

## **Response from Jim Morse**

1. How would you vote on funding the Brooks Estate road proposal?

The road proposal is scheduled for the Fiscal Year 2014/2015  
<http://www.medford.org/Pages/FV1-0002536A/S035A3BB5-035A3FB1> and although I think that historic preservation is a priority I would have to say that at this time, I am undecided on the issue pending the long awaited release of the city Master Plan.

We have tens of millions of dollars in potential projects under discussion and I believe that we have to know the total costs in order to make an intelligent decision.

All these loans have to be paid back by the taxpayers. Are we borrowing \$20 million? Is it \$30 million? Is it \$50 million? I believe that voting on each project in a piecemeal approach is inefficient at best.

2. Are you in favor of the Everett Casino? What would you specifically do to try and help/prevent that legislation from passing?

I voted against casinos in the general election of 2010 and when two attempts to repeal the casino laws by submitting a ballot initiative petition were not certified by the Attorney General, I thought that casinos were inevitable and I was supporting the Everett casino. As of today, there may be one more attempt at keeping them out of Massachusetts and I would support that initiative.

One of the organizations denied a ballot question initiative was just granted an injunction by the state's Supreme Judicial Court and are in the process of collecting signatures to once again attempt to put it on the ballot in November 2014. <http://www.repealthecasinodeal.org>

"On September 20, 2013 we collected papers from the Secretary of State to gather over 68,911 signatures of registered voters to exercise our constitutional right to pursue a ballot question to Repeal The Casino Deal on the November 2014 election," says the organization.

The casino licenses are reportedly to be announced in April of 2014 and no one knows what would happen if the casinos have broken ground and started construction and the ballot question to disprove them passes in November of 2014.

3. If the Everett Casino is approved, what do you suggest we do to try and prevent traffic gridlock?

Wynn has publicly said that if someone has to battle with traffic to enter or leave the casino, they will not return. If he is awarded the license, HE has to fix the traffic problems.

4. Prioritize the following (a) School Swimming Pool (b) Additional Police Officers (c) New Fire Engines (d) DPW Building (e) New Police Building?

**Additional Police Officers, New Fire Engines, New Police Building, & School Swimming Pool (DPW is resolved)**

5. Should money in the Water Tax fund be refunded or applied to new projects? Which ones?

**The money in the Water and Sewer accounts should stay right where it is and should be used for Water and Sewer related projects only.**

**I met with the City Engineer recently and she told me that there was approximately \$4 million in the Water account and \$1 million in the Sewer account.**

**Having this surplus in these accounts was a contributing factor in having our bond rating improve. The savings in interest alone could be substantial over the course of the next 20 years or however long the millions of dollars in bond projects will take to be paid off.**

6. Which projects do you feel should be immediately bonded by the city?

**In June of 2011, a study of the six existing fire stations was conducted and there was \$1,018,700 in Priority 1 repairs that were recommended. Priority 1 repairs are Currently Critical – requires immediate action. These repairs were needed immediately and they were not done. We are talking about serious structural deficiencies of the apparatus floors with exposed rebar in one station.**

**The work is just going out for bid in September 2013 and in my opinion, the city has been very lucky that there has not been a serious injury or death as the result of this inactivity. The entire \$2.67 million in repairs (based on 2011 costs) should be done immediately and this may be just a band-aid approach to the aging and deteriorating fire stations. The 2011 replacement cost of all six stations was \$18.6 million and I believe that we should look into this.**

7. What is your position and priorities for the Green Line Extension initiative?

**My priority is for the 1.3 million passengers that use the MBTA each weekday.**

**In 2012, the MBTA raised the fares and cut bus routes. It was one of the rare times in recent years, that the Medford City Council chamber had a packed house with over 100 riders voicing their concerns.**

**My question to the MassDOT is, "How many bus routes will be cut if the Green**

Line expansion continues and how much will the fares increase?" They will NEVER answer this question!

This week the "Mass Tech Tax," was repealed and another \$161 million was taken away from Governor Deval Patrick's "Transportation Finance Package." The bill started out raising \$1.9 billion and it has been cut back to a fraction of what is needed just to maintain the present systems.

"The very hard reality is that our appetite for expansion and desire for expansion has to be tempered by the sober reality of available funds," said Sen. Brian Joyce,"

Read more: [http://www.lowellsun.com/breakingnews/ci\\_23895384/senator-transit-bonding-will-be-left-up-administration#ixzz2fbvXZbIS](http://www.lowellsun.com/breakingnews/ci_23895384/senator-transit-bonding-will-be-left-up-administration#ixzz2fbvXZbIS)

There is also a campaign to repeal the "Gas Tax," which is another component of the "Transportation Finance Package,"

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2013/08/06/republicans-hope-repeal-future-gas-tax-increases-with-ballot-measure/ZEGxR9x7eRQ1MxqnEHABaO/story.html>

In my humble opinion, we need to put a moratorium on all MBTA expansion projects until the state legislature comes up with a plan to fund the day-to-day expenses of the MBTA, which at this time is non-existent.

[http://www.eot.state.ma.us/downloads/tfc/tfc\\_findings.pdf](http://www.eot.state.ma.us/downloads/tfc/tfc_findings.pdf)

<http://www.bostonmagazine.com/2011/01/why-the-mbta-is-broke/2/>

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/newton/news/x1155162123/William-Heck-State-transportation-bill-is-misnamed>

## 8. What is your position on Medford tax rates and tax revenues?

My Real Estate taxes have never been higher and they go up every year.

However, the Medford Residential Tax rate in 2012 was lower than the majority of surrounding cities:

## FISCAL YEAR 2013 TAX RATES

<u>Community</u>	<u>Residential Tax Rate</u>	<u>CIP Tax Rate</u>
Revere	\$15.56	\$31.56
Everett	\$15.64	\$43.04
Lynn	\$16.93	\$34.55
Malden	\$15.88	\$25.42
Lexington	\$15.20	\$28.97
Lowell	\$15.01	\$31.32
Reading	\$14.94	\$14.94
Quincy	\$14.50	\$30.61
Billerica	\$14.31	\$32.89
Chelsea	\$14.13	\$34.20
Wilmington	\$13.61	\$32.08
Arlington	\$13.61	\$13.61
Waltham	\$13.49	\$31.77
Somerville	\$13.42	\$22.38
Stoneham	\$13.06	\$21.00
Melrose	\$13.03	\$19.90
Winchester	\$12.77	\$12.01
<b>Medford</b>	<b>\$12.36</b>	<b>\$24.39</b>
Wakefield	\$12.29	\$24.97
Burlington	\$11.85	\$31.70
Brookline	\$11.65	\$18.97
Woburn	\$10.40	\$27.01
Cambridge	\$8.66	\$21.50

### Average Tax Rate

Residential: \$13.58 (2013)

Commercial/Industrial/Personal: \$26.47

### Median Tax Rate

Residential: \$13.61

Commercial/Industrial/Personal: \$27.01

9. What are some community/economic development suggestions you have for Medford?

I suggested in 1995 that the City of Medford provide ambulance service for the city with a Rescue/Ambulance staffed by firefighter/EMT's and I would still suggest it today. There would be an initial investment but if run properly it would generate a profit. Not only would there be a profit, but every medical run by the Fire Department would have two more personnel responding and they would also respond to every fire.

**I also believe that civilian parking enforcement would generate millions of dollars in revenue.**

10. What would you say are some of the best improvements Mayor McGlynn has made for the city of Medford during his tenure?

**Rebuilding the schools with 90% state funding was his greatest accomplishment. Station Landing and Rivers Edge are also helping with tax revenues.**

11. What are the most significant decisions and actions the city council has taken in the past 2 years? Do you agree with those decisions/actions?

**Approving the funding for the school technology upgrade, the MHS pool repairs with additional charges, and approving the new DPW building are to me the most significant. I would have reluctantly voted in favor of all three and I say reluctantly because I want to see the Master Plan.**

12. What is your experience with and opinion of Medford's public schools?

**I am a 1968 graduate of the old MHS on Forest Street and in my opinion, it would have been better for the city and Medford Square businesses to have built the new MHS right there. I have a granddaughter who is an Honor Role senior at MHS and it seems that some students do very well at MHS in spite of recent poor test grades for the entire city in past years. The latest MCAS results show Medford slightly lower than the state average in all areas including English, Mathematics and Science <http://medford.patch.com/groups/schools/p/how-did-medford-students-do-on-mcas>**

13. What are your biggest concerns for Medford residents? How can you help?

**There is nothing more important to me than the upcoming Cradock Bridge Rehabilitation scheduled to start in the Spring of 2014. Here is my plan:**

**Morse asks for a "Rebuilding the Cradock Bridge Committee."**

**Jim Morse, candidate for the Medford City Council, is asking the city of Medford to form an official city committee to deal with the upcoming Cradock Bridge replacement scheduled to start sometime next summer.**

**"This project is going to be a real test of all the citizens of Medford; it is our Big Dig," Morse said last Thursday night. "Issues that need to be addressed include: Two buildings including Carroll's Restaurant (and other businesses) and the Auto**

School/Dentist office both of which sit on huge stones could possibly suffer irreparable structural damage; every phone, cable and utility line for the area south of the River runs through the bridge and will have to be re-wired; the State has only released one paragraph of info and no diagrams of the plans; four or five police details will be on the site directing traffic; business owners and citizens are concerned about the potential for massive gridlock causing people to avoid the square and this will go on for at least two years or more; other business owners who are barely getting by are in danger of closing; landlords are concerned about renting their units now and there are vacancies at three locations in Medford Square; two on High St, and one on Main St."

Morse made the statement at the Grand Opening of his Campaign Headquarters at 16 Main Street.

"I attended a meeting last week with MassDot at 8 am at the bridge and there were 22 attendees," Morse added.

"We need to have meetings at night in the City Council chamber with input from the Fire Department, Police Department, Chamber of Commerce, the Historical groups, residents, business owners, MassDot, the traffic engineers, the Office of Community Development, the members of the City Council and anyone else who will be impacted by this project. I would be willing to serve on this committee."

Mayor Michael J. McGlynn was presented with this suggestion but was unavailable for comment.

14. What neighboring community do you admire and why?

I'm impressed with Mayor Curtatone and Somerville. Davis Square is thriving and Assembly Row will provide thousands of permanent jobs, housing, and tax revenue for Somerville and unfortunately more traffic for Medford. Being a younger mayor, Joe Curtatone is very tech-savvy and we are even friends on Facebook. The City of Somerville website and other online services are also excellent.

15. If elected to the post of City Councilor, what will you do to reduce the blight on our streets and in our public and municipal parking lots, in particular those surrounded by homeowners just wishing to have a decent quality of life?

I think you have to define what you mean by "blight." If you mean potholes on our streets, as a City Councilor I would ask the DPW to fix them. They always seem to be responsive when a City Councilor makes the request. I use Summer Street almost daily and it hurts.

If you are referring to tree stumps, that is another matter. For years the city council has been trying to get a list of how many there are in the city and how many have been removed. I would make a motion asking for a new report.

**As far as municipal parking lots, I would have to know which one(s) you are talking about and go there personally and inspect them.**

**I have looked at the three lots surrounding City Hall and they could use a resurfacing but they are not too bad.**

**I have looked at the one on Governor's Ave and that too could use a resurfacing but with a new garage proposed on that site, it has to be on hold.**

**Recently, I looked at the one on Yale St. and I have a short video with a half dozen photos here <http://youtu.be/KYAosl6-Ydl>**

**16. How would you reduce heavy trucking from South Medford Neighborhood?**

**As a private citizen, I've produced videos of the heavy trucking and traffic both on Mystic Ave. and Harvard Street, posted them publicly and sent them to elected officials. As a City Councilor, I could ask for more enforcement of the existing laws but there is such a shortage of police officers it is unlikely that anything will be done. If elected, I will be urging the Mayor to implement civilian traffic enforcement.**

**Years ago, when the state lowered the road under the Harvard St bridge, supposedly to help with drainage, the end result was for an almost unbelievable increase in heavy trucking.**

**I have heard that the current Harvard St. Bridge project for the Green Line Extension will raise the street level and stop the heavy trucking. If this is true, it will help Harvard St residents and others.**

**My latest video of Jim Silva talking about Harvard St problems on August 11, 2013 is here: <http://youtu.be/tpzmVcQU6M>**

**17. How would you mitigate the increase in traffic on Harvard and Yale Street and commuter parking in South Medford when the Ball Square MBTA Station is fully functional?**

**I think the question should be how can we get the state to mitigate the increase in traffic and commuter parking. On the local level, it comes down to enforcement and there is such a shortage in police personnel, I do not see the police department doing it anytime in the near future.**

**Again, I do not know why the Mayor does not have civilian traffic enforcement, but I can assure you that I will be one of the city councilors fighting for them.**

18. The bikeways , jogging, pedestrian walking area policies in Medford are seemingly stuck in an odd and awkward 1950's time capsule. I really can't understand why there has been such a pervasive, long standing, persistent and negligent policy on this , especially considering the wealth of opportunity already set in place., naturally, by the river(s) running through the city!!. The success and overwhelming community improvements created with bikeway improvements by our neighbors in Arlington, Somerville, and Cambridge truly make Medford seem as though there may truly be some kind of unexplainable problems within the leadership in this city. It makes living here VERY unattractive for lots of people. Efforts MUST be made in getting the Arlington and Somerville path areas from Rte.16 over to the Tufts hat shell area, through Medford Center and over to the DCR's McCormick Park on other side of 93 is like a HUGE missing link in the connectivity of paths and ways amongst our bordering cities and towns...Please! Do ANY of you have ANY strong or impassioned feelings to a commitment on this and are you willing to make the truly necessary efforts and decisions to modernize and implement this neglected resource and opportunity??

**This year the Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission was created and I would agree that it was long overdue. When the state was redesigning Clipper Ship Drive, I asked for and received a bike lane. Not only is biking a great exercise, it also helps cut down on carbon emissions. <http://www.medfordbikes.org>**

**There needs to be a long-term plan to educate both bikers and drivers on how to safely navigate the narrow roads of Medford:  
[http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2013/09/21/bicycling-dutch-way/kFRT0ABSPtUnXMIUj5zONM/story.html?s\\_campaign=email\\_BG\\_TodaysHeadline](http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2013/09/21/bicycling-dutch-way/kFRT0ABSPtUnXMIUj5zONM/story.html?s_campaign=email_BG_TodaysHeadline)**

**We also have seen a 1.7 mile walking route implemented which begins on Governor's Ave and ends down on the Mystic Valley Parkway.  
<http://www.medford.org/Pages/FV1-0002536A/Walking%20Route> There are some hills involved so a word of caution for those with mobility problems is warranted.**

**There are 2,575 acres and miles of trails for hiking, biking, dog-walking and more in the Middlesex Fells  
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-north/middlesex-fells-reservation.html>**

**Torbert MacDonald Park, part of the Mystic River Reservation, runs along the Mystic River from the Meadow Glen Mall up to the Fellsway and has miles of fairly level paths for hiking and biking  
<http://thewheatleychronicle.blogspot.com/2012/04/out-and-about-mystic-river-reservation.html>**



19. Medford currently institutes permit parking on a street-by-street basis. Do you agree with this system, or would you change it in some way (for example, to city-wide perming parking)?

**I agree with the present system especially since the city has just changed the one-sided winter parking ban to be during declared emergencies only. My street does not need permit parking and if we did, I see nothing wrong with the residents voting for or against it.**

20. Medford's bond rating was just upgraded to AA-. Which, if any projects, would you use bond funding for during the next two years (for example, Brooks Estate, Governors Avenue parking garage, police station)?

**The most urgent need is for a new police and fire station. It is so bad that on the Police side, the roof is leaking over the evidence room. The next priority should be the other five fire stations which are going out to bid for some repairs this month.**

21. How would you describe the city's relationship with Tufts University, and how would you propose to make it better?

**I would describe the relationship as a partnership. Tufts is dependent on Medford for some Police and Fire services and they are also reportedly the largest employer in the City of Medford.**

**The student population helps the rental market for the many two-family and three-family owners. I especially liked it when Tufts started paying property taxes on the former Dame School. Paying a percentage of real estate taxes on all the property that they own would make the partnership a lot better.**

22. Would you support the expansion of the Hub way bike sharing program in Medford?

**I had not heard about this program until I read it here. It sounds like a great idea. I just submitted five locations for Medford: Medford City Hall, Medford Police and Fire Headquarters, Wellington Station, the West Medford Commuter Rail Station and the Engine 5 Fire Station on 0 Medford Street. Probably should have one or two up at Tufts University too. <http://www.thehubway.com>**

23. What solution do you propose for restore programming to Medford Community Cablevision (TV-3), which has been off the air for several months?

**I am a former producer for Medford Community Cablevision, Inc., (TV3) and produced approximately 14 live shows all from the Hot Set, located at their former site at 5 High St. My shows were interviews of local (mostly) residents and began in the winter of 2007 and ran through 2008.**

My first show was in 1995, when I hosted a debate dealing with the Brooks Estates Preservation Association (BEPA) proposal calling for flat grave markers to be used at Oak Grove Cemetery. That show was held at the former Canal St. location. Eventually, the BEPA proposal was dropped.

In May of this year, I decided to re-join TV3 to help produce a video of a candidate for City Council as I was not running at that time. The new location, 38 Riverside Ave, did not have the ability to broadcast because neither Comcast nor Verizon had ever wired that particular block.

It has been reported that TV3 is working with Verizon to broadcast taped-shows only which would be an improvement over the present situation but in a recent conversation with the Dan Sarno, the station manager, they do not have the money to pay for this because the Mayor held back their payment which had been requested by the Medford City Council.

The City of Medford is supposed to appoint a representative to serve on the TV3 Board of Directors and there has not been one for years (possibly since 2009). In June, I offered to serve on this position but was told by the Mayor that he had asked someone else to serve and they had accepted. I have not heard anything new in this regard.

I ran into Dan Sarno, the station manager, in Medford Square on Thursday, September 26 and I asked him point blank, "Is there any thing I can do to help get TV3 back on the air?" His response was, "No, only the Mayor can get us back on the air."

24. What would you propose for increasing the number of performances at Chevalier Auditorium?

In 2011, John Costas, member of the Civic Auditorium and Convention Center Commission, asked me to help publicize an event at the Chevalier Auditorium called "It's a Jazzy, Snazzy Christmas," and I agreed to help.

The video is here: [http://youtu.be/Xx23l6y\\_CIU](http://youtu.be/Xx23l6y_CIU) and I posted it on Medford Patch and many other websites. I thought that this was a great family show and even with a pretty good turnout, the show lost money.

The auditorium is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the greater Boston area with 2,061 seats <http://www.chevaliertheater.com/> and is available for rent. I thought about producing a show of my own but with all the expenses involved and the risk of losing a lot of money, I declined.

I think the question should be how can we increase the number of attendees at existing events and I think that we should hire a professional management agency to do that.

25. How would you characterize the City Council's working relationship with Mayor McGlynn, and how would improve it?

I was the first person to run against the Mayor in 1995 and it was what I would call an issue-based campaign. There was no bashing, attacking or insulting, like we see today in so many campaigns and too often at city council meetings.

I would characterize today's relationship of the City Council and the Mayor as strained. I met with the Mayor last month and told him that If I was lucky enough to be elected to the City Council, I would not bash him on a weekly basis. If I agreed with one of his petitions, I would vote in favor of it and if I disagreed with one of his petitions, I would make an appointment with him and find out why he wants it. See Question 27 for some suggestions on how I would improve this relationship.

26. Medford created a Master Plan for Medford Square in 2005, but other than the realignment of Clippership Drive, no elements of the Master Plan have been enacted. What are your top 3 priorities for Medford Square?

I filmed my very first video in 1970 in Medford Square with an 8 Millimeter Bell & Howell Film-O-Sound system. The sound never synced with the video but I was able to film the vibrant square that we have not seen in decades.

We have three municipal parking lots behind and adjacent to City Hall, one on Forest St, one down on Rt. 16 behind St. Joseph's and another one on Governor's Ave. My first priority would be to look at the MIT study of 2006 to see what we could implement to both increase pedestrian traffic in Medford Square and make better use of these vacant lots:

<http://web.mit.edu/11.360/www/final%20report%20for%20web%2012.13.06.pdf>

My 2<sup>nd</sup> priority would be removing or replacing the contaminated building at 8-16 Forest Street which is reportedly leaking contaminants into other buildings.

The top priority however is the Rehabilitation of the Cradock Bridge, and in my opinion, all other projects in Medford Square should be put on hold or worked in conjunction this major project. See Question 13 for more info on the Cradock Bridge.

27. A recent article in the Boston Globe about the lack of civility and combative nature of local government bodies said that in Medford, "civic strife runs so deep that it is something of a point of pride." Do you feel this statement is accurate? How would you improve the discourse at City Council meetings?

Medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas said of Pride, "Inordinate self-love is the cause of every sin." I would hope that this is not true in Medford.

One of the top four reasons that I am running for City Council is because of the lack of civility at City Council meetings and my desire to bring civility back to the meetings.

My campaign motto is "Morse, Of Course," with a minor of, "I know everyone and I talk to everyone."

I believe that it takes a conscious effort to negotiate with someone who may be diametrically opposed to your beliefs and I also believe that this is a skill that I

**possess.**

**I would improve the discourse by asking every candidate for public office in Medford to make the Logue Group, Commitment to Civility which is:**

**The Key to Good Dialogue is Exploring, Listening, Asking, Respecting, Learning and Deliberating with NO Interrupting, Challenging, Accusing, Dominating and Attacking.**