

**PRESTON HOLLOW DEMOCRATS – DALLAS CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Candidate Name: Omar Narvaez

Council District: 6

1. **Describe your experiences and skills that have prepared you to be a member of the Dallas City Council, and on what committees would you like to serve to best use those skills and experiences.**

Two completed terms bringing effective, experienced leadership as the currently Councilmember finishing up my 2nd term.

I currently serve on the following committees:

Chair Environment and Sustainability

Quality of Life Arts & Culture

Economic Development

Ad Hoc Judicial Nominations

Ad Hoc COVID-19

Liason Seniors Affairs Commission

Liason Youth Commission

2. **What are your top three priorities if you are elected to City Council?**

- **Housing affordability: this is the issue that first organized Dallas's Black community, but it's never been as bad as it is now. The city has solutions available to it in the form of the Comprehensive Housing Policy and tens of millions of federal and state housing dollars but is implementing neither. I will push for implementing existing policy, passing new approaches, and deploying incentives for high-quality, affordable housing in high opportunity areas**
- **Policing: people of color are being subjected to far too much policing. Yet the city as a whole is suffering too much violent crime. These two problems are not the opposite sides of a coin. Police must be held accountable for both proper respect for civil rights AND for fighting real crime (as opposed to arresting thousands of POC for simple drug possession). I would push for robust data reporting to stop disparate policing.**
- **Jobs: Dallas needs more living wage jobs, but those jobs also must be in Dallas and accessible to its residents. This means spending economic development dollars in disinvested areas. This also means rapidly and thoroughly overhauling public transportation to get people to work**

3. **We are a Democratic club. Would the Democratic party platform and values inform your service on the Dallas City Council, and if so, how? I am a lifelong Democrat and have supported our party value's in almost every decision I have made while representing my district.**

4. **What changes would you support to Dallas city government, including the police department, to enhance public safety in our community? The biggest change**

needs to be to the 911 system. We tell folks to call 911 for everything now not just emergencies. Unfortunately, 911 only has three resources to send to people: a gun, waterhoses or a stretcher. Many issues require other different types of resource responses. The 911 system causes our first responders to be overburdened with too many issues that they are not trained to react to.

5. Homelessness is an increasing problem in our community and has become more visible in our council district. What do you believe is the best way to address this problem, both from the perspective of the persons experiencing homelessness and the surrounding community?

These folks are the most vulnerable in our society and must be treated with the same dignity and respect we would treat anyone else. It is not illegal to be homeless. However, we must do as much as possible to help these people that choose to be helped. We can not force these individuals into programs. I am proud to have supported and successfully navigated the zoning case to bring the largest Salvation Army Compound to be in District 6 in a warehouse district and received the support of the surrounding business community as well as supported the purchase of two hotels one in far north Dallas D12 and one in North Oak Cliff close to my own home but in D1 that will become transitional housing for our most vulnerable. The biggest need we have is supportive housing for those that no longer need emergency shelter but are not quite ready for permanent living space. We have more than enough emergency shelter beds in Dallas the bottle neck occurs when people are using emergency shelters for over two years holding space for those that may need those emergency beds. Continuing to create more supportive housing will allow us to get more of these folks into permanency.

6. Our community was hit hard by the tornados in 2019 and has yet to recover. Homes and property were recently damaged by the severe winter weather. Does the City have a role in assisting with recovery, and if so, would you advocate for this and what would be your recommendations? As the current Councilmember we have set up programs to help business through the SBA and created an expedited permit process for those that choose to rebuild. The unfortunate delay for many businesses and homes is they were either underinsured or are still working with their insurance companies to try to get more for their value of their property. The hard part for any of the warehouses in NW Dallas is the code has updated for things like fire sprinkler systems that they did not have because they were grandfathered from when code was updated. This alone is an extremely expensive item and if didn't exist in their previous building would have to be added to become compliant with current code.
7. Have you reviewed the City budget? If so, what is your biggest concern and what would be your proposed solution to that concern? As the current Councilmember I have now reviewed four budgets. My biggest concern is our overwhelming tax rate. We have to trim. We must continue to deep dive into the budget and continue to eliminate programs and Departments that are no longer effective. We must also continue to scrutinize every department and hold them all accountable for their spending.