

# Concord City Council Questionnaire

On behalf of Healthy & Active Before 5, the Central County Regional Group (CCRG), and First 5 Contra Costa, thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We have selected questions about the issues that matter most for families with young children in Concord.

Please note: this questionnaire is for voter education purposes only, and responses will not be used to endorse any candidate(s). Responses in full will be made available for Concord voters to review.

Email \*

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What would be your top three priorities in office, and how do you see them impacting families in Concord? (maximum 500 characters) \*

My top 3: transit equity, housing affordability and stability, and good, local jobs. This is because my overarching priority is working families. I would like to see improved, efficient, and affordable transit, because this would reduce dependency on car and gasoline expenses. Similarly, housing affordability and stability would have a direct and positive impact. And fostering growth in good jobs completes the picture: families of all types should be able to live, work and thrive in Concord.

Please rank the following funding areas based on how much of a priority each would be for you if elected. \*

	Highest Priority	Second highest priority	Third highest priority	Fourth highest priority	Fifth highest priority	Lowest priority
Parks and green spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programming for children and youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety net programs such as food or rental assistance for low-income residents	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support for local childcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Mental health services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what should be prioritized within the city's budget for parks and recreation for children and adults? (maximum 500 characters) \*

The budget should be used to foster better health, sustainability, and accessibility. Healthy physical activity and food consumption should be supported, and community gardens should begin to replace acres of watered grass. I encourage programs which are simultaneously fun, educational, and environmentally transformational - children need to learn healthy habits through fun. Multi-use playing fields are essential, as are staffed programs for art, music and recreation.

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What are your thoughts on local tenant protections policies in Concord (for example: rent control, just cause for eviction)? (maximum 500 characters) \*

I support a broad range of tenant protections. These are a high priority because the people who need them are working families, the young and the elderly. Housing and community stability are important for the health and vitality of these vulnerable communities. Consider the economic impact on Concord: the more stable rents and home life are for working people, the more they can participate in and contribute to a thriving Concord. Tenant protections are essential to equity and the common good.

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What are your thoughts on strategies to preserve and produce affordable housing in Concord (for example: inclusionary zoning, community/tenant opportunity to purchase, community land trusts, etc.) ? (maximum 500 characters) \*

I fully support C/TOPA programs as well as land trusts. In fact, I support programs which transfer foreclosed properties into land trusts for use as affordable housing. I am in favor of infill, especially by simplifying the ADU process - infill would benefit residents rather than outside developers. I am sensitive to the ramifications of gentrification, as I am to making sure that denser housing doesn't turn into traffic nightmares. These are complex issues to solve simultaneously.

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What are the challenges you see with access to healthy, affordable foods in Concord, and what are some policies you would support or oppose related to food security? (maximum 1,250 characters) \*

Data show that food insecurity and lack of access to healthy, affordable food are linked to decreased economic opportunity and lower wages. For youth living in food-insecure households, lacking the proper nutrition can lead to increased risk of poor performance in school, behavioral problems, and chronic illnesses such as obesity and diabetes. Poor nutrition has been shown to have an impact on student outcomes.

I believe that we should actively work to help best practices take root in Concord: foster (sub)urban agriculture, facilitate nonprofit grocery stores and food cooperatives, and examine land use and zoning for opportunities to emphasize healthy foods rather than unhealthy. We should encourage cross sector collaboration to turn sources of grant funds into real and accessible healthy food sources.

The issue isn't ideas, good examples are plentiful. The challenge is to reimagine Concord and then use leadership to create good partnerships among nonprofits, advocacy groups, labor and small businesses. We have far too much empty property in Concord which lies dormant because of outmoded economic models and highly restricted control. We can and should come together to expand local production of healthy and affordable food.

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What role does the city play in meeting the health, mental well-being, and economic needs of families, and therefore what programs or policies would you support or oppose? (for example, local jobs, mental health services, guaranteed income, support for small businesses, preventing poverty, etc.) (maximum 1,250 characters) \*

The role the city can play is different from the role the city does play. The City can have a direct impact on better transit, affordable and stable housing for working families, encouraging the growth of jobs and unions, and addressing homelessness. These are not challenges which can or should be solved entirely by City government, but improvements can be facilitated by policy emphasis, carefully reallocating budget priorities, leadership, and collaboration.

The biggest gains in the well being of working families can come from reducing costs - such as with better transit; fostering housing affordability and stability through a combination of practical policies including tenant protections; and assembling a coalition of labor, nonprofits, and small businesses to foster job growth, including union apprenticeships and transition programs. In short, address the causes, not just the symptoms.

Direct support is needed - mental health resources and guaranteed income are examples. But the City itself does not have the financial capacity for such programs on its own. By giving priority to the health and stability needs of working families, Concord can begin to shift away from the status quo, which is arguably not working for everyone.

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Please explain the role you believe local government should play in childcare and early education, and therefore the policies you would support or oppose. (maximum 1,250 characters) \*

First, City government can support a basic truth: we must find ways to treat child care as a vital part of our economy. But what can local government actually do? Prioritizing child care begins and ends with the funding question. So one tangible step which can be taken is to dedicate ourselves to better management of the overall city budget, both revenues and expenditures, so that more is available for child care. But that is a long process, and City resources can't be the entire answer.

So a second step can be to sponsor a fair assessment of existing resources and what might be needed to optimize child care for Concord families. Only then can we search for the private and grant resources to fund the gap. Which private and government enterprises benefit the most from stable child care? Can they help establish a system? These are questions which are not currently asked by City government, but which could be.

Local government can prioritize child care, both directly and indirectly. It can encourage the formation of programs and funding which make child care available. Concord has room in its budget for business development. It should have room in its budget for child care development as well.

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What are your views on how climate change might impact Concord families, and what climate-related city policies or programs would you support or oppose? (maximum 1,250 characters) \*

Let's approach climate change through the multiple lenses of equity. Transit and energy equity call us to address the unequal economic impacts of outmoded energy and transportation systems on working families. My priority is meeting the needs of working families. I believe that improving transit options can simultaneously improve the quality of life of working families and shield them from the costs of energy conversion, which many simply cannot afford. Innovative ways to mitigate traffic and improve transportation options throughout the city are available, but aren't prioritized.

I support California's goal of conversion to carbon neutrality by 2045. Low income and disadvantaged communities will have a harder time performing this conversion, especially where such investments will be made by landlords rather than occupants. I support moving away from natural gas as rapidly as possible, but this must be done in an equitable fashion. Low-income programs supporting the conversion to greater residential energy efficiency should be expanded, and I would like to find ways to prompt conversion in rented buildings which would not cause displacement. Gentrification and displacement cannot be the outcomes of addressing climate change.

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Is there anything else you'd like to share with Concord families about why you're running for City Council? (maximum 500 characters) \*

I am running for Concord City Council because we can choose to make changes which will improve life for all Concord residents, but most importantly for me, for working families. The status quo doesn't really work for anyone, and it is time for change. But these kinds of changes will not happen unless everyone gets engaged in civic affairs, and unless everyone votes. I realize that many Concord residents face daily challenges which make voting seem like a luxury. It isn't; it's a necessity.

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