

MEDICARE GUIDE 2026

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Sunday

THE POST-STANDARD



ELECTION 2025 SYRACUSE MAYOR

The frontrunner is clear. Can any of the others win?



Republican Tom Babilon, left, independent Alfonso Davis, middle, and independent Tim Rudd, right, participate in the Oct. 20 debate at the National Veterans Resource Center at Syracuse University. Shuyang (Sky) Zhuang, Contributing photographer

Thomas Babilon, Alfonso Davis and Tim Rudd show varying levels of confidence in their victory plans.

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A huge party enrollment advantage. Big leads in campaign funds raised and spent. Prominence in the incumbent administration. That historically lopsided primary victory in June.

Syracuse Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens is the clear favorite, on paper, to become the city's next mayor.

But until all of the votes are cast and counted in this year's general election, nothing is guaranteed. The three men competing against Owens in this year's race continue to express confidence they can win.

Republican Thomas Babilon is making a numbers-based case for a path to victory that banks on a combination of low turnout by Democrats, high participation from GOP voters and enough support from independents and disenchanted Dems.

Independent Alfonso Davis cites anecdotal evidence from the campaign trail, specifically pledges of support from thousands of residents he and his volunteers have met going door-to-door.

The other independent, Tim Rudd, is relying on a more aspirational notion, saying that he believes in voters to see him as the smartest choice.

An early indication voting trend, however, seems to favor Owens, the Democratic



Sharon Owens responds to a question at a Oct. 14 mayoral debate. She holds a large fundraising lead over her opponents. Dennis Nett, dnett@syracuse.com, file

nominee.

Of 2,175 mail-in or in-person early voters processed in the city through Tuesday, 68% were registered Democrats, the elections board said. Republicans and unaffiliated voters each accounted for 15%, with the remainder registered to minor parties.

That reflects what Syracuse political insiders were saying about this year's race to replace Ben Walsh as the first candidates emerged in the summer of 2024. With more than four times as many Democrats registered to vote as Republicans, they said, the race would likely be decided in the June primary.

Owens ran away with that three-person race, securing 62% of the vote against a pair of multi-term incumbent Syracuse common councilors who spent considerably more money than any of Owens' current opponents.

Grant Reeher, a political science professor at Syracuse University who follows city politics, said he would be shocked if Owens does not win.

"From a political science standpoint, I would say the chances of those three candidates, either collectively or individually, seriously biting into her margin of victory is almost zero," he said.

THE POLITICAL METRICS

Reeher is not basing his assessment on what he has seen or heard from the candidates. He has interviewed three of the four candidates (Davis declined an invitation) on his public radio Campbell Conversations program, and he believes all of the candidates have made valid arguments.

Although there has been no public polling in this year's mayoral race, Reeher said key metrics that include party enrollment, campaign fundraising and name recognition favor Owens, who has been Walsh's top aide since the mayor took office in 2018.

As of Tuesday, Democrats make up 39,214, or 53%, of Syracuse's 73,754 registered voters. The next largest group isn't Republicans — it's unaffiliated voters. They total 21,519, or 29% of the electorate. The GOP, with 9,439 registered city voters, is at 13%. The last Republican to win a mayoral race in Syracuse was Roy Bernardi in 1997.

SEE SYRACUSE MAYOR, A8

SYRACUSE

District poised to hire retirees as consultants

The firms, owned by Anthony Davis and Timothy Moon, will each be paid \$250,000.

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The Syracuse City School District is poised to pay \$250,000 for two former highly paid officials to keep working for the district after retirement.

Superintendent Anthony Davis retired Friday. Former Chief Information Officer Timothy Moon retired this summer. The school board unanimously approved a consulting contract with Moon's company, Silver Moon Data Compliance and Consulting, in August. The district will pay Silver Moon up to \$125,000 over the course of two school years.

On Nov. 12, the school board could approve a \$125,000 contract with Davis's company, TD22 Consulting. This contract would run until the end of the current school year.

Davis declined multiple interview requests via a spokesperson. None of the seven elected school board members would answer questions about the contracts.

Michael Root, a former teacher running for the school board, called the contracts part of a "revolving door type of policy."

"It seems like they throw money around to the administration in the top level, and meanwhile they're counting every dime and nickel when it comes to the TAs, the teachers and other school personnel," Root said.

The funds for Silver Moon Consulting come from the central data processing budget. The district plans to pay TD22 with money allocated for the chief school administrator budget.

Root said he sees the contracts as a district problem, not necessarily about the two men involved.

"Anthony Davis and Tim Moon, this isn't their issue ... They're doing nothing

SEE CONSULTANTS, A7

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Whew, it's early ...

It's time to fall back! Daylight saving ended at 2 a.m., so don't forget to set your clocks back one hour.



Advance Local

History. A2 Nation&World. A11 Sports. B1 Obituaries. C1 Business E1 Opinion. F1 Empire. G1 Real Estate. H1 Today's weather: Wintry mix. High: 52. Low: 37. B10 ©The Post-Standard



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