

# Irving Muslims PAC

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## Mayoral Questionnaire

*May 2026 General Election*

*Responses are listed in ballot order per race*

## Standing Against Anti-Muslim Hate

*Irving has a documented history of anti-Muslim public demonstrations and political rhetoric, including statements made by public officials in civic settings.*

*If you witnessed or became aware of anti-Muslim rhetoric from a fellow elected official, a candidate, or a public figure in Irving, what would you do, concretely? Would you say so publicly, and if so, how?*

### Zhanae Jackson

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Every Irving resident deserves to live and worship without fear of discrimination. As a Christian, I believe every person is created with dignity, and that principle should guide public leadership.

If I became aware of anti-Muslim rhetoric from a public official or candidate, I would address it directly. My first step would be to speak with the individual and make clear that targeting people because of their faith is unacceptable in a city that serves many religions.

If the behavior continued, I would say so publicly and reaffirm that Irving must be a place where Muslims, Christians, Jews, and people of all faiths are treated with equal respect under the law.

Leadership requires both courage and fairness.

### Olivia Aberu

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If I ever witnessed or became aware of such rhetoric, I would immediately research the incident. By carefully examining the facts and talking to the people involved, I would call a meeting with the Council and City Lawyer to find a solution. A report would be prepared and made public, once the situation had been resolved.

### Albert Zapanta

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*No response received*

## Equal Treatment for Muslim Institutions

*Irving's mosques, Islamic schools, Muslim community organizations, and Muslim businesses are subject to the same zoning, permitting, and administrative processes as all other institutions.*

*If a Muslim organization reported to you that their permitting process had been delayed, denied, or handled inconsistently compared to similar requests from other religious institutions, what steps would you take?*

### Zhanae Jackson

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All religious institutions should receive equal treatment under city processes.

If a mosque, Islamic school, or Muslim organization believed their permitting process was delayed or handled inconsistently, I would ask city staff to review the timeline and procedures involved to ensure they were applied fairly.

In Irving's council-manager system, the mayor does not control permitting decisions directly, but the mayor can ask questions, request transparency, and ensure accountability.

If inconsistencies were found, I would support correcting the issue and improving processes so that every religious institution—mosque, church, synagogue, or temple—is treated equally.

Fairness and transparency must guide how city government serves every faith community.

### Olivia Aberu

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Just as stated in 1a [first question above], a careful research on the complaint would be conducted. If the case showed negligence from the City's staff, actions would be taken to correct the problem. If, on the other hand, nothing showed procedures were not followed, no further action would ensue. Still, as a matter of good will the two parties would be invited to participate in a healthy dialogue to settle differences.

### Albert Zapanta

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*No response received*

## Protecting Families and Children

*Irving's public libraries and schools serve children across a wide range of ages.*

*What do you personally think about the availability of materials dealing with sexuality and gender in city-funded spaces for young children?*

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### Zhanae Jackson

Families from many backgrounds live in Irving, and protecting children is a responsibility shared across cultures and faith traditions.

I believe materials made available to young children in city-funded spaces should be age-appropriate and focused on healthy development, literacy, and education.

Parents should feel confident that public institutions respect their role in guiding their children's upbringing.

At the same time, libraries serve people of many ages, so policies should ensure clear age standards, transparency, and community input when concerns arise.

My focus would be making sure city spaces remain welcoming, educational, and respectful of the values of the families who live here.

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### Olivia Aberu

Libraries offer a variety of services to patrons of all ages, clearly divided by groups. Staff follows strict regulations to keep appropriate materials to children, youth and adults in separate areas. While a watchful eye can miss the correct placement of an item, this error can be easily fixed when a patron brings it to the attention of a librarian. In my case, bring a "book worm", I cherish libraries and respect measures to keep us safe in all situations.

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### Albert Zapanta

*No response received*

## Opposing Harmful Industries

*The Irving City Council has zoning authority over the location and concentration of alcohol outlets, vape and smoke shops, THC dispensaries, gambling establishments, and sexually oriented businesses.*

*1. When a proposed zoning change raises public safety or community character concerns, what criteria guide your decision?*

*On March 20, 2025, the council voted 6 to 3 to approve Ordinances 2025-47-UDC and 2025-48-ZC (Agenda Items 45 and 46), a rezoning proposal brought by Las Vegas Sands Corporation for 1,001 acres including the former Texas Stadium site. The proposal originally included casino gaming as a permitted use. Sands withdrew that component hours before the vote but stated publicly that without gaming the project makes no financial sense, and they continue to lobby for gaming legalization in Austin.*

*2a. How would you have voted, and do you believe the council adequately weighed the long-term implications of approving zoning that leaves the door open for a casino if Texas law changes?*

*2b. Would you support an ordinance explicitly prohibiting casino gaming as a permitted use within Irving's zoning code?*

### Zhanae Jackson

When evaluating zoning decisions, I consider economic impact, public safety, and long-term community stability.

Irving has built a strong reputation as a city for families and professionals. Development should strengthen that stability rather than undermine it.

Casino gambling raises concerns for many residents across faith communities, including Muslims and Christians, because of the social harms associated with gambling addiction.

Because of those concerns, I would have serious reservations about zoning decisions that could open the door to casino development in Irving.

I support economic growth, but it should be growth that strengthens families, neighborhoods, and the long-term health of our city.

### Olivia Aberu

1. First and foremost, it is the residents I need to protect. Addictions have been proven to cause severe health issues. Tobacco use and vaping fall in this category. And while alcohol sale is widely available for purchase in Irving, strict regulations exist for various establishments. Proximity of any of these outlets to family neighborhoods or schools must be prohibited. Sexually oriented businesses have no place in our City.

2a. I would have voted No to Casinos in Irving. As I do not participate in the Council work sessions, I do not know if they weighed the long-term implications of an open door discussion for a casino in our City.

2b. Yes, I would support an ordinance explicitly prohibiting casino gambling as a permitted use within Irving's zoning code.

### Albert Zapanta

*No response received*

## First Amendment Rights

*Texas state law currently restricts cities from contracting with companies that boycott Israel, including through BDS-aligned purchasing decisions.*

*Do you believe this law reflects sound public policy?*

### Zhanae Jackson

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The First Amendment protects the right of Americans to speak, advocate, and act according to their conscience.

At the same time, Texas law currently establishes the framework cities must follow regarding contracts and boycotts of Israel.

As mayor, my responsibility would be to follow state law while ensuring city contracts remain transparent and focused on serving Irving residents.

Irving is home to people of many backgrounds, including Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities. My goal is to ensure our local government respects the rights and dignity of all residents while focusing on the local issues that affect daily life in our city.

### Olivia Aberu

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Sound public policy does not necessarily protect all parties involved. I have no further opinion on this matter.

### Albert Zapanta

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*No response received*

## Moral Courage in Public Life

*For the May 29, 2025 regular council meeting, three addendum items were submitted, including Resolution RES-2025-166, expressing support for the President's efforts to achieve a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the release of all hostages. The addendum was certified and posted by the City Secretary on Monday, May 26, 2025 by 5:30 p.m., more than 72 hours before the meeting. Before any discussion or vote could take place, all three items were struck from the agenda after points of order were sustained by the presiding officer. Irving Muslims PAC has submitted written inquiries to the City Attorney's Office regarding the legal basis for that removal under Section 5.1(B) of the Council Rules of Procedure, which states that a properly submitted agenda item may only be removed by the member who requested it. As of the date of this questionnaire, no response has been received.*

- 1. How would you have voted on Resolution RES-2025-166, and why?*
- 2. What would you do to ensure that Irving residents and elected council members can bring good-faith items before the council without having them removed on procedural grounds before any discussion takes place?*

### Zhanae Jackson

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City residents deserve transparency and open discussion from their elected leaders.

If an agenda item is properly submitted according to council rules, it should be allowed to come before the council for discussion. Preventing debate through procedural maneuvering undermines public trust.

While I would review the full context before deciding how to vote on any particular resolution, I believe council members should be able to present good-faith items so the public can hear the discussion and understand where their leaders stand.

As mayor, I would support clear and consistent council procedures so agenda items are handled fairly and residents can see their government operate with transparency and integrity.

### Olivia Aberu

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1. Wars are being fought in many places in the world as we speak, with Gaza being one. As this question pertains to International Law and Presidential efforts, I abstain from providing a more elaborate response.
2. Good faith can be hard to prove and even more complicated to achieve. Council members with strong opinions and opposing views have to compromise on voting matters. Only sincere dialogue can make the right decisions come to pass.

### Albert Zapanta

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*No response received*