



## LAWRENCE BOARD OF REALTORS®

3838 W. SIXTH STREET / LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66049

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### 2023 CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

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#### **Biographical Information**

Occupation: Delivery Driver

Previous Government Experience: I have been attending city commission meetings for years. I also attend advisory board meetings sometimes.

Involvement in Community Activities: I'm a member of the Lawrence Pyschedelic Society

#### **Positions on Important Issues**

##### **Priority Issues:**

##### ***1. What are your three top public policy priorities if you are elected to the City Commission?***

Fixing the housing/homeless situation. Decriminalize magic mushrooms. Spend our money more wisely, especially when it comes to roads.

##### **Housing Policy:**

##### ***2. What does "housing affordability" mean to you?***

It means people can live in a dwelling and not pay more than 30% of their income on housing.

##### ***3. Several studies, local and state-wide, have confirmed that Lawrence has insufficient housing inventory to meet market demand. As a result, Lawrence has seen housing prices rise faster than neighboring communities. How would you suggest Lawrence address this availability and affordability gap?***

We need to approve more housing projects, especially ones that increase urban infill. Last year, the current commission should have approved the duplex project over by Kasold. Instead Commissioner

Shipley said it didn't fit the character of the neighborhood. We need commissioners who will stand up to NIMBYs, not become one when a project is proposed in their neighborhood. Finding ways to decrease the cost of building houses could help, such as maybe easing up on some regulations/requirements. Allowing small homes to be built. 2-4 homes on a plot of land that usually would host 1 house means 2-4 families can live on that plot of land instead of one. Another change could be allowing more than 3 unrelated renters to live together because it could mean more people living together. Maybe that would free up some apartments.

- 4. The Lawrence Board of Realtors® believes that everyone in Lawrence should have access to safe, affordable housing and that everyone should be able to experience homeownership within their means. Meeting the demand for moderately priced housing is difficult. The City of Lawrence has identified Affordable Housing as a major priority. Do you support development policies that increase the cost of residential development? Please explain.**

Maybe, it would depend on the policy. If there is a good reason for it, then yes. If not then no. It would be case by case depending on the policy.

**Would you support new development policies that would incentivize new residential development meeting market demand to supply workforce housing at \$250,000 or less? Please explain.**

Again, I'd need to see the plan before giving out incentives. I've talked in favor and against incentives before at city commission meetings, and it depends on the plan.

- 5. The City of Lawrence recently passed Ordinance 6690, providing protections in housing based on source of income and immigration status. The Lawrence Board of Realtors® raised several concerns regarding how the ordinance will impact sales transactions and Landlords of Lawrence have filed a lawsuit challenging the ordinance. What is your position on source of income and immigration status protections?**

I'm ok with it

**How do you feel about going further to limit a Landlord from using a background check and/or credit history to evaluate rental applicants?**

I don't know. Depends what all is being limited. If the Lawrence Board of Realtors wants to argue against background checks for drug crimes, I think I could get behind that at least! People should have the freedom to do drugs, so from that perspective, it shouldn't be a crime. If it wasn't a crime, then there wouldn't be anything to check.

- 6. Lawrence has experienced unprecedented growth in the unhoused population in the last several years. What role do you believe the City should play in addressing this issue?**

The city started the process of helping the homeless when they gathered them all up and placed them in the tent city, so I feel the city is obligated to see the process through. They recently purchased a pallet village, so we need to use it. I do think if we can get it up and running, it will help the problem. The city needs to realize prevention needs to be part of the answer, and that means creating more housing in general in town. If we get more housing, we should have less people unhoused. Citizens also need to start understanding that even if we do get people housed, those people are still going to be part of the city. Just

because someone has an apartment to live in doesn't mean they're going to stop panhandling. If someone talks to themselves out in public, I don't think that's going to stop if they have shelter. If we provide shelter, I'm not going to mandate to the homeless that they have to stay inside as part of the stipulation for housing. Also, I know the city has a Built for Zero goal of trying to reach functional zero homelessness, but I have strong doubts that's going to happen in the near future based on how it's going so far. We need to find places for those who don't want help from the city to camp. It won't be many, but I think a few of the homeless would rather just camp somewhere on their own instead of receiving housing from the city. If that's the case, we should find a place to let them do that, and not spend taxpayer money helping someone who doesn't want our help.

**7. *The City is currently undergoing a review and re-write of the Land Development Code. What changes to zoning, design, historic preservation, or other requirements in the Land Development Code to you think would encourage housing development?***

Let people build the houses they want. I'm ok with saving a historic building, but just because something historic is part of a neighborhood, I don't think that should dictate the character of a neighborhood. I was at city commission meeting before where a guy had to get approval to put a different type of roof on his house than he currently had, all because he was within a historic district. If neighbors want to dictate what type of house their neighbor has, then they should just live in an actual HOA, not try to turn their neighborhood into one.

I'm ok with things like trailer parks or putting multiple smaller homes on a lot that previously only had one. In general, I've spoken more for letting people build what they want than I have against it.

**Energy Efficiency**

**8. *In March 2020, the City of Lawrence adopted Ordinance 9744, establishing a goal of 100% clean, renewable energy in all municipal operations by 2025 and city-wide by 2030. The Kansas Legislature pre-empted this ordinance during the 2021 session with the Energy Choice Act. What is your opinion regarding clean energy policies and how should we balance environmentally conscious policies with the rising cost of housing and utilities?***

My understanding is that renewable energy is becoming cheaper than fossil fuels, if not already. Since fossil fuels are limited, the price will go up as the supply goes down if we keep using it. The technology involved with renewable energy keeps evolving and it keeps becoming cheaper and more efficient each year, while sources like wind and solar remain plentiful. So I would say staying on the path of switching to renewable energy will make things cheaper in the long run.

**Economic Development:**

**9. *When appropriate, do you support the use of economic development incentives (such as industrial revenue bonds, tax abatements, rebates, community improvement districts, etc.) to attract or retain jobs and economic development investments in our community? Please explain your answer.***

Yes. Although it needs to be the right fit. I was for the US Engineering Metalworks project receiving public incentives. It was projected to bring in good paying jobs, and brought something unique to Lawrence. I was against the brewery by 9<sup>th</sup> and Pennsylvania receiving public incentives because it was close to Free State Brewery. I'm against giving tax breaks to a business to open so it can compete with an existing business.

**10. How would you propose to balance the need for economic development and increasing density in our City with preservation of the City's character and historic resources and monuments?**

I don't think our city's character is defined by our buildings; I think it's more defined by our people. I don't know if you have ever used one, but I have a virtual reality headset that I like to watch travel videos on. They have videos that take you on a tour of a city. I bring this up, because I'd like there to be some virtual reality videos of Lawrence. Then we could preserve history that way. If people want to see what Lawrence looked like in 2023, they could watch the video and see the buildings and places they loved before they were replaced with higher density housing. We can't save everything. It makes me think of the show Hoarders, where one of the things they do with people who hoard is have them take a picture of an item and then get rid of it. That way they have more room and remove the clutter, but still have a reminder of what they got rid of.

**City Budget Issues and Property Taxes:**

**11. In terms of your priorities on the City Commission, how highly would you prioritize your commitment to decreasing, or limiting future increases in the mill levy rate?**

I don't want to raise taxes. I would like to identify ways we can save money and make better use of our money. I would totally be open to using any money we save from the budget towards lowering taxes or utilities.

Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation in completing this candidate questionnaire. Your response will be greatly appreciated and will be distributed to our membership so they can make an adequate judgment on the merits of the candidates. Please return this questionnaire to our office by July 14, 2023.

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