not fully reflected in our Comp Plan. While the opening of the light rail expansion has really highlighted the role that transit will play in our city's future, the ability for us to be more walkable and bikeable is not yet fully laid out. We also need to do a better job of understanding that climate resiliency will play a critical role in every future decision that our city makes, and that being as resilient as possible in our future starts by making good decisions now.