



## How can Kendall Square continue to be a positive force for good in the City of Cambridge?

*The responses below are from 16 Cambridge City Council candidates, to a questionnaire circulated by the KSA to all 19 candidates in the summer of 2021.*

**Burhan Azeem**: Kendall Square provides a good tax base to the city that pays for our schools and many other programs. Kendall Square should further its commitment to the city by providing opportunities to kids that grew up here, ensuring even business regions are walk-able and "alive" with 1st floor retail, and continuing its development of invaluable cures.

**Dana Bullister**: The people, businesses, and initiatives of Kendall Square can be positive forces, not just for global technology leadership, but within the local community. Fundamentally, I believe that close, ongoing communication among local business leaders and policy leaders on the City Council and School Committee is critical for continuing to explore fruitful potential partnerships. Deliberate efforts to engage surrounding communities and to help people benefit from this area's ample resources are especially important. Our joint community's best interests involve evolving Kendall Square toward a safe, livable, and welcoming area of the city. An ongoing discussion of achieving these ends in ways that are creative, collaborative, and open-minded can best leverage these unique local qualities that can enable Kendall Square to grow as an inclusive and connected part of our community.

**Dennis Carlone, incumbent**: Be a better part of the abutting/poorer neighborhoods. Partner with under-performing schools. Buy land for low and middle housing. Provide Pre-Kindergarten space and facilities on your first floors—especially those near open space. Encourage city officials to reach out more to you and all the neighborhoods in a coordinated manner. Provide a top consultant/employee trained in leading just efforts. Be a partner of the entire city, not just Eastern Cambridge.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I am always available to work with you in a positive, supportive spirit.

**Robert Eckstut**: Be involved, be civil, approach issues/disagreements with good faith, and vote for me.

**Tonia Hicks**: I think my previous answers address this question adequately. Please see above.

**Alanna Mallon, incumbent (Vice-Mayor)**: Continuing efforts on sustainability, building and recruiting from our workforce development programs, and contributing financially to the creation of affordable housing are all ways in which Kendall Square can continue to have a positive

impact on our City. Creating deeper partnerships with the City, local community based organizations to solve intractable problems like lack of access to bio-tech jobs, broadband internet access, affordable childcare, and more, for residents in neighborhoods along its borders is a critical component to being a good and productive neighbor. Additionally, Kendall Square can make itself more physically accessible by focusing on placemaking opportunities for the neighborhoods and residents of Cambridge, not just for workers there during the way. One of the reasons Kendall Square may feel inaccessible to long-time residents or students in Cambridge is because the actual place feels exclusive to workers who have already found opportunities there. But integrating more places for families or pocket parks may help open the space up—additionally, making clear that existing public places are truly public (like the green roof on top of the Kendall Square garage) may contribute more to the feeling of accessibility. In all these ways, Kendall Square can, and must, be a better neighbor and partner to the residents of Cambridge who live in its shadow in order to have a more positive impact on the City.

**Marc McGovern**, incumbent: First off most people in Cambridge have no idea what is happening in Kendall Sq. All they see are tall buildings, profitable companies and traffic. Kendall and the KSA needs to inform people of what is going on. I have talked about this for a long time. Happy to talk about it again. Kendall needs to reach out to neighborhoods, to schools, to our young people. There is no reason for a family that lives outside of Kendall to go to Kendall. BioMed's skating rink is about the only reason for someone who doesn't live in Kendall to bring their kids there. It needs to be more inviting. I was recently in North Point at one of their movie nights and it was packed with families having a wonderful time. We need more of that. It is going to take time for people to feel welcomed. Its not going to be a ""one and done"" effort.

There is a lot of money in Kendall and I am thankful for the companies that step up with financial contributions, especially when there is a crisis. The truth is, the majority of funds raised for the Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund come from Kendall Square. But we also know that this is a drop in the bucket. How can Kendall work with the city to close the digital divide and bring municipal broadband to Cambridge? Kendall has the expertise and money to make it happen. How can Kendall support more affordable housing being built? How can Kendall work more closely with our schools?

I don't put all of this on KSA or Kendall. I think the city is often reluctant to innovation. We don't always think out of the box. We don't take chances. We have to be better partners with you as well. Let's get together and really tackle our challenges with sustainability, transportation, equity and education. We are not a big city. We have tremendous resources. Let's get serious.

**Joe McGuirk**: The positive impact of our scientific community has been a boon for our city, as it has allowed us the means to create services that benefit all residents. It has also allowed us the means to potentially mitigate the impact of climate change. However, while prosperity has come for many, it has come with a cost. Housing costs are among the highest in the nation, and we are at risk of displacing our most vulnerable, at a time that is unprecedented in our history. Displacement no longer means a longer commute or a career change. It now will possibly mean moving to another community that does not have the means to mitigate climate change. I do not advocate for our corporate partners to build housing for their employees, but I do want to

include our business leaders in meaningful conversations about their role in how to address the housing crisis. We live in one of the most innovative cities in the world, and we should harness that brain power to be a leader in solving our nation's fast growing housing crisis.

I support mentorship programs and apprenticeships that could help youth and young adult Cambridge residents become part of the workforce that is required for the success of our innovation and scientific communities.

[Patricia Nolan](#), incumbent: Kendall Square is leading the way in creating a world class innovation center that tackles the global problems of our world starting with being a good neighbor right here in its own community. The myriad of ways Kendall Square companies step up the plate for the community are awesome. Practically every non profit I know ( and I know a lot) have received funding, volunteers and support in some form from Kendall Square companies.

That can and should continue—in all those ways.

From the many internships to the upcoming Constellation Center, to working with community partners like the Community Art Center, to providing spaces for events, to mentoring non profit organizations, to volunteering on direct service and boards - the list is exactly what one would hope to see in a thriving partnership. We all can continue our partnership and work together to support a growth mindset for all the areas of our community that we share, education, sustainability, diversity, housing and transportation.

Keep exploring, working with the most effective leaders and groups. AND I challenge Kendall community to up the ante - every company and organization in Kendall should set explicit public goals for hiring Cambridge residents with explicit goals for hiring low and moderate income residents.

[Sumbul Siddiqui](#), incumbent (Mayor): From supporting the Mayor's Disaster Relief fund for COVID-19 to supporting our extraordinary testing efforts, members of the Kendall Square Association have stepped up over the last year and a half to support the community. I want to deepen the partnerships that we have forged in Kendall Square and see direct involvement with our schools so that we bridge the gap between our students and the world-renowned innovation that takes place around the corner. I look forward to continuing my work with the many organizations pushing to make our city better for everyone.

[E. Denise Simmons](#), incumbent: I look back to the mid-point during my second term as mayor, in December 2016. There was a devastating fire that tore up a couple of neighborhood blocks and left over 100 residents homeless in a matter of hours. I worked with our City Manager to establish a fire relief fund, and a number of companies in Kendall Square were on the phone to my office asking "What can we do to help?" before I could even place the calls. That sense of being not just situated in the community, but of being \*a part of the community\* made a huge impact upon so many of us, and it was the kind of corporate engagement that I would suspect is missing in many other communities. That sense of wanting to reach out and provide services to

our community, and on a more general scale, the willingness to ask "how do we get more kids from the Port educated and working in our companies," or to ask "what tangible things can we do to help our neighbors" is exactly the kind of attitude I urge ALL the companies in our city to adopt. Beyond that, steady communication and relationship building are key. I believe the KSA has done an extraordinary job in that regard, and I look forward to continuing to cultivate that with you in the coming years.

**Theodora Skeadas**: Kendall Square can be a force for good in Cambridge by helping to tackle the crises around affordable housing and climate change. Also, we can and must do more so native, young Cambridge residents are able to access the opportunities Kendall Square offers. In addition to bolstering STEM education in our schools, I believe it is equally important for Kendall Square companies to prioritize hiring local as well. This is an important step to build a more resilient local economy and close the disparities within our city.

**Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler**, incumbent: In a few short decades, Kendall Square has transformed from a symbol of Cambridge's industrial past to a hub of the innovation economy. To be a positive force in Cambridge, it must make sure it is addressing the effects of that transformation. While Cambridge now has a wealth of resources and innovation jobs, they are not accessible to all residents. Cambridge's status as a nexus of jobs has helped drive up housing costs and lead to increased traffic and congestion. These challenges and the inequality gaps in Cambridge are now some of the most pressing demands facing the city and we should address them with the urgency they demand. Like all parts of Cambridge, I hope Kendall Square can be part of the solution and bring its expertise and resources to bear in addressing the most important issues facing the city.

**Paul Toner**: Maintaining open communication between the Council, residents, and the firms in Kendall Square will help build the collaborative relationships that make up our vibrant community. Finding opportunities to educate young people, create jobs, and protect our environment are things we can do together to create a better Cambridge.

**Nicola Williams**: Kendall organizations have been generous in offering space for community arts programs such as the Cambridge Youth Steel Orchestra program, which is a program of Cambridge Carnival International, of which I am the President. Cambridge Community Center for the Arts (CCCA) currently hosts this Cambridge Carnival program. The Kendall organizations have also offered in-kind support and donations to organizations like the Community Art Center, of which I am a board member and other grassroots organizations such as Margaret Fuller House, CCCA, and others. I would like to see that continued partnership and stewardship continue.

I also see that there is an opportunity for the Kendall community to support enterprising Black and Brown entrepreneurs by considering offering affordable ground floor retail space with new development as part of a community benefit. As the Facilitator of the Cambridge-Somerville Black Business Network, whose goal is to foster a diverse, inclusive and equitable ecosystem for Black and Brown businesses, I know first hand how challenging it can be for these business

owners to find affordable retail space. I hope the Kendall organizations and developers keep that in mind moving forward in their development plans.

I would also like to see the Kendall organizations play a role in significantly investing in housing, especially home-ownership, where low and moderate income and Black and Brown community members can have sustained and long term living. To really make an impact, an investment in housing that is affordable would be game changer for many who do not see home ownership as an option in Cambridge. An investment in an Affordable Downpayment program similar to what Harvard has with their professors or what has been successfully implemented in San Francisco will allow families to stay here and build generational wealth in some communities where the net wealth is only \$8.00 compared to \$275,000 for others. The Affordable Downpayment Program does not depend on building new homes and offers a significant down payment of approximately 30% downpayment on existing home prices on the market.

[Quinton Zondervan](#), incumbent: KSA can become more involved in our efforts to do justice in Cambridge. I've described several proposals in this questionnaire that KSA can partner on to help us achieve our goals.