

Progressive Blueprint For Greenfield

A GRASSROOTS PLATFORM FOR GREENFIELD CITY ELECTIONS

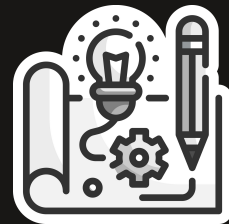
Greenfield elects a new **mayor, city councilors, school committee members, and chair of the board of tax assessors** on **Nov. 7, 2023**. We're proud of Greenfield, and we want a city government we can be proud of, too. Let's elect a government that works for us, with honesty, integrity, and attention to residents' needs and concerns.

In this brochure Greenfield residents from Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution (FCCPR), Greenfield People's Budget, and other groups present an election platform that builds on longstanding efforts to fix what's wrong with Greenfield government across many domains: education, safety, economy and jobs, environment, housing, health, and taxation. These are the changes Greenfield needs in order to build a thriving, inclusive community, now and into the future.

Recent **scandals** have demonstrated serious problems with city leadership, especially the mayor, the chief of police, certain members of the school committee, and the chair of the board of assessors. No real progress is possible without basic changes to our city government: Greenfield deserves **honesty, integrity, and humility** from its elected officials. We need our government working in our collective public interest.

Greenfield is a low-income city: the median household income is just 60% of the state average. All of the issues we address in this platform disproportionately affect people of color and low-income folks, and these policy proposals support a vision for Greenfield that is **racially and economically just**. Public officials must commit to building justice in these ways because progress does not happen on its own.

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VOTE
NOV 7
2023

WE CALL ON THE CITY TO...

DEMOCRACY & PARTICIPATION

Consult and listen to residents. Officials must have direct, face-to-face, two-way dialogue with the public, regardless of those officials' comfort or convenience, and officials must adopt a **service-based approach** even when they disagree with constituents.

Establish avenues for the public to **be actively, collaboratively involved in developing policy and budget priorities and designing city services.** Use these processes to **match funding and programs to residents' needs.**

Make civic participation and public office accessible for as wide a range of residents as possible. Strategies include increasing administrative and legal support for councilors and committee members, increasing stipends for service, establishing child care stipends for parents, or other options not yet considered.

Permanently require that public meetings allow remote participation, and require all boards and commissions to meet in rooms with hybrid meeting technology.

EDUCATION

Inspire families to send their children to Greenfield Public Schools by adopting the following policies:

Fund the schools consistently, over the long-term, at the level they need in order to become stable and offer high quality education to our children.

Invest in **staff development, curriculum redesign, and authentic student leadership;** ongoing training for all staff and students in **conflict resolution, anti-racism, and anti-bullying skills;** and more **project- and community-based learning.**

Drop the MCAS/test prep curriculum.

Implement school discipline that is **restorative, respectful, even-handed, fair, and constructive.** Acknowledge GPS's **ongoing disparate treatment** of students, families, and staff on the basis of race, abil-

ity, language status, gender and other markers of difference.

Keep school resource officers out of the schools.

School Committee: Welcome the input of teachers, parents and caregivers, and the broader community. Hold community meetings at various locations and times in order to foster community participation and open dialogue.

Collaborate with families to create a well thought-out redistricting plan based on racial, economic, and social justice to best serve the education of Greenfield's children.

Pay all GPS staff (and all city employees) a **living wage.**

Collaborate with other districts and lobby the state to pay the **actual costs of educating our students.**

COMMUNITY SAFETY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Build the foundations for community safety by helping people meet their **basic needs for housing, care, food, health, employment, and connection to others.**

Work with neighboring communities and community organizations to establish a **non-armed, civilian emergency response program** for mental health, behavioral health, and other civil issues, led by community members and especially by those who are most harmed by the current emphasis on policing.

Reassess what types of calls police respond to, 90% of which do not involve even allegations of crime. Rein in city costs, alleviate police staffing burdens, improve outcomes for the public, and reduce harm, by **diverting calls away from police and towards more appropriate responses whenever possible.**

End harmful interventions that make people's situations worse, including police-based social work (a.k.a. "embedded co-response") and sweeps of public spaces.

Protect the rights of residents not to be tracked or surveilled, by enacting a **ban on government use of facial recognition technology** and other forms of community surveillance.

Ban police participation in union-busting and labor disputes, including at Baystate Franklin Medical Center.

Protect everyone, including immigrants and unhoused people, from harassment and harm. Work to end all forms of oppressive, hateful, racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, and ableist behavior.

ECONOMY, JOBS, AFFORDABILITY

Develop a **plan to make Greenfield a more affordable place to live.** Base action proposals on **proven solutions** from similar towns, not on the false promises of corporate development.

Prioritize creating **quality jobs and growing community prosperity** by building sustainable and green infrastructure; social, mental, and behavioral health supports; deep investments in education; and a robust arts and culture community.

Support working people by enacting an **ordinance against wage theft** and develop a plan for enforcement. Explore other ways to protect the rights of working people.

Coach retiring business owners to **sell their businesses to their employees**, in order to retain key businesses for future generations, create and maintain living wage jobs, and grow the local economy.

Offer tax incentives to businesses only in extreme cases. Offer incentives to small, locally owned businesses and worker-owned cooperatives that pay living wages and provide dignified working conditions.

HOUSING

Increase the supply of **affordable and accessible housing**, by working with the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority, the Franklin County Community Land Trust, and others.

Ensure **safe and supportive temporary shelter options** for those in need.

Support the expansion of the 60 Wells St shelter as a first step towards establishing a **housing first approach** to helping people without housing.

Protect residents' home equity in cases where property taxes are overdue. Place liens on homes in tax arrears rather than seizing them.

ENVIRONMENT

Build justice by reducing the city's climate impacts and supporting and **protecting those who are most vulnerable to extreme weather, climate disasters, and environmental toxins.** Implement the Comprehensive Master Plan, work to reduce toxins and solid waste, ensure clean air and water, and improve outdoor recreation opportunities.

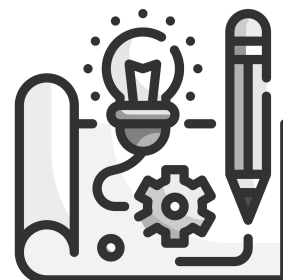
Cooperate with residents to ensure a **thorough clean-up of the Lunt property** and safeguard the health of the neighborhood.

Consult residents of lower-income neighborhoods and implement their priorities for **natural amenities and outdoor recreation**, such as expanding greenspace, tree-plantings, gardens, walking trails, and so on.

Expand healthy, affordable, and climate-friendly transportation: **walking, biking, and public transit**; expand **walking and biking routes and make existing routes safer**, including the need for a safe route to walk and bike between Greenfield and Turners Falls.

Develop a plan to **end the use of synthetic pesticides and herbicides** by the city.

Ensure that renters also benefit from federal and state subsidies for energy efficiency and renewable energy; for example, by passing an ordinance requiring landlords to implement efficiency upgrades when selling a building, as in Burlington, Vermont.



HEALTH

Make every decision with an eye toward providing **equal opportunity for health and well-being** to all of its residents.

Invest in the public health department and enforce health codes in rental housing.

Prioritize **accessibility** in all new and existing city buildings and projects.

Do everything in the city's power to ensure that Baystate Franklin Medical Center honors its historical agreements to **keep care local**. Support nurses, CNAs, primary care providers, and all other health-care workers, who are our best allies for keeping care high quality and local.

Work to improve local **mental and behavioral healthcare services**. Support existing programs that are **peer-led, respectful of people's rights and dignity, and focused on reducing harm** (including Wildflower Alliance, the RECOVER Project, and Tapestry). Require city staff to learn the best human rights-based standards of care.

Lobby state government for **single-payer insurance (Medicare for All)** to provide better healthcare for everyone at a lower cost to individuals, saving the city millions of dollars each year in employee benefits.

TAXES

Ensure that **businesses and high-value property owners pay their fair share of taxes**. Audit property tax assessments, especially for commercial properties.

Provide **accountability in the assessor's office**. Conduct tax assessments in-house, not through for-profit subcontractors.

Pursue **Payment In Lieu Of Taxes** from Baystate Franklin Medical Center and other large non-profits.

Partner with local legislators to advocate for Greenfield receiving its fair share of resources from the state of Massachusetts, especially more funding for our schools.

GCET

Support and strengthen GCET, our city-owned broadband utility.

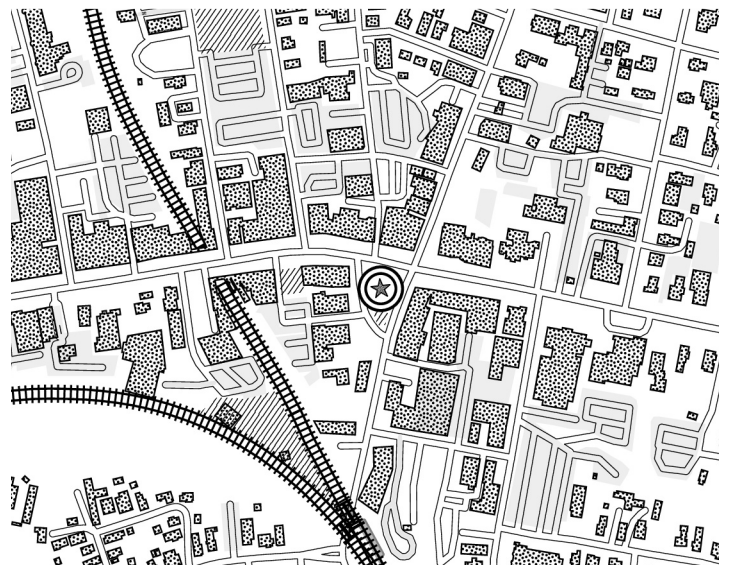
Prioritize **expanding broadband services to low-income residents**, working with residents and property managers to overcome obstacles to providing service. **Include representatives from unserved areas on the GCET board**.

Push back against obstructions created by Comcast, Verizon, and Eversource, who create delays and backlogs for putting GCET equipment on telephone poles.

ARTS & CULTURE

Hire a **qualified marketing professional** to facilitate the growth of arts and cultural activities and increase Greenfield's draw for visitors from near and far.

Facilitate and encourage the creation of an **independent non-profit** (like RiverCulture in Montague) in order to more effectively distribute grant money to the arts community.



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