

WARD B Council Candidate Survey Q&A



Chris Gadsden



Mira Prinz-Arey

Ward B Council Candidate Jessica Hellinger did not respond to our survey

QUESTION #1

In 2016, JC Open Data shows that there were 585 pedestrians struck by vehicles, a 3% increase over 2015 and a 12% increase over 2014, and the problem is equally chronic in every part of the city. Traffic safety enforcement has long been inconsistent at best and not a true priority, and our roads have become dangerous speedways. What will you do, if elected, to make this public health crisis a top priority for improvement for the next administration? (Source: JC Open Data, tinyurl.com/peddashboard)

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - We will use city resources to make public awareness amongst drivers a priority. We need to work with the JCPD to patrol roadways where speeding and fatal accidents are a problem, like JFK, 440 and Grand Street. We should reestablish the motor cycle unit, which Mayor Fulop abolished and that police believe was a cause in the increase in fatalities.

Mira Prinz-Arey - The current administration has formed a JC PD unit dedicated to traffic safety, and if elected I will work diligently with them target problem areas in ward b. There has been an increase in enforcement and summonses issued which equates to roughly 1500 tickets issued monthly, and I will work with the JCPD to ensure they have the resources they need to continue this work. Additionally, the city planned for 30 additional crossing guard hires in the past few months, and I will work to ensure some of these guards are placed in ward b. I walk, take public transportation, ride a bike and drive, and understand the importance of pedestrian safety, from all these perspectives.

QUESTION #2

In 2011, the Council adopted a “Complete Streets” policy, which calls for design improvements on our streets to more fully accommodate road users of all ages and abilities more safely and allow access by all modes of transport (including bicycles and pedestrians). Complete Streets policies reduce speeds to within safe, existing limits and can improve traffic flow. However, this policy has yet to be enacted, citizens continue to get hurt or killed, and our auto insurance rates keep rising. Will you commit to making the application of Complete Streets policy a priority during your term, if elected? How?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - Team Matsikoudis FULLY supports the Complete Streets policy. Again, educating the public through meetings, social media and other media about the benefits of traffic calming measures and alternative means of egress like median crossing islands; audible cues for people with low vision, curb cuts; curb extensions, center medians, planter strips and protected bike lanes, greenways, and possibly bicycle lanes, neighborhood greenways, wide paved shoulders, and possibly Bus Rapid Transit.

Mira Prinz-Arey - Over the last four years there have been over 22 miles of bike lanes added to our streets, and I will continue to advocate for the importance of “Complete Streets” policies in my ward and through out the city. It makes good sense from a safety engineering perspective. It is our responsibility to ensure everyone can use the roads safely and efficiently.

QUESTION #3

The streets in Jersey City are generally not bike friendly and are dangerous to ride on. The bike lanes we do have are not connected in a network, nor are they enforced (often blocked by double parking, etc.). We have no protected bike lanes and lack sufficient racks at key transit and shopping hubs. What would you do to improve safety and access for bicycle riders throughout the entire city?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - We need more bike parking at transit hubs and we need a bike network of connected PROTECTED LANES and we need greenways to connect our two waterfronts.

Mira Prinz-Arey - The bikeshare program, additional bike lanes, and programs like the Grand Street project are all great starts. Parklets and bike parking zones are also solutions that have worked in other cities. I will also work with groups like Bike JC and Safe Streets to explore the feasibility of other solutions.

QUESTION #4

“The truth about a city’s aspirations isn’t found in its vision. It’s found in its budget” – Brent Toderian. As a councilperson, what would you do to fund an expansion of Complete Street improvements to make our roads safer for all users?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - Cut patronage, come up cost to implement top measures at needed street and timeline to implement it.

Mira Prinz-Arey - I will look for effective and efficient ways to get around the city, and see how that syncs up with the city’s budget.

QUESTION #5

“If you plan cities for cars & traffic, you get cars & traffic. If you plan for people & places, you get people & places.” – Fred Kent. Reducing dependency on cars is important for the environment, for safer and more pleasant neighborhoods, and for residents who cannot or who choose not to have a car. As density continues to increase, how will you ensure that new development promotes multiple modes of transportation with better connectivity between neighborhoods and to the region?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - All buildings should have parking for bikes. Our focus should not be parking garages, but complete streets.

Mira Prinz-Arey - Investment in modes of transit is very important. The bike share program is a step in the right direction. We also need to talk with our partners at the state level to assist us with our transportation needs. The NJTPA has a North Jersey Transit plan that is a great blueprint for what can be done in Jersey City.

QUESTION #6

Illegal, dangerous parking is not adequately enforced and often contributes to crashes and injuries to pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike. Parking Enforcement does not have sufficient staffing, training, or technology to adequately address violations, including dangerous illegal parking (blocked crosswalks, double parking, blocked bus stops, impaired sight lines with cars parked too close to corners, etc.). If elected, what will you do to increase capacity within the Parking Enforcement Division?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - Illegal parking causes accidents. We need more parking enforcement on this violation and greater fines.

Mira Prinz-Arey - Staffing needs are part of the issue, however, the larger issue is finding alternative modes of transportation. Bike lanes have been shown to work, so have apps that give the arrival times of buses and light rail trains. We can continue the fight for greater transit funding and move towards a 24 hour bus service from the Heights to Manhattan. Parking is only one part of the issues, and I will work with community leaders on a comprehensive and holistic approach to these issues.

QUESTION #7

Grand St. is one of the most dangerous streets in the city, and it is also a key artery filled with dense residential developments, shopping, schools, and other community facilities. Do you support the Grand Street Vision proposal to redesign dangerous Grand Street, including elements such as a road diet, pedestrian safety improvements, and protected/separated bike lanes? What will you do to ensure that the city’s eventual plan for Grand St. is swift, bold, and comprehensive—not a watered-down patchwork compromised by its loudest opponents?

ANSWERS

Chris Gadsden - YES! Again, educate, come up with plan, put it out to bid and get it done. Simple.

Mira Prinz-Arey - Investment in Infrastructure is important, as are innovative solutions to transit issues. Making sure that pedestrians, bike riders and drivers alike have a safe outlet to travel will continue to be an important part of my platform. I will work with the appropriate city agencies to ensure the project comes to fruition.