

WALK BIKE QUESTIONNAIRE

2019 NASHVILLE METRO COUNCIL CANDIDATES



In preparation for the 2019 Metropolitan General Elections, Walk Bike Nashville distributed a Walking and Biking Candidate Questionnaire to Metro Council candidates. This questionnaire is intended to help educate the public about the positions and ideas of

each of the candidates. Walk Bike Nashville is a 501c3 non-profit, and as such we do not endorse or support any candidate.

These are the answers as we received them, unedited, from the candidates.

1. What would you do as a council member to promote walking and biking in Nashville?	
Emily Benedict	Madison and Inglewood need more sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as more streetlights, which I will fight to obtain. I will highlight our access to the Shelby Greenway, and beyond, as accessible via Cornelia Fort and Moss Rose.
Clint Camp	Protect pedestrians; in tandem with TDOT address our primary corridors for sidewalk improvements as well as crossing at dangerous areas as previously identified. Fund additional sidewalks and greenway extensions to make better connections, and help ensure that funding is provided consistently in the budget. Encourage MPW and Planning to review our corridors so we can identify how we can make meaningful and lasting improvements to our streetscapes to allow for additional tree canopy that provides great shade and the sundry other improvements from street trees. Expand biking corridors and protected bike lanes. Support the measure to reduce speed along neighborhood local roads to 25 MPH. Support additional police staff to help with enforcement. Support for increased funding to transit to include connections for the last mile. Encourage trail-oriented development as appropriate, as well as transit-oriented development. Request support to address issues around blocking sidewalks and bike lanes. This is a pet peeve and recurring issue from multiple sources: construction projects, delivery trucks, scooters, parked cars, etc. We need to educate and enforce that bike lanes and sidewalks are not inferior to the car.
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	I'll be holding "Walk-with-a-candidate" and if elected "walk-with-your-councilman" events. I also believe that smart density along our corridor roads will encourage walkability there and in turn require safer options for our non-vehicle and vehicle transportation to coexist. I also believe a clear delineation, such as armadillos on bike lanes (which we are getting in parts of D7!) will help motorists to recognize that a bike lane is not just a suggestion. I will also be promoting and monitoring continued advancements in the WalkNBike plan.
Jacob Green	As a health-conscious member of this great city, creating a healthier and safer Nashville is a top priority for my time as a city councilman. As a member of the Inglewood community, I understand first-hand how dangerous and unsettling it can be to walk or bike streets that do not have sidewalks or properly marked bike lanes. I plan to work hard throughout my term to build more walkways, marked bike lanes and direct walkway access to parks. In addition, my

	goal is to make it easier for our community to have access to bikes through affordable rental or purchase programs and community outreach events.
Stephanie Johnson	<p>1.) I would support the organizations that promote walking and biking and helping to integrate their awareness into our neighborhoods, especially at different association meetings, and in our local schools. I would also love to see open streets happen in my district more often.</p> <p>2.) I am encouraging the development of a district 7 caucus or liaison board, and one of the representatives would handle transportation and street relations, which would cover working in the community to identify areas that need sidewalk's, trafficking calming, better bus routes, etc. How are streets are designed directly affect how they are used. WeGo, Steve Bland, mentioned that 88% of bus riders walk to a bus, having sidewalks directly affect how great our transportation will be.</p>
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	

2. What will you do as a Council Member to reduce pedestrian fatalities and severe injuries in your district and all of Nashville?

Emily Benedict	First, I think we need to build awareness of this problem. I agree with the recent push for lowering the speed limit in neighborhoods from 30 mph to 25 mph. On too many streets, there are not enough crosswalks between traffic lights, for instance, on Gallatin Pike between Greenfield and Ardee and then on to Riverwood. Adding a crosswalk in these areas should slow traffic and reduce fatalities. We need more, and smarter, bike lanes, such as the one on Riverside Drive. Where widening the streets is not possible, we should have signs that point out a bicyclist's right of way.
Clint Camp	Support and encourage Metro Planning and MPW to facilitate design charettes along our primary corridors where most fatalities occur, including Gallatin Road. Work in conjunction with council members, MPW, Planning, and Metro Water, etc to create projects that help reduce these fatalities and GET THEM FUNDED.
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	<p>I am looking forward to seeing the results from the vision zero task force who would ultimately develop an action plan to eliminate fatal and severe traffic crashes. I also would encourage and work to not call traffic crashes accidents, TDOT and most transportation/transit advocacy groups are trying very hard to move away from that because typically crashes are not accidents, but rather through the fault of a distracted or influenced driver. I think this change in vernacular would assist in a bit of a paradigm shift for how we view this.</p> <p>Ultimately though, I would be working with Public Works on reporting and IDing streets that -- for one reason or another-- have evolved into a dangerous situation.</p>
Jacob Green	One of my primary platforms involves creating not only a healthier Nashville but a safer one. We need to implement a thorough walkway system but also need to improve the oversight of third-party contractor

	regulation. Improving these processes will ensure a timely and cost-effective way to improve the lives and safety of Nashvillians. Education for proper bike and walk etiquette is another essential piece of making everyone in the community safer.
Stephanie Johnson	This speaks directly to the traffic calming initiatives all over the city, and also building better barriers for bikers and people riding scooters. Working with organizations like the CDC and any other group, to make sure we are designing the best city for all modes of transportation. Ensuring that crosswalks are maintained, Madison for example could really use some love in that area. Even considering bike lights at cross sections or working to create a carfree urban core or in other sections around the city to not only reduce deaths, but to increase people using other modes of transportation. Also, thinking about do we have enough places to lock up bikes.
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	

3. What will you do as a council member to enact WalkNBike and expand low-stress bikeways? If a plan for new bikelanes came across your desk that you had the authority to approve and you thought it was the right thing to do, Metro staff agreed, but a vocal minority were strongly opposed, how would you move forward?

Emily Benedict	I would definitely move forward with that plan. Serving in office is not about popularity; it is about improving peoples' lives. No senior, child, or resident should be put in harm's way due to unsafe and unwalkable streets.
Clint Camp	Our neighbors have generally been very supportive and favorable to improvements that support walking and biking, including the recent re-striping of Riverside Drive. Through a process that was vetted by three (3!) neighborhood groups, the overwhelming response was to include the bike lanes on the interior. The process was educational, both in terms of process as well as working together as a common corridor. Regarding the beating of the drums of a few, but vocal, in opposition depends entirely upon the context, including whether eminent domain or other issues were present. Generally, change can be hard, wounds may heal, and we need to continue moving forward as a city adopting best practices for the next 100 years.
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	If a project was laid out and WalkNBike, Public Works & Planning agreed, and the majority of the residents were in favor I would undoubtedly support the road diet or road reconfiguration. Progress—especially in the name of safety—should not be held hostage by a vocal minority.
Jacob Green	We need to work tirelessly to create a system that works for our ever growing residents, our city, our visitors and the environment we are required to protect. Creating a better transportation system that encourages citizens and visitors to utilize alternative modes of transportation, Uber/Lyft/Scooters/Bikes/Trolley System/Mass Transit, will aid in reducing the number of vehicles that require parking, reduce traffic and will lower our traffic-related pollution. I am in support of a plan that serves to enhance our existing infrastructure for bikes.

Stephanie Johnson	One resident came to me and mentioned what if we were to switch bike lanes and parking spaces, where the parking acted as a barrier for bike lanes. If something comes across my desk, I want to see Metro staff in agreeance, but more than anything, I want the community to be behind it as well. Just like that resident came to me with excitement about his idea, I want to see this exact excitement from the majority of the community. It's nice for the inner-core to understand the benefits, but working directly in communities to ensure they to support it is very important, as their tax dollars will be spent to make it happen.
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	

4. How can Metro Nashville reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips into downtown in order to ensure that new employees, Nashvillians, and visitors continue to have access to Nashville's urban core?

Emily Benedict	I haven't decided my position on the proposed parking meter plan, however I do believe if the rates and penalties were higher, and if there were meters in more places, then we could turn that negative into a positive by promoting ridership on WeGo, although it must be marketed together for that to work. In addition, corporations downtown should incentivize their employees to use the transit system.
Clint Camp	This is a dual-issue. As we most recently saw during the NFL Draft, it is becoming more common-place that some employers can allow for alternative workplace solutions, such as off-site employees, or what we might have previously called 'telecommuters'. We need better-funded transit. Longer hours. Free wi-fi. Better locations for transfers. Public restrooms. Act like they are a key piece of the urban fabric. Rover-bus services that can pick up those not served by regular bus routes and get them to bus stops as needed.
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	I would encourage usage of the Nashville Connector and their work through the CMAQ grant by helping to facilitate telecommuting and planning for better commutes, especially for Metro employees.
	Also, parking maximums limiting the options for people to easily park their cars, will result in folks naturally looking at other transit/transportation options to get to a destination.
Jacob Green	As a member of one of those downtown Nashville companies, I understand the frustration that comes along with traffic and lack of parking when commuting to work. The answer goes back to improving our mass transportation system. Many cities have been wildly successful in creating and utilizing systems such as trolleys. They are an effective, eye-catching and fun method of encouraging not only residents but visitors to participate in mass transit. We also need to work on connecting our communities through multiple avenues making it easier to get in and out of Nashville and East Nashville.
Stephanie Johnson	We can listen to individuals like Steve Bland at WeGo. We have the minds in the community who already have the information and research, we just need to be ready to support them in the implementation of it. Steve

	Bland mentioned having dedicated bus lines (tactical transit lanes) and allowing them to be involved in the planning stages in new development. If new development also incorporated bus stops, this could off set the cities cost and then increase bus ridership.
Randy Reed Cole D. Rogers	

5. The WalkNBike Plan states that only 19% of Nashville’s streets have sidewalks. How can Metro expand our sidewalk network? As a council member, what would you do to support this?

Emily Benedict	We must find a way to fund this. All functions used to design and build sidewalks should no longer be outsourced because we manage processes better in-house.
Clint Camp	"Budgets are a moral document." We need more funding. The enactment of legislation to require sidewalks with development is a solid start - it helps. But our neighborhoods are starved for improvements that may take 30 years or more waiting on the private sector alone.
Stephen Downs Dan Fitzpatrick	I would discourage developers from seeking variances to not build new sidewalks or pay into the sidewalk fund. I would also lobby for a larger and more robust Public Works staff to build sidewalks (ideally, a Department of Transportation...), rather than contracting out these projects to local firms at a much higher labor cost.
Jacob Green	I am an active outdoor enthusiast, making building sidewalks a vital platform for my campaign. As a resident of Inglewood, I often have to leave my district to be able to find walkways or areas safe enough to go for a walk with my fiance and dogs. I plan to work closely with engineers and politicians alike to ensure planning, funding, prioritizing and managing of programs that provide sidewalks across all of Nashville.
Stephanie Johnson	My transit and street relations representative on the caucus/board would work with me and the community to identify areas in our own district that are high areas of need. We would also ensure businesses do not get out of paying to add sidewalks (close loopholes), like what happened in Madison. We will do our best to ensure it becomes a high priority and it gets done through pressure and community backing.
Randy Reed Cole D. Rogers	

6. Transportation remains severely underfunded in Nashville and lacks a dedicated, consistent funding source. Which of the follow options would you support? Please explain.

A. Referendum to raise sales tax, business tax hotel/motel tax, and/or wheel tax

B. Increasing property taxes and using those funds for transportation

C. Bonds

D. Other _____

E. None of the above

Emily Benedict	Increasing property taxes and using those funds for transportation, Tourism revenue from downtown needs to be allocated to the neighborhoods, helping us fund this priority.
Clint Camp	Referendum to raise sales tax, business tax hotel/motel tax, and/or wheel tax, Increasing property taxes and using those funds for transportation, Bonds
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	Referendum to raise sales tax, business tax hotel/motel tax, and/or wheel tax
Jacob Green	Referendum to raise sales tax, business tax hotel/motel tax, and/or wheel tax, Increasing property taxes and using those funds for transportation, Bonds, Reallocation of funds and resources (e.g. alcohol sales tax)
Stephanie Johnson	
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	

6. b. Please explain your response to the options above.

Emily Benedict	With the lowest tax rate in the city's history, we also must look at additional revenue streams, which may include a property tax increase.
Clint Camp	The State Legislature gave us the ability to use multiple funding sources to help pay for improvements to transit, and we should work to utilize all of them as appropriate. Improvements to transit help improve the surrounding property values, increasing density, encouraging walkability and more. Funds raised will need to go towards both operational needs, as well as the long list of potential capital improvements (bonds).
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	TDOT is a debt-free transportation department and I think Nashville should follow suite in regards to how it funds its transit network. I do not think we should build any transit system on bonds or other types of debt, but rather only pay as we go with a dedicated revenue stream. It does take longer, but I don't think the city needs to take on more debt obligations with a transit network build-out. Transit systems tend to require additional costs and time so using bonds and other types of loans sets up the whole system for failure.
Jacob Green	Without investing in our future, we will be confined by it. I would plan to generate funds from any creative and/or viable means necessary to meet our growing demands, including the increase in tax revenues on alcohol sales. Traffic from tourism is a significant factor in urban Nashville being overly crowded. Sales, alcohol, and hotel taxes provide a steady stream of income, mainly from non-Nashvillians, as a way to improve our infrastructure for all to enjoy. Finding a way to bring outside or existing funds into Nashville's transportation budget will be my first priority but utilizing all options could very well be the answer.

	We must take action today to make sure our traffic problems do not become a problem we can't overcome. We are soon approaching the point at which our city's infrastructure will not be able to handle an increase in population or tourism. We must invest in our future now to ensure the health of our economy.
Stephanie Johnson	According to WeGo, TDOT cut about 57% of our funding. We need to get creative, maybe change pace in leadership, Mark Aesch, for instance has helped many cities, his "entire philosophy is based on the belief that the best way to raise both ridership and revenue is by improving the transit experience". WeGo has defiantly worked to do this, and I believe we need to stick with getting as creative as possible.
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	

7. What are your thoughts about the Metro Traffic Calming Program? Should speed-management (either lowering speed limits or adding physical traffic calming) be used to slow car speeds? If so on what type of streets?

Emily Benedict	Yes. Secondary streets at a minimum, and state roads where possible. Brush Hill Road is an example where we could add stop signs and/or speed humps. As stated above, putting more crosswalks on Gallatin Pike would also help slow down traffic.
Clint Camp	I understand that many neighborhoods, including my own, have requested inclusion in the Traffic Calming Program. I appreciate they are adding a structured process, including a finite window for requesting improvements, but based on the project metrics and other funding, neighborhoods like those in District 7 are not atop the list to receive any interest. Politics necessitates we offer a priority based on need, but cannot neglect geographic footprint across the County. I favor lowering speed limits along local roads, along with the required enforcement. Traffic calming is more of a challenge, but I applaud TURBO and areas where they can reduce the footprint of the asphalt to the minimum required for functionality.
Stephen Downs	
Dan Fitzpatrick	I am all for this and would be an advocate for bulking up the Public Works staff and budget in order to address these issues on more streets throughout the district and Nashville as a whole. I would like to see these implemented on all qualified streets... however, I would prioritize roads that have become auxiliary options to the corridors and connector streets.
Jacob Green	Traffic calming is a top priority in East Nashville and the greater Nashville area. I am in support of programs that help to slow car speeds in residential neighborhoods and high traffic walking areas. With the addition of mass transit systems, traffic calming will be something that we can accomplish over the next four years.
Stephanie Johnson	I love the traffic calming program, and I would love to see more neighborhoods get behind it. I would love to see more of this around schools and in neighborhoods who have apartment complexes at the end of their streets. I have had my community members complain about the

	speed coming out of some of the complexes and through their neighborhoods.
Randy Reed	
Cole D. Rogers	