

# 2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire is for candidates running in Municipal Elections, please complete questionnaire below. Submit a completed electronic copy by Thursday, February 27, 2025, to be considered for endorsement in the 2025 Municipal Elections.

Email \*

zaringracey4district3@zaringracey.com

## General Information

Candidate Name \*

Zarin D. Grace

1. District/Office Sought \*

Dallas City Council Place 3

2. Are you a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? \*

Yes

No

3. Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

As the current Councilmember for District 3, I've approached my service with the fundamental belief that all residents deserve dignity, respect, and equal access to city services regardless of who they are or whom they love. My faith teaches me that Jesus accepted and loved everyone as they are, which guides my approach to public service.

In District 3, I've worked to ensure all residents feel welcome at community meetings and that their voices are heard in policy discussions. I've supported inclusive language in city documents and communications, and I've advocated for LGBTQ+ residents when discussing housing, public safety, and economic opportunity initiatives.

4. As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas \* will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history (please explain any changes in party affiliation)?

Yes, I am a Democrat and have voted Democrat in previous primary elections. I affirm my alignment with the Texas Democratic Party's platform and policies, particularly regarding equality, civil rights, and protection from discrimination.

5. Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I have served as District 3's Councilmember for the past two years, building on my 16-year career working for the City of Dallas. My experience includes serving as the District 3 Planning and Zoning Commissioner and President of the Dallas Public Facilities Corporation. I've also served on various non-profit boards including Harmony CDC, Brother Bill's Helping Hand, Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, and the Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce. This combination of city government experience and community involvement has prepared me to effectively represent all District 3 residents.

6. Once you are elected, what are some of your priorities and plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

My priorities for my second term focus on three key areas:

#### Economic Development & Opportunity

- Ensure Southern Dallas receives equitable investment and resources
- Strengthen programs supporting minority, women-owned, and LGBTQ+-owned businesses
- Complete the Glendale Park renovation and continue advocating for equitable park funding
- Create safe, inclusive recreational spaces that serve residents of all ages and backgrounds

#### Housing & Neighborhood Stability

- Continue developing mixed-income housing solutions throughout the district
- Implement anti-displacement measures to protect long-time residents
- Ensure housing options for vulnerable populations, including LGBTQ+ youth and seniors

#### Transportation & Public Safety

- Protect and expand DART service throughout Southern Dallas
  - Improve infrastructure in historically underserved areas
- 

### Housing

This section addresses housing and homelessness within the LGBTQ+ community.

7. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, please rate your city’s response to housing affordability and briefly explain your rating.

I would rate Dallas a 5, based on two key perspectives:

City Operations Perspective (4 → 6): Our housing department has historically created well-intentioned programs, but they’ve often been developed without sufficient input from developers who build the housing or residents who need it. This disconnect has limited effectiveness. Recently, I’ve seen promising improvements to our housing plan that incorporate more stakeholder feedback, which is gradually moving us from a 4 to a 6 or 7.

Community Perspective (6): While we collectively acknowledge our housing crisis, there’s a paradox in how we approach solutions. Many neighborhoods resist new development and density, even as we declare an emergency. Simultaneously, Southern Dallas’ specific housing needs were largely overlooked until the crisis became citywide. We must ensure that addressing the broader crisis doesn’t mean bypassing Southern Dallas’ legitimate need for quality single-family homes in favor of only adding density elsewhere.

These two realities average to a 5 – we’re making progress but have significant room for improvement in both policy implementation and community acceptance of housing solutions.

8. Please list a specific policy/ordinance you would like to introduce or repeal to address the housing supply issue

As former President of the Dallas Public Facilities Corporation, I strongly support mixed-income development and will continue to promote these policies and developments throughout Dallas. My experience has shown that this approach not only increases affordable housing supply but also builds stronger communities by preventing concentrated poverty. This balanced development strategy ensures all parts of Dallas—including historically underserved Southern Dallas—receive appropriate housing options that meet each community’s specific needs while addressing our citywide housing crisis.

9. What's the biggest threat to LGBTQ+ folks with respect to housing security and what are your plans to address housing insecurity within this community specifically?

Housing insecurity in the LGBTQ+ community primarily stems from discrimination, higher homelessness risk (especially among youth), economic disparities, and limited access to safe, supportive housing. As a man of faith who believes in treating all people with dignity and respect, I find these inequities unacceptable.

My plan to address these challenges includes strengthening Dallas' fair housing ordinances to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, partnering with LGBTQ+ organizations to develop targeted outreach programs for individuals facing housing insecurity, and supporting the creation of LGBTQ+-affirming housing options. I'm especially committed to focusing on supportive housing for youth aging out of foster care, who are particularly vulnerable to homelessness. By combining these policy improvements with community partnerships, we can create a more secure and equitable housing landscape for LGBTQ+ individuals in District 3 and throughout Dallas.

10. What specific ordinances or policies would you suggest or support to address housing inequality and rental pricing, such as a ban on algorithmic rent control?

I support a comprehensive approach to housing inequality that includes:

1. Implementing reasonable rent stabilization measures that limit annual increases to a percentage tied to inflation or median wage growth
2. Establishing a strong Renters' Bill of Rights with clear protections against discrimination and unfair evictions
3. Increasing dedicated funding for affordable housing development and preservation
4. Developing anti-displacement policies to protect communities from gentrification
5. Requiring transparency in algorithmic rental pricing to prevent discrimination
6. Supporting diverse housing types that serve different needs and income levels

These policies would work together to create a more equitable housing market in Dallas, ensuring that all residents, regardless of background or identity, have access to safe, affordable housing.

Public Safety (Includes Fire, 911, School safety, and all safety departments)

This section addresses Public Safety within the LGBTQ+ community

11. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, please rate your city’s delivery of public safety services to the community and briefly explain your rating. \*

I would rate Dallas' delivery of public safety services a 6. During my first term, we've made significant progress, achieving a 6.8% crime reduction in District 3 and installing 24 new Flock safety cameras throughout the district. However, challenges remain in ensuring all communities receive equitable public safety services.

While our police department has improved community engagement, there are still disparities in response times and resource allocation between different neighborhoods. Additionally, I want to increase funding for youth violence intervention programs as a preventative measure to address crime before it occurs, particularly in underserved communities.

12. Please list one public safety policy you support and why and one public safety policy you oppose and why. \*

Policy I Support: The innovative Right Care initiative that teams behavioral health specialists with emergency responders for mental health calls. This collaborative model ensures individuals in crisis receive proper treatment and support rather than entering the criminal justice system unnecessarily. It represents a smarter allocation of resources that simultaneously improves outcomes for those experiencing mental health emergencies while allowing police to concentrate on addressing serious criminal activity. By treating mental health as a healthcare issue rather than a criminal one, we create more compassionate and effective community safety.

Policy I Oppose: The arbitrary mandate for hiring 400 additional police officers without a comprehensive public safety strategy. This numbers-focused approach ignores the complexity of community safety needs and unnecessarily constrains budget flexibility. I believe in thoughtful staffing based on data-driven analysis of community needs, complemented by investments in prevention programs and alternative response models. Public safety requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses underlying causes of crime while providing appropriate emergency response options for different situations.

13. Please address how you would work with public safety officials across all appropriate levels \*  
of government to ensure LGBTQ+ people feel safe, secure, and respected within your  
respective jurisdiction.

I would establish regular dialogue between LGBTQ+ community leaders and public safety officials while hosting community forums where LGBTQ+ residents can directly share their experiences and suggest improvements. These open channels of communication would build trust, increase understanding, and ensure policies are developed with direct input from those most affected. Through consistent engagement and listening, we can create responsive safety strategies that address the specific concerns of LGBTQ+ community members.

My goal is to create an environment where LGBTQ+ residents feel confident that public safety officials will protect and respect them equally, recognizing their unique concerns while affirming their equal right to safety and dignity.

---

14. Have there been any recent incidents involving LGBTQ+ hate or violence in your city, if so \*  
how do you plan to address this? If not, what can other cities learn in order to reduce these  
occurrences?

Texas consistently ranks among the states with the highest number of reported hate crimes against LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly transgender women of color, which confirms the urgent need for comprehensive preventative measures in Dallas.

My approach includes supporting enhanced hate crime investigations and prosecutions, improving data collection on hate incidents to identify patterns and allocate resources appropriately, creating safe reporting mechanisms for LGBTQ+ individuals to report threats or harassment, and implementing community alert systems when patterns of targeted violence emerge. These coordinated strategies will help us not only respond to incidents when they occur but work proactively to prevent them.

As a public servant, I believe in standing firmly against hatred in all forms. The safety of all residents, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, remains a top priority for my administration.

---

15. If you are not a member of a historically marginalized group, what is your understanding of the needs of these groups with respect to public safety? \*

As a Black man, I experience both rage and compassion daily - the desire to protect our own balanced with the need for allies who want to help. This perspective helps me understand the complex relationship marginalized communities often have with public safety systems.

While my experience as a Black man differs from the LGBTQ+ experience, I recognize similarities in how historically marginalized groups need public safety systems that:

- Respond with equal urgency and respect to their concerns
- Recognize their specific vulnerabilities without assuming criminality
- Include their voices in policy development
- Protect them from hate-motivated violence
- Build trust through consistent, respectful engagement
- Address historical harms and ongoing biases

I commit to listening deeply to LGBTQ+ community members about their specific safety needs while applying the insights from my own experiences with marginalization to create more equitable public safety for all.

Environmental

This section addresses Environmental protections within marginalized communities.

16. Please list a specific policy/ordinance that you would suggest or support to advance making your city more climate resilient. \*

I would support a comprehensive green infrastructure ordinance that requires climate-resilient design in all new city projects and major renovations. This approach would particularly benefit Southern Dallas communities that have historically faced disproportionate climate impacts due to inadequate infrastructure. I would also challenge both city and county governments to adopt higher environmental standards in their infrastructure projects, creating a coordinated regional approach to climate resilience.



17. What are your plans to address environmental injustices for marginalized communities within your city? \*

My commitment to environmental justice is demonstrated by concrete action. During my first term, we successfully shut down the Envirotin plant that was emitting foul odors throughout District 3 neighborhoods. This facility had significantly degraded residents' quality of life for years, causing respiratory issues and preventing outdoor activities.

I am firmly committed to working alongside environmental advocates and community organizations to identify and address environmental justice concerns in marginalized communities.

Communications

This section addresses Communication Methods between elected officials and marginalized communities.

18. How do you plan to work with allies and organizations across all appropriate levels of government to present a cohesive message of unified support for the LGBTQ+ community? \*

I will continue to work with a coalition of government officials, LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, and community organizations to present a unified message of support. By fostering these connections and maintaining a consistent message of inclusion and respect, we can ensure that Dallas speaks with one voice in support of our LGBTQ+ residents' dignity and rights.

19. How do you plan to work with allies and organizations across all appropriate levels of government to present a cohesive message of unified support for the LGBTQ+ community? \*

I would add faith based communities as well.

20. Will you commit to being an active partner and supporter of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? \*

Yes

No

### Local Governance

This section addresses the attack on Local Governance from the State Legislature.

21. Do you believe the State Legislature has engaged or will engage in government overreach? \*  
Briefly explain your answer.

Yes. The "Death Star bill" was just the beginning. Between charter amendments like S, T, and U combined with growing pressure from the state, we should all feel the overreach but also an overwhelming need to not just stand but plan. Local government must be strategic and proactive in protecting our communities' interests and values.

22. Please list one specific policy/ordinance that you feel would best advance LGBTQ+ rights on a local level \*

Housing Inequality. See #10.

23. What is your opinion of local police department cooperating with ICE? \*

I support limiting collaboration between Dallas police and federal immigration authorities to cases involving significant public safety threats or serious offenses. Maintaining community trust is essential for effective law enforcement. Our officers' primary focus should be protecting and serving all Dallas residents, not enforcing federal immigration laws.

### All Candidates

All candidates will need to answer the following questions.

24. Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might – without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.  
.....

25. I'm seeking an endorsement from the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas for the 2025 Municipal \* election. (Please type name)

Zarin D. Gracey  
.....

This form was created inside of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

Google Forms