

Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATES FROM EACH OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S 13 DISTRICTS WERE ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE TOPICS OF DEMOCRACY, HOUSING, CLIMATE, SAFETY, AND TRANSPORTATION.

All candidates with more than \$1,000 fundraised as of June 1st were invited to respond to the following questionnaire. Candidate responses to each question will be listed alphabetically.

The following candidates did not respond:

Esteban "Steve" Bovo

Ludmilla Domond



Having a local government that is responsive to residents and gives everyone an equal voice is crucial for **democracy. What specific policy changes would you pursue to expand civic participation and reduce the influence of special interests?**

MONIQUE NICOLE BARLEY

Get the residents more involved by sending out surveys to homes. I want to ensure our constituents that their voices are important as well and deserves to be heard.

DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

I founded the Office of New Americans to engage new citizens into civic life. During this pandemic, I called for and ensured that every resident received applications to vote by mail. I will expand governmental review to reduce the influence of dark money on our government and elections. I will look to expand outreach to non-voters and encourage them to become involved, become active, and vote!

ALEX PENELAS

Aside from expanding the powers of Community Councils, which are critical to our UMMA residents, I will also provide funding increases for cultural exchange programs, like the MOSAIC Initiative, which give our County's diverse people the chance to interact and learn from one another. I also plan to reform our procurement process so that county contracting decisions are made more independently.

XAVIER SUAREZ

Most public input is taken in unwieldy commission meetings, rather than through meetings with the mayor or even town hall meetings. I intend to be active in social media, in meetings and with civic associations throughout the county, as envisioned by Alexis de Tocqueville and the other great political philosophers.



An analysis by Apartment List shows 62.7% of renters in Miami are cost-burdened, the highest percentage of the nation's 100 largest metro areas. Why do you think this is and what are the most important steps you'll take to address this problem?

MONIQUE NICOLE BARLEY

To me everything is about getting down to the root problem of things. We need to implement rent control. Not allowing landlords to increase the rent. We also need to bring down the cost of move in amount. Security deposit and first months rent should be it. We need to keep our public housing for our low income families, we need self sufficient programs to help our residents.

DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

Two of the most direct ways we can address this are by improving our workers' wages, and by extending our public transit system to connect neighborhoods with opportunities. We can also bring long-term solutions like Community Land Trusts (which I made a county priority), and partnerships like our current one with Rebuilding Together to help low income residents make needed repairs to their homes.

ALEX PENELAS

Miami-Dade County's problems with housing affordability have accelerated in recent years and thus warrant a set of programs that focus on three key areas: Preserving the existing stock of affordable housing; expanding the number of affordable housing units; and increasing access to Miami-Dade residents by educating them about affordable housing opportunities outside of their immediate area.

XAVIER SUAREZ

Miami is a haven for foreign capital, much of it in real estate. We need to double our efforts at affordable housing by using 1% of our operating budget, or more than \$50M/year, making land available for free (our current inventory is 4,500 properties), self-insuring the housing and legislating catastrophic coverage from the state, and reducing utilities to zero by incorporating solar energy.



Climate change is a massive challenge to Miami and is particularly harmful to under-resourced communities. What are your plans to make us more resilient and sustainable? How will you ensure all communities have access to resources to adapt and thrive?

MONIQUE NICOLE BARLEY

Remove the houses off the tanks and put them on pipelines. We need better infrastructure.

DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

Climate change is here and disproportionately affects low-income communities. As Commissioner, I led on environmental issues and called to evaluate and reduce our energy use. As Mayor, climate justice considerations will play a central role in the decisions made by my office. I will seek out every expert, approach, and option to prevent further damage to our environment, economy, and way of life.

ALEX PENELAS

To begin, I will strengthen Community Councils to provide UMSA residents with increased resources to push back against climate gentrification. Additionally, I have a plan to, in my first year in office, provide every county department with carbon emission tracking technology so that we can set specific goals for every department and get our County to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

XAVIER SUAREZ

All subsidized and public housing should use solar energy; all new county light vehicles, buses and trucks should be CNG or electric powered; recycling should be enforced and single-use plastics prohibited as much as possible.



The County spends over \$1 billion dollars of the budget on police and corrections. How do you weigh this against making investments in communities to tackle issues such as homelessness, education, and public health?

MONIQUE NICOLE BARLEY

Homeless trust have enough money to decrease the homelessness we're experiencing here. We shouldn't need to take from one budget to allocate to another. Education obviously is a school board situation but as Mayor I'll work with the school board directors to foster my ideas. Public health, sanitizing the streets is a great start.

DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

When our community is healthier, housed, and well-educated, we turn to our police departments less. We must fund shelters, childcare centers, libraries, and community centers, dedicated to addressing gaps among disadvantaged communities. These solutions should not compete with funding for our public safety programs, but complement them to encourage an environment of growth and equity for all.

ALEX PENELAS

Problems that we tackle reactively are more costly than ones we tackle proactively. By proactively investing in mental healthcare, homeless services, education, and economic development, we can divert people from our Corrections Department and lower the costs of keeping our communities safe and healthy. I will make these proactive investments as your Mayor.

XAVIER SUAREZ

There's not much we can do about corrections, except not to build another jail, which will reduce the capital and operating costs of the department. As for police, I am currently looking at calls for service, most of which do not involve crimes per se in order to deploy better and use other departments for mental health and such.



Given the lack of reliable and easily accessible **public transportation**, what are your plans to expand public transportation options for constituents?

MONIQUE NICOLE BARLEY

Expanding the rail. Adding back routes that was outsourced. Update buses.

DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

Many residents depend on public transit to get to work. I support extending rail to the South Dade and North corridors and extending light rail to Miami Beach. After decades of delay and empty promises, I'll focus on innovative approaches that attract federal, state and private sector investments that allow Miami-Dade County residents and visitors to have a true countywide interconnected system.

ALEX PENELAS

- 1) Reverse the South corridor BRT project and begin an expedited process to convert it to rail.
 - 2) Fund the most effective and efficient mass transportation solution for the North Corridor.
 - 3) Enter into P3's for the Miami Beach, Northeast, and Kendall corridors to develop commuter-friendly rail.
 - 4) Finalize the design of our East-West corridor and make the project eligible for federal funding.
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XAVIER SUAREZ

I will immediately restore funding to the CITT and issue \$1.8 of bonds to build the North corridor and the S Dade corridor. I will all public transit free and accelerate the use of the FEC line with the existing perpetual easement from downtown to Little Haiti, Liberty City and Hialeah.

