

Tampa City Council 2023 survey Creative Loafing Tampa Bay (non-incumbent)

Creative Loafing Tampa Bay is beginning to put its voting guide together and would love to get some feedback from you since you're on the ballot. This is a pretty basic form asking you about your background and how you'd vote on certain issues. It includes multiple choice questions and lots of room for you to explain answers in your own words. We'll definitely be reaching back out with follow ups after your initial response. We'd like to hear back from by before Jan. 23 if possible. These responses are all on the record.

Email *

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Your race is non-partisan, but do you care to disclose your party affiliation?

- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Independent
- ☒ Other
- ☐ Prefer not disclose

Could you give us your quick elevator pitch? *

I've been an artist, athlete, student and small business owner in Tampa. I believe I have the competence and character to make the right decisions to help our community thrive.

Please feel free to give us a more robust explanation of your background and why you want to be a city councilperson.

I've always admired the structure of checks and balances in local government. As a young skateboarder I had my fair share of "conversations" with the police and soon realized that being a stakeholder in local politics is not beyond my abilities. I've seen the good and bad in Tampa and believe my contracting past will help hold parties accountable where necessary.

What makes you more qualified than the incumbent or any of your other opponents in the race. We'd like to read specific examples and reasoning.

The incumbent has been in office 8 years and brought little to the table, I believe in 8 year council terms. A swinging door keeps innovation and progress more likely in a growing city.

What do you call someone from Tampa?

- ☐ Tampeño
- ☐ Tampanian
- ☒ Other: Buc or Bolt

When it comes to the municipal flag of Tampa, do you stan or would you change it?

- ☐ STAN 100%
- ☐ Reluctantly Stan
- ☒ Needs a redesign

Tampa City Council recently rejected a Harbour Island hotel proposal after loud outcry from residents. As promised, the developer is suing the city for \$6.6 million. How would you have voted on the proposal, given all the context of neighborhood feedback and Tampa's trajectory as an emerging metro?

We need to get used to rejecting developers. Large designs that dramatically effect people's livelihood need to be relayed through council. Regarding the lawsuit...silly.

Hindsight is 20/20 at this point, but go back to the appointment of former police chief Mary O'Connor. Given the community feedback on Jane Castor's pick, would you have voted to confirm O'Connor for the position? Feel free to explain why or why not.

No. This is a reoccurring challenge in this city between council and the mayor. While checks and balances need to exist in a Mayor Strong city I believe decisions are being made with political stamina as a priority.

Staying on the topic of police. The Tampa PBA recently sent out a candidate survey that ruffled feathers, in part, because it asked about a candidate's support or affiliation with Black Live Matter, but skipped any questions about affiliations with white supremacist groups. From the dais, one city councilman asked the PBA to apologize. How would you have reacted to the survey, had you received it?

Yep, they asked me these questions, the whole interaction was concerning. The group was defensive when I asked how their union benefitted community members outside their union.

Would you have voted in support of expanded oversight capability—including subpoena power—for Tampa's police Citizens Review Board? Please feel free to expand on your yes or no answer.

Yep. Cops investigating cops is not the course of progression.

A year ago, Tampa's Hanna Avenue 'City Center' project faced scrutiny after the public learned that its budget was increased from roughly \$6 million to \$108 million without a public RFP. Did that process trouble you? How would you have handled if you were on council?

Same thing, mayor pushing things through. Ironically now she's complaining that council is doing this to her. I would have pushed for public opinion with transparency in budget as a priority.

At a March 2022 press conference, Tampa Mayor Jane Castor told reporters that rent stabilization and rent control aren't viable solutions to the housing crisis because the measures would ["kill development."](#) What is your stance on rent control, and how would you have voted last August when council was talked out of putting the issue of rent control on last November's ballot?

Shocker, a sitting mayor that wants more revenue and development during her term. This is to be expected but it's up to council and the public to insure these projects are handled accordingly on a case by case basis.

Last Halloween, as council was set to vote on charter amendments, Mayor Jane Castor said, "For more than fifty years, mayors and city councils have worked together for the betterment of our city under its current form of government. This system has served us well and resulted in a stronger, more prosperous city – and today, more than 90 percent of Tampa residents say they trust their city government."

That echoes a sentiment from former Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn, but we'd argue that the last 50 years has led to an inflection point where maybe the city should consider not abolishing the strong mayor form of government, but giving council more tools to check the mayor's power.

Especially now after Castor's recent vetoes, what's your take on charter amendments, specifically those that would give council more avenues to balance power in city hall?

Council needs more power, they're the voice of the people and the mayor is trying to silence the people.

If a vote to relocate the Christopher Columbus statue came up, how would you vote? Please answer yes or now, and feel free to explain why.

Least of my priorities but I don't think location is the problem.

Last September, council members all expressed either doubt or complete disapproval of the administration's PURE wastewater plans as a whole. The Tampa Bay Times recently confirmed environmentalists' concerns and reported that it was actually Tampa lobbyists who helped craft the legislation that will require Tampa to find some other use for the wastewater by 2032. What's your take on the situation? Would you have pushed on with PURE as it was presented?

I've worked around water my whole life. There are alternative methods to eliminate groundwater storage/salinity infiltration that have not been presented. I would love to discuss these with the group. Lobbyists want to build infrastructure they can capitalize on built with public monies, nooo? The report is viable but the solutions are implausible, let's chat.

Please feel free to freestyle and tell us about anything that you didn't get to address above.

Love the CL; Dave Decker is a longtime skater friend of mine and I love reading Justin's articles. I look forward to discussing items in person and more in detail soon. We're not all bad guys and I really want to use this part of my life to give back to a city that has done so much for me over the years. Thank you!

This form was created inside of Creative Loafing Tampa.

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