

Question 1 [walkability]: What is your vision for walkable neighborhoods in Hamden and at large? What improvements do you think can be made in the near and long term future to enhance quality of living for your constituents seeking to live a non-car dependent lifestyle?

Over the last 2 years, we have invested in replacing sidewalks with over 2.5 miles of sidewalks installed. I recognize that we have so much more work to do to make our sidewalks safe. It will take yearly investments and I am committed to seeing this through.

Hamden has recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy that addresses multimodal transportation. Now we need to implement the policy and the traffic calming measures described within. Additionally, the State of Connecticut has approved a road diet for Dixwell Ave and Whitney Ave. to reduce the number of lanes from the New Haven line up to Skiff St. We would have a northbound lane, a southbound lane, a dedicated turn lane, and bicycle lanes.

Here is the link to the policy: <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/8068/Town-of-Hamden-Complete-Streets-Policy>

Whitneyville is fortunate to have local businesses that support a non-car dependent lifestyle like the Whitneyville Food Center, a local post office, many small businesses, and restaurants. I will continue to push economic development efforts that support and develop small businesses for the Whitneyville neighborhood.

I will work closely with our citizens and citizen groups, such as the Whitneyville Civic Association, to make our neighborhoods and the entire town more walkable.

Start by conducting an inventory of all town-owned properties and determining how those properties, regardless of size, can be upgraded into neighborhood enhancements such as mini-parks.

Conduct neighborhood meetings with this information to decide what would be of greatest interest in making the neighborhood more walkable.

Protect and vigorously maintain the Farmington Canal.

Designate some savings from adding the town government to our decision on the Board of Education to join the ACES Green Energy Program for neighborhood walkability.

Recruit advice and technical support from Yale and Quinnipiac faculty and form student projects to provide a blueprint for a Hamden Neighborhood Walkability Program.

Most importantly, Meet, listen, and collaborate with neighborhoods to undertake this program.

Question 2 [local commerce]: What is your vision for the commercial center of Whitneyville, specifically the Putnam Whitney intersection? How can we, as a town and neighborhood, build a more thriving business district (e.g., fewer empty storefronts, thriving businesses)? How will you support Whitneyville's business district and Hamden small businesses?

Whitneyville is one of Hamden's best assets and the shopping area there has always been invaluable to surrounding neighborhoods. The Town has proposed changes to its zoning ordinances that will make it easier for businesses to locate in our business districts without having to go through an overly bureaucratic process. Our Engineering department is leading an effort to implement a complete Street program which will result in more pedestrian focused street improvements, increase the walkability of neighborhoods and will make traveling in and through the community safer. Our economic development office is launching a small business grants program to support new and existing businesses and will be launching a broader market campaign to bring attention to Whitneyville, small business owners, and amenities that exist within Hamden.

Please see Action Plan Step #2: <https://mortonformayor.com/my-plan>

As Mayor, I will develop a robust economic development plan to end the current administration's automatic tax increases. Just yesterday, a key member of the Garrett team indicated that more property taxes are forthcoming from that administration. <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2023/09/06/hamden-mayoral-candidates-differentiate-themselves-on-economic-policy-ahead-of-democratic-primary/>

I will work closely with the Whitneyville Civic Association and neighborhood businesses to build a thriving business district there.

But our first steps must be to:

- Create a serious and substantive economic development plan for Hamden, • Work closely with the Business Schools at Quinnipiac and Yale to acquire expertise and action steps for a more robust long-term economic plan.
- Make our neighborhoods and commercial areas safer through a stronger public safety program. Start by appointing a permanent police chief.
- Make Hamden more attractive to businesses and future residents by achieving the 3-year goal of being the most environmentally sustainable community in the region
- Meet with the Whitneyville Civic Association in the first 30 days after taking office to get these initiatives underway.

Question 3 [Whitneyville branch library]: Will you go ahead with proposed plans to close the Whitneyville library (on Carleton St.)? Recent Town budget proposals indicate the functions of the Whitneyville library (and the other branch library) will be moved to the former middle school site.

There is a suggestion that the proposed community center could include a new branch library. We will utilize community input in determining the amenities for the community center. If a library branch is constructed as part of the Community Campus planned for the old Middle School site, all stakeholders will be engaged to decide on the future of the library branches. The construction will take a few years to complete. No decisions will be made before that time. If Whitneyville Branch Library remains open after that time, the building will need a major renovation to become ADA compliant. I am happy to get feedback from the community on this and any other issues.

I commit to keeping the Whitneyville Library open in Whitneyville.

Question 4 [pedestrian safety and infrastructure]: How do you prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety in the context of limited Town resources across the police and engineering departments? What short and long term plans will you enact to increase the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in Hamden?

Pedestrian and bicycle safety are a high priority for my administration. We are working hard to continue to secure needed funding through our State and Federal partners. Several projects that address these concerns are already in the works, such as the Whitney Ave road diet, our Complete Streets Policy, Bus Rapid Transit, sidewalk repairs, and improvements to the Canal Trail. Pedestrian safety is very dependent on vehicles traveling safely on our roads. Our Complete Streets Policy addresses traffic calming to slow down vehicles.

We need more resources in the police and engineering departments because the current administration's regular answer to our challenges is a two-sided coin of property tax increases and service cuts. We need a better solution for Hamden's future. Please see my 10 Week Plan at <https://mortonformayor.com/my-plan>. One of my highest priorities will be to make Hamden the most environmentally sustainable town in the greater New Haven region. Earlier this year, I used my position as Chair of the Finance Committee of the Board of Education to have the school district join the ACES Green Energy Program. We will use state incentives and the free technical assistance ACES offers to make our school facilities more energy efficient and use on-site renewable energy. One of my first acts as Mayor will be to add all municipal facilities to this program. The long-term cost savings will be significant, and I plan to designate a portion of the energy cost savings to the Hamden Neighborhood Walkability Program.

Question 5 [Whitney Ave]: What specific efforts would you take to push CT DOT to make needed changes sooner rather than later? Whitney Ave is a state road (CT DOT-owned) that serves as the major thoroughfare through Whitneyville and a key arterial road for Hamden. CT DOT has indicated that no changes at least on "lower Whitney" will happen until three years from now when the road is slated for repaving. With the City of New Haven moving forward with their own plans for Whitney Ave, are you in favor of accelerating CT DOT's timeframe? If yes, what steps would you take to make that happen?

My administration and particularly our Town Engineer is in regular contact with CT DOT. We have communicated and will continue to communicate our preference that this project move forward as soon as possible. I have a great relationship with Senator Cabrera who is the chair of the transportation committee. We will work with our partners to accelerate the timeline.

The first step will be to organize the Mayor's relationship with our legislative delegation—state senators and state representatives—to meet regularly, collaborate, and leverage that relationship to seek better approaches toward Hamden from the state government. As someone very familiar with the inner workings of the state government and with relationships with the Lamont administration, I am confident that we can get DOT to accelerate their current timetable.