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City Council Candidate
2nd District, In-District

1. Please share your vision for the future of transportation mobility in KCMO and how walking/biking/public transit would be important strategies to achieving that vision.

KCMO needs to evolve its view of transportation to meet the opportunities and needs of our diverse population. As our communities are transformed by new ideas and technologies, we must allow those same processes to move through our transportation network. Walkability and rideability have been common themes in new developments where residents are integrated into an open and accessible new concept that echoes town square concepts of the past. Equally important to community development ideas will be accessibility to employment opportunities. As generations coming of age seem to be less reliant on the personal transportation models of the past, we (the City) need to be working to recognize employment oases and provide public transportation opportunities centered on employment, education, and experiences for our whole city. Future affordable housing developments should likewise be centered among transportation, education, and employment opportunities.

2. The arrival of scooters has shown now more than ever that there are many diverse and growing demands on limited public space for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars. How do you think the city should balance all of these needs to ensure safety and accessibility for everyone using public space?

The first step is always safe-sidewalks. Once we allow for walkability, whole new businesses, services, and opportunities follow. With them and the increased demand for access, come historical and alternate modes of transport. We are seeing that it is difficult, but not impossible to accommodate ridership outside of our downtown areas. As housing and employment opportunities spread throughout our City, we need to be encouraging private investment in the modes that can use those alternate transit lanes. So that the City is not the only source of bikes or just a licensing authority for scooters. As community squares arise in mixed use residential areas, we may need to research and invest in car-free zones that are thoughtfully implemented and actually used. Ride-sharing technologies, shared car storage lots, bicycle nodes, and scooters (and whatever the future can dream up) need to be embraced as opportunities to serve our citizens.

3. Affordable housing and multimodal transportation are inextricably tied to one another. For many households, transportation is just as expensive, if not more, than housing. How should the City Council work to ensure an abundance of both without hindering one issue to make progress on the other?

The City will always be among the most aware of growing housing centers and new employment opportunities. We need to use that information to be pro-active in serving future needs and recognizing areas for other types of related growth in the community. From there it is a matter of

demonstrating clear and viable plans for additional bus lanes to the KCATA. The City should be evaluating where there are excess job openings, which schools can afford to grow, and where labelling these areas for additional service. Conversely, the City and KCATA can observe where transportation options already exist but are underutilized to identify areas to incentivize the building of new affordable homes or help create job growth and educational opportunities for potential riders.

4. KCMO recently updated its Bike Plan. It is both an ambitious and practical plan to connect the city, while supporting the City's goals for mobility, health, housing, equity, economic development, and sustainability. Residents are frustrated that previous plans have sat on the shelf due to lack of funding and prioritization, and the City has struggled to deliver funded projects. How would you align City budgets, policies, staff, and procedures to ensure the new bike plan hits the ground running with tangible, rapid results?

Some of this will come down to preparedness and hard work. We need our public works crews and developers to be mindful as they build and repair our roads and communities. Sewer, water, power, accessibility, and development leaders need to be fully coordinated so that new roads aren't torn up to make way for other planned infrastructure, and so that new roads are accompanied by the biking lanes, safe sidewalks, and modern runoff measures these communities; instead of having to go back later to fix issues that never should have arisen.

5. Active transportation is increasingly important across the KC metro area and around the country to support goals for connectivity, public health, economic development, equity, quality of life, and climate protection. As the economic and cultural hub of our region, KCMO is key to all of these goals. How would you use the City's position to provide regional leadership on transportation and mobility for the entire metro area?

Step #1 is leading by example. KCMO and KCATA need to be coordinating to identify the areas of greatest need in our City. KCATA needs to be more dynamic in their efforts to serve our growing population centers outside the downtown areas. Step #2 is creating productive partnerships that are mutually beneficial. Step #3 is finding creative, even temporary solutions, that seek to move our people to their jobs, schools, and activities. The City can be working with our large-scale employers, employment hubs, job training centers, and educational institutions to identify the areas of greatest need in the metro area to be efficiently moving our citizens to their areas of greatest opportunity.

6. Since the passage of the GO Bond, Kansas City has worked to address the backlog of requests to fix broken sidewalks. However, the City has had issues with regards to transparency of this process and ensuring funds are used where they are needed most, especially on the East Side. If elected, how will you work to ensure greater transparency and a process that pushes more dollars into these underserved communities?

Safe sidewalks are an underrealized element of a great hometown. The ability for our children to get back and forth to school safely, for families to get to local parks, to open new opportunities

within a community can all rely on this most basic infrastructure. I believe the City should layout its plan for sidewalk installation/rehabilitation in advance, it should be actively partnering with developers in those areas, it should get buy in from the water/sewer department, and it should be in the community getting feedback on the actual need. I would favor initiating our sidewalk programs from our local schools and parks and reaching out into the communities they serve. KCATA should also be “in the loop” on these developments so they can be updating bus stops to be rider friendly. Areas of high crime and areas of great need (pedestrian safety) should be prioritized as studies show that investment in these areas to highlight those issues work. Installing street lights and making a community more “user-friendly” decrease crime numbers and demonstrate to underserved community that they are valued by City Hall.

7. With regards to multimodal transportation, what is one project you would like to see completed in your district?

District 2 in the Northland is one of KC’s fastest growing areas. We have job growth, population growth, and great places to live and go to school. I would like to see more opportunities for Northlanders to use public transportation, and we need to create a desire to use public transportation. A targeted ad campaign to highlight the efficiencies, cost benefits, and environmental benefits of public transportation might go a long way to increasing ridership and buy-in.

I, personally, plan to be a multi-modal commuter. There is a bus stop within walking distance of my home, and I intend to use the bus whenever possible. I will also drive a car when required to be more mobile throughout the day, but I will seek to carpool when possible. I also ride a motorcycle which minimizes pollution and congestion while accomplishing the same transportation goals as a car. Finally, I hope to be able to ride my bicycle to City Hall on nice days where that is a reasonable option, realizing I have commitments that will make that difficult. In general, I feel that it is the responsibility of our civic leaders to be active in the community and using our experiences as commuters, parents, and employees/employers to improve our neighborhoods, communities, and City.

Thank you for this opportunity to answer some of your questions on these important topics. Safe sidewalks are one of my highest priorities for all the benefits they can deliver to neighborhoods and communities. Walkable and ridable communities have returned to the forefront of civic design, and the City and local developers need to embrace that movement to better serve our communities and environment.