



LAWRENCE BOARD OF REALTORS®

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2023 CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE Name:

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_____ Telephone Number: _785-764-8998_____

Biographical Information

Occupation: Property manager _____

Previous Government Experience: I served one term as city commissioner, during which I served one year as mayor. _____

Involvement in Community Activities: _____ Previous to my election to city commission I served on the Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods and Lawrence Preservation Alliance Boards. _____

Positions on Important Issues

Priority Issues:

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

Firstly, continued implementation of the Strategic Plan, which ties established community priorities to spending via data driven goals.

Secondly, Find more opportunities for investment in sustainability projects, for example stormwater, solar, or electric charging projects-preferably with grant opportunities.

Thirdly, Continue work with community partners on the implementation of the five-year housing and homelessness strategic plan.

Housing Policy:

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

What many people in our community refer to as affordable housing is on a spectrum from “unhoused” to “workforce” and “missing middle” housing. It doesn’t particularly matter what the technical definition is or what it means to me because the least affluent of us know it simply means that we can’t afford to live here.

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?

Steve Kelly with the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce has confirmed that a number of landowners on the East side of town, where presumably the consequences of the Panasonic factory should be housing and industrial growth, refuse to sell. There’s not much we can do about that. In the interest of growth the city has already committed to infrastructure projects which are costly to the taxpayer in the short and long term. I believe the development code changes we are working on can have a transformative influence on housing availability and housing diversity.

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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.

Yes, I believe this is where the development code revisions can play a big role in reducing the cost of building and housing as well as making processes less onerous. I’m very glad to have served during a time where I was able to push for such important policy changes that acknowledge the challenging experiences local builders and developers have had for many years.

5. 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.

Yes, I would also add on the topic of the land development code revisions, I was pleased during my time as Mayor to appoint local experts such as Danielle Davey, Phil Struble, and Commissioner Finkeldei to that board. Such an important and complex issue required a balance of viewpoints and expertise and I worked very hard to

place all the community members together in the room to create community solutions.

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 believe the city addressed the sales transaction issue per Board of Realtors concerns. Thank you for your advocacy. Source of income policies have been utilized all over the United States and exist on firm legal footing. As a property manager I'm aware of how this ordinance can aid in our housing crisis. I am also aware that the fear of the unknown can overshadow the benefits. It is incumbent upon the city to communicate with landlords about how the ordinance does or does not effect them. Having experienced vouchers positively from the landlord's perspective, I am an advocate for their many advantages. I am firmly on the record for my support of policies that protect all neighbors from discrimination and predatory behavior, including our undocumented neighbors.

6. 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 have not heard that being suggested locally and I do not understand the new ordinance to stop landlords from using those criteria. I would need very compelling evidence of the legality of such policies to consider such restrictions.

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 community spoke quite clearly that it wanted the city to take greater responsibility in the houselessness issue. Our housing and homelessness strategic plan (**A Place for Everyone: A Community Plan to End Homelessness**) addresses best practices and gaps in our community. The public engagement on this plan created space for all the perspectives in the community to be in the room together working collaboratively and being honest about experiences and issues. I am specifically interested in continuing work with all of our community partners toward creating capacity so that we can get all of our parks and public spaces cleaned up.

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 do you think

would encourage housing development?

As I've indicated, I think there are fantastic opportunities in the re-write. Other communities have tried such things as installing design guidelines in lieu single family zoning, revisiting parking restrictions, and density bonuses to encourage sustainable and affordable building opportunities. I am chomping at the bit to discuss accessory dwelling units and the relief they could provide to multiple housing needs in Lawrence. I am encouraged by the current reconsideration of the historic preservation chapter. I think the collaboration and engagement will result in far better process and guidelines. The last four years have been an exciting and fruitful time to be pushing for transformative outcomes in our community.

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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?

"Home rule" is a foundational tenet here in Kansas and I am always disappointed when the Kansas Legislature forgets its importance. The reactive nature of some advocacy groups failed to account for such supportive opportunities as municipal incentives (not to mention current federal opportunities) and grant programs that would put our community in a leadership role for climate change responsiveness and modernization. The ordinance also attracted national attention from like-minded investors which I would classify as economic development. Additionally, I do not interpret anything in the ordinance that would have robbed individual businesses or homeowners or builders of energy choice.

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, when appropriate. The Catalyst Program has been a great success story. An example of incentive with less

clear benefit was those given to the Oread hotel project. The fraudulent misuse of those incentives lead to increased public suspicion of incentives. Additionally, after the sale of the hotel the remaining TIF monies continue to go to a developer who is no longer associated with the asset. That doesn't seem to be in the best interest of the taxpayer. We should be judicious in the use of incentives.

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 think the current rewrite of the Historic Resources chapter 22 will address several of the issues that people have found difficult in the past. This would include less stringent use or interpretation of environs which has caused a number of unnecessary issues for homeowners trying to make basic updates to their homes, in my view. Also increased density is not just a consideration for infill projects but for all future development. Inefficient development patterns are costly to the taxpayer and a strain on city services for generations to come.

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?

So far I have not been convinced that an increase to the mill levy is necessary. We need to prioritize services with the resources we have.

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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