

MEET THE
CANDIDATES

Nora Martínez DeBenedetto, Ward I Candidate

<p>How can Hoboken... ...better support local business development, particularly locally-owned retail and small business development on Washington Street?</p>	<p><i>I think it's most important that small businesses looking to open in Hoboken are fully aware of what is competition and what is complementary. Not that long ago, about six falafel places opened on Washington Street within months of each other. City Hall needs to work harder, and in partnership with the business community to make sure that doesn't happen again. Communication is key.</i></p>
<p>...streamline the approval and permitting process for businesses that want to locate in the City.</p>	<p><i>I think the SID will help, but there should be someone at City Hall who can walk you through the process. You should also be able to check the status of your permit online, the same way you can track a UPS package. Received, Processing, Approved!</i></p>
<p>...rationalize its parking policies to promote commerce in the City.</p>	<p><i>I thought dynamic pricing was a good idea for opening more parking spots on Washington Street. I'd like to revisit the idea, perhaps with a different pay structure, or through business feedback. I think one of the the biggest challenges for parking is that many Washington Street employees take up a lot of the spots. The city should find ways of incentivizing employees to use public transportation or park their cars in the municipal garage.</i></p>
<p>As you may be aware, there is a new Special Improvement District in Hoboken. What is your position on this new SID and what do you expect it to accomplish on behalf of Hoboken businesses?</p>	<p><i>The SID will be a huge win for Hoboken businesses. Personally, I would like to see it aid in the revival of 14th Street. When I was a kid, 14th Street was a legit happening spot. Small changes such as cohesive signage, sidewalk beautification and more diverse transportation options can help make it a true destination.</i></p>



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<p>What other projects/initiatives are a priority for you and which you believe will significantly elevate Hoboken?</p>	<p><i>I am a huge fan of the Hop, the city sponsored shuttle buses that run throughout the city. I support expanding service to include weekends, which I think would be great for Hoboken businesses. Currently there is no advertising on the Hop, but I would love to see local businesses can do so at free or reduced rates to the captive Hop audience!</i></p>
<p>Please add any other comments you want to include in your response here.</p>	<p><i>Small businesses are important to me and my family. My brother owns The Drum Den, a music shop here in Hoboken, and I want to make sure that locally owned and operated businesses continue to exist on Washington Street and beyond. The SID, combined with other smart measures can hopefully help bring Washington Street back to the thriving commercial avenue it once was.</i></p>