



# Candidate **CONVERSATION GUIDE**

*This guide offers sample questions intended to help you engage with candidates to learn more about their positions on issues that matter to you. Suggested talking points follow each question, to provide you with more context and to help with follow-up, if needed.*

## **What will you do to end homelessness?**

Minnesota's statewide housing crisis impacts people at every point in the housing continuum, but no group is in more danger than the unsheltered (people staying in places not meant for human habitation). Between 2015 and 2018, unsheltered homelessness across the state increased by 62%; the pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic have put even more Minnesotans at risk of losing their housing.

## **How will you support access to more deeply affordable and accessible homes, particularly for under-served communities?**

Minnesota's affordable housing stock has not kept up with demand. Minnesota must produce 10,000 more units each year over the next decade in order to meet the needs of the state's lowest income households, yet there are only 100 homes produced each year for these families. Finding affordable and accessible housing is even more difficult for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

## **What housing-based strategies will you pursue to improve health outcomes?**

Access to stable housing can improve health and reduce health care costs. Now more than ever people recognize housing (including emergency shelters) as an important part of the health care continuum.

## **What policies or strategies would you support to keep Minnesota's aging population stably housed and financially secure?**

The Wilder Homeless Study found a 25% increase in older adults (55+) experiencing homelessness from 2015 to 2018. Nearly all older homeless adults reported that a disability limits their ability to work or complete activities of daily living (e.g., eating, bathing, and dressing). Nearly half of homeless older adults did not become homeless until they were age 50 or older.

## **Minnesota has some of the worst racial disparities in the nation. What will you do to close the opportunity gaps and bridge racial inequities in our state?**

Data from government databases shows that Minnesota ranks near the bottom in racial equity by virtually every measure, including homeownership, income and education. These disparities are driven by systemic inequities in policies at all levels of government.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
of St. Paul and Minneapolis