



# 2025 Detroit Public Transit Candidate Questionnaire Responses: General Election Edition

Transportation Riders United, along with our partners at Detroit Disability Power, Detroit People’s Platform, and MOSES, asked all qualifying candidates in this year’s Mayor and City Council elections a series of questions about public transit, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and infrastructure and land use policies.

The following are the responses received by candidates who advanced to the November general election. These responses are printed as received, without revision for length or errors.

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## Introduction

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Transportation Riders United is a non-partisan organization and does not endorse candidates for elected office. However, TRU and our allies believe it is important for voters to know Detroit candidates' positions on the issue of public transit.

More than 20% of Detroit households don't have access to an automobile, leaving many to rely on the public transit services of the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT). DDOT is the largest transit agency in the state of Michigan, operating 37 bus routes that serve tens of thousands of riders across the city every day. As a city department, its management, operations, and funding are under the direct control of the Mayor and City Council.

TRU, along with our allies at Detroit Disability Power, Detroit People's Platform, and MOSES, assembled a questionnaire on public transit and related issues. TRU sent the questionnaire to all 37 certified candidates for Mayor and City Council, via email to the addresses listed on their ballot filings, on May 5, 2025. We followed up on May 16, and received responses from 12 of those campaigns at the time of publication.

After the primary election, we sent emails to the winning candidates who had not yet responded on September 16 and September 25, and received responses from 2 additional candidates.

Note that since the questionnaire was first sent, DDOT has implemented same-day paratransit service.

We thank all candidates who took the time to complete this survey.

## How to Vote

Primary elections for Mayor of Detroit and City Council were held on **August 5, 2025**. The top two finishers in each election advanced to the general election, which ends on **November 4**.

In both elections, registered Detroit voters can choose to vote:

- **In-person on Election Day at their local precinct, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.**  
Find your polling place at [mvic.sos.state.mi.us/](https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/).

- **In-person the week before Election Day, at more than 20 early voting locations across the city of Detroit.**  
Find early voting hours and locations at [detroitvotes.org/vote-early/](https://detroitvotes.org/vote-early/).
- **By mail before Election Day.**  
Learn more at [detroitvotes.org/vote-from-home/](https://detroitvotes.org/vote-from-home/).

**If you're not registered to vote, you still can, even on Election Day!**

Learn more at [detroitvotes.org/register-to-vote/](https://detroitvotes.org/register-to-vote/).

## Candidates for Mayor of Detroit

Jonathan Barlow, James Craig, Fred Durhal, Joel Haashiim, Saunteel Jenkins, Todd Perkins, and DaNetta Simpson were eliminated in the August 5 primary.

### Solomon Kinloch

candidate for Mayor of Detroit

#### **1. DDOT Investment**

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030? How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

I am open to considering increasing funding, but it would be unrealistic for me to commit until I understand the real financial impact of such a decision. I am interested in seeing the results of the increase in service model being introduced by the department to see how service levels are impacted, and the revenue impact of such an approach. This question also impacts Question 5, which talks about regional cooperation and mileage impact on Detroiters.

#### **2. Riders with Disabilities**

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP? What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

Yes. Better customization of service must be the goal. Investing in the necessary technology and transportation providers must be utilized in providing the necessary high level of service provided

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers? How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

Yes. Competitive wages are necessary to improve continuity of service and avoid loss of employees to competitors.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026? How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

Yes. Improve service reliability, technology, invest in stock rolling and training of DDOT staff.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels? How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

The easy answer is yes. The hard part comes when we consider funding alternatives to reach the stated goal. It would appear that in considering "road policy" how to move people through public transit should also be considered an element of the plan. Increasing funding, by not imposing additional taxes on Detroiters who also pay the highest mileages rates must also be considered.

### **6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities? How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

Incorporate into road design matrix which emphasizes safety first.

### **7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan? How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Yes. In order to accomplish this goal, a rethinking of DPW street maintenance functions would have to be undertaken. Whenever major road improvements are planned, a set of stated goals would be incorporated into the design process. These goals would emphasize walkable and rideable designs, emphasizing safety first of pedestrians. A similar approach would be used in major resurfacing.

#### **8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development? What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

Yes. Eliminating parking minimums for new or redevelopment eliminates the waste of space that we have in the city of Detroit. Taking cues from a recent book "Abundance," we will rethink development to incorporate intermodal transportation into the mix. This would allow for developers to cover a portion of the cost of creating necessary DDOT infrastructure to reduce overall operating costs for the system on maintaining structures needed to protect riders from the elements. This would call for creation a system of "requirements" that Developers must incorporate into their design and layout of sites to accomplish the stated goals. Reductions in permitting fees, relaxing zoning requirements, fast track of permit review and other incentives will be incorporated into the process.

#### **9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership? What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

Consistency in the development of reliable transportation requires consistency in leadership. To that end, a competitive salary is needed to retain capable leadership at DDOT.

## **Mary Sheffield**

candidate for Mayor of Detroit

### **1. DDOT Investment**

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030? How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

Yes. I believe that Detroiters deserve bus service that prioritizes dignity, efficiency, and reliability.

We will phase-in these improvements, incrementally increasing the budget every fiscal year to achieve concrete milestones. Given fiscal realities, this is a much more feasible approach than immediately doubling the budget.

As the quality of life measures that form the basis for my administration's operations develop, so will the material growth of Detroit, leading to increased economic activity, job growth and higher wages. At the same time, I am currently exploring the relative gains and impacts of tax tools and levers with the goal to lessen the burden on Detroiters while creating additional revenue. I will prioritize expanding and improving Detroit's transit system with the increases that occur each fiscal year, which even now are subject to utilization according to Mayoral priorities. Transit is situated at the top of this priority list.

### **2. Riders with Disabilities**

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP? What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

One of the priorities of my Administration is to make sure that this is a City for ALL Detroiters. We will make sure that we meet people where they are, and ensure that all residents can access the services and programs that we are launching and improving on their behalf.

I support same-day paratransit services. I want to work with disability community advocates, as well as the City of Detroit Office of Disability Affairs to make sure that we build solutions that meet these specific needs. As we talk about increasing the DDOT budget, I also want to ensure that we have disabled Detroiters and disability advocates at the table, and that the needs of the disability community are integrated within the overall DDOT improvement plan.

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers? How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

I do support wage parity between SMART and DDOT. I believe that improving our transit system starts by keeping and attracting the best talent with competitive wages. Beyond pay, my campaign's Social Services and Basic Needs focus also includes a pledge to offer wraparound service support to all City of Detroit employees. This means that our drivers and their households will receive targeted housing, food and physical and mental health assistance and resources where they may need them. I know that household stability impacts everything from on-the job performance to the ability to get to work at all, and so my Administration will holistically support DDOT employees and their household needs, which includes but is not limited to simply increasing hourly wages.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

Yes, I will support the countywide tax millage in 2026.

I plan on making sure that my Administration has strong representation advocating for the needs of Detroit as the regional group creates its revenue-sharing models and service improvement projects. I also want to work on leveraging the regional partnership into increased state and federal funding for Detroit. I would like to use this partnership to coordinate routes between SMART and DDOT, adding additional stops and transfers that benefit our residents and reduce duplication between the providers. Secondly, I would explore tracking and traffic control technology to increase bus reliability across the board. Additional priorities are increasing the quality and quantity of bus shelters, implementing additional safety measures on coaches and at bus shelters, and extending hours of operations so that we can simplify our system to better service Detroiters all across the City.

## **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

Yes I will.

I plan to work closely with the County, the state, our legislative representatives and with the federal government to advocate for transit funds for Detroit. I plan to lead a local Transit Task Force, and to participate closely in the regional conversations that are occurring now about a scalable regional transit strategy. We need a strong voice at the table that can take local feedback to our regional partners to find commonalities, and to develop solutions to our common transit issues. I will also advocate that the elimination of the 'opt-out' bill results in more SMART investments and DDOT/SMART joint projects that could help fund some of the improvements that we want to see in the Detroit transit system.

Also, Detroit has attractions and events that people from all over the region should have easy access to, as do our regional partners. I want to create a plan to not only physically enable regional transit, but make regional transit a real commodity by co-marketing the sports, outdoor activities, and arts and culture events that Michiganders would love to share with each other through regional transit opportunities.

## **6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

My transportation plan includes investments in bus shelters, and, necessarily, the sidewalks surrounding these spaces as well. The issue of subpar or non-existent shelters at bus stops is not a new one in Detroit, and some progress has been made to address this. I want to ensure that bus shelters are first and foremost present and in great condition, starting along every major transit line in Detroit.

Then, I will direct DDOT under my administration to explore updating bus shelters - consoles that provide a time of arrival, increased lighting and wifi powered by solar arrays are preferred features, where we can pilot them.

The importance of crosswalks to protect pedestrian safety cannot be understated. I also want to repair and repaint crosswalks starting with the areas that have seen the

highest rates of traffic violence, and ensure that the crosswalk and signage comply with national best practices. My administration will spur these improvements, starting with major transit lines and moving into our neighborhoods.

## **7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

I do support accelerating this plan. Traffic violence has been recognized as a public health issue in many places around the country. I want to ensure that Detroit takes this issue just as seriously. Following the public health model, our local approach should include strong prevention efforts, as well as data-informed interventions that examine the social and environmental contributors to traffic violence.

We have to balance smooth traffic flow with protecting residents who bike to their destinations, just as every other major city has done as they develop equitable transportation systems. I believe that community input and data have to be primary factors in deciding how to prioritize interventions. My Administration will provide data around the corridors and intersections that represent the most frequent danger to bikers. Many times, these are areas where drivers are at increased danger as well. Within those neighborhoods, community members will be gathered to settle upon intersection improvements, speed limits, bike lanes, and a variety of other interventions to improve safety for bikers, pedestrians, and drivers alike. We will not have a one-size fits all solution, but we will have a community-led and data informed effort to create agreed-upon solutions that meet a variety of safety needs within our neighborhoods and corridors.

## **8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

My Restoring Neighborhoods pillar specifically creates what we call Community Anchor Zones, which is a service radius around legacy institutions such as churches and longtime businesses in Detroit. Within these zones, we will prioritize retail, commercial and housing development using an accelerated authorization process

created by my Administration. This will support pockets of fast-tracked, dense development within our neighborhoods and along major transit lines. And, importantly, what will unite these new neighborhood pockets is a transit system that allows Detroiters to quickly travel between where they live, and where they work and play.

I support parking minimum reform and gradual elimination based on service benchmarks. If we want walkable, transit-oriented communities, we need to create an environment where resource density eventually takes precedence over parking. We will need a phased-in approach to realistically address this. We should immediately explore what options exist besides traditional surface lot parking, and whether cost-sharing could be a way to reduce individual construction obligations where we replace surface lots. Consolidating lots into parking decks is one way to do this. Another option that I will ensure that DDOT explores is the Park and Ride system, which is highly effective along short-distance commercial, retail and housing corridors in many other municipalities.

Overall, while we improve our transit system, we do need to assume that many visitors will need to park their cars at the business that they visit. For that, there are ways to reduce the number of surface lots that we have in targeted areas. As DDOT services improve, and as we demonstrate effective workarounds to surface lots, I expect to phase out parking minimums in favor of strategies that fully utilize the new and improved capabilities and timeliness of DDOT services.

## **9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

Yes, I will provide DDOT with this support.

I plan to do three things to ensure consistent leadership and support. One is to talk to DDOT staff to understand the support that they need. We have DDOT staff on all levels who have been with the Department for ten or more years, so there is a wealth of historical knowledge to be gained there. I want to know what has gone well and what has not gone so well. I also want to know what their understanding of 'success' is, and how their performance is gauged. Also, I want to know what resources and support they need in order to be successful on a daily basis.

Two is to continue the conversation with transit advocates about their expectations of DDOT. I will set short and long term goals, and ensure that we establish a work

group between my Administration and those that utilize the service to ensure that we are communicating the latest progress and that are collecting feedback.

Finally, I will ensure that DDOT leadership aligns with the stated needs of DDOT staff, the expectations of riders and stakeholders, and importantly, my Administration's goal of a World Class transit system. I want to be extremely clear that the shared vision is for DDOT to ensure dignity, efficiency and reliability on a local level. This means that as my administration works to explore regional transit, we will first make sure that DDOT leadership understands and aligns with these expectations as well. Within a holistic plan delivered by DDOT leadership or leadership candidates, I want to see that customer service is a priority. Additional supports such as mental health first aid and naloxone training should be requirements for drivers as well. These are just two foundational points of a premier transit system that will in turn be operational priorities. The full support of my Administration, starting with additional funding considerations, will be behind a complete action plan. As for leadership, I will support and work closely with a DDOT leader that will commit to a multi-year term, and has submitted a work plan to my Administration that puts Detroiters first along these exact tenants, and more.

## Candidates for City Council At-Large

Levan Adams, Shakira Hawkins, and Gary Hunter were eliminated in the August primary. Janee Ayers and James Harris did not respond by the deadline provided.

### Mary Waters

Candidate for Detroit City Council At-Large

#### 1. DDOT Investment

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

Yes – I was proud to support the DDOT Reimagined plan at the budget table this past year, and I was disappointed to see DDOT leadership refuse incremental funding. The need is acute for immediate action to improve service, and that means hiring more staff, getting more buses through maintenance and on the road, and improving passenger safety. I am committed to a long-term roadmap for doubling funding, leveraging improvements in local tax collections to help support the short-term increases. However, the intermediate and long-term funding for this must come through partnerships at the regional, state, and federal level.

#### 2. Riders with Disabilities

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

Yes. I worked tirelessly to get paratransit service back on the road when there were contract lapses the other year, and I believe we need to improve the service from where it is today. Continued integration of technology and regional partnerships will help, but it is also critical that we continue to monitor customer service metrics and hold private vendors accountable. Improving sensitivity training for both DDOT employees and contractors will also help build understanding in the organization and also enable better planning and setting of KPIs that accommodate the unique needs of different individuals.

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

Yes. I support wage parity, and have worked on Council to secure raises for our operators. I also fought for installing comprehensive child care support for all DDOT employees, eliminating a barrier for TEOs and other personnel to be as effective as needed. I will continue to work to make not only wages more competitive, but work to improve driver safety and comfort to ensure TEOs have better working conditions to keep them serving our residents.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

Yes. I support a county-wide transit millage, and I also support even greater regional funding for public transit. I believe that we must prioritize areas that are underfunded from state-based PA 51, especially our bus system. I believe these funds should go into both expanding service as well as expanding rider-oriented developments, including more bus shelters.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

Yes. As a long-time transit advocate, and strong supporter of TRU from its inception while I served in the Michigan Legislature, I will continue to work collaboratively and aggressively to boost transit funding at the regional and state level.

### **6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

Yes. I have lobbied for the installation of more bus shelters, as well as benches, and will continue to support them at the budget table. I also have, and will continue, to identify funding to support street and sidewalk repairs, directing the Administration to prioritize areas that are around bus stops.

**7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Yes. I will work on City Council, as I have in my first term, to support complete-street projects that focus development around humans and not automobiles. I will work to support street-scape transformations that provide safety to Detroiters walking, biking, or otherwise moving in our community, such as lane restrictions, the installation of more bike lanes, and expanded medians to control traffic speeds and give people with different abilities more security when crossing streets.

**8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

Yes. I am supportive of the current proposal to adjust zoning to curb parking minimums for new developments and redevelopments.

**9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

I have always been, and will continue to be, a champion for DDOT workers and riders. I will work with the new administration to ensure that there is consistent leadership at DDOT, and that new personnel bring in new best-practices to DDOT that will improve service.

## Coleman A. Young II

Candidate for Detroit City Council At-Large

### 1. DDOT Investment

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

Yes.

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

1) At the local level, we need to enhance revenue / tax collections.

2) We need

a. Public-Private Partnerships,

b. Grant-Funding

c. As well as looking to our State and Federal Partners for grants and appropriations.

3) Fully implementing DDOT's commitment to provide same-day reservations for paratransit riders must be a priority of the next administration.

### 2. Riders with Disabilities

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

Yes.

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

1.) We will make sure that our sidewalks and bus stops are ADA compliant.

2.) We will make sure that our housing is built with universal design.

- 3.) We will ensure that the disabled are treated equitably in their desire for effective transportation.
- 4.) We should implement tactile paving, ADA curbs and bumps, accessible pedestrian signals.
- 5.) First Responder Training for the disabled.
- 6.) Mobile Clinics to address the needs of the disabled onsite.
- 7.) Intersection Cameras so that the perpetrators of vehicular accidents that include the disabled as victims provide necessary documentation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

Yes, but I would like to and need to work with the labor unions on this matter, because this is a negotiated item

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

By working with Labor Unions and the administration to make sure that wages become more competitive.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

Yes.

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

I would like to see most of the money go to buses, shelters, curbs, para-transit and micro-transit services.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

Yes.

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

- 1) Engagement
- 2) Organization
- 3) Reaching out to Legislators in Lansing and the County and to the Lobby Corps.
- 4) Having Virtual and In Person Town Halls to engage the community.
- 5) Reaching out to the Detroit Caucus and having them meet with both chambers and the governor for a Transit presentation.
- 6) Engagement with non-profits around the state and locally.

**6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

Yes.

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

Ensure ADA compliance via inspection and correction.

**7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

Yes.

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Please see my response to Question #2 from above and

- 1) We need to implement the Complete Streets Program,
- 2) We need to pave the sidewalks.
- 3) We need to do a better job of separating parking spaces from the bike lane.
- 4) Ensure that we have more transportation option: Bikes, scooters, ride-share, zip-cars, automated/autonomous vehicles, bus rapid transit, more investment in the transit police, as well as the use of smart technology for cameras and data collection at intersections to predict traffic patterns and prevent accidents.

**8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

We need to reform our parking regulations and improve our zoning process and this is occurring with Director Todd, as we speak.

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

Transit oriented development; Density bonuses in either our Community Benefits Agreements or Developer Agreements.

**9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

This is a decision made by the Administration. I will support the Administration in any way that I can from the legislative branch.

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

To reiterate: This is a decision made by the Administration and we will do all we can to support the Administration in the consistent leadership of DDOT.

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## **Candidates for City Council District 1**

James Tate, the only listed candidate, did not respond by the deadline provided.

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## **Candidates for City Council District 2**

Helena Scott was eliminated in the August primary.

Angela Whitfield Calloway did not respond by the deadline provided.

### **Roy McCalister, Jr.**

#### **DDOT Investment**

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

Yes, I support improving and expanding DDOT service, but doubling the budget alone will not guarantee better outcomes. The DDOT Reimagined Plan is a good starting framework, yet effective service depends not only on funding but also on having enough qualified drivers, consistent maintenance, and meaningful investments in training particularly in conflict resolution, safety, and customer service. I would pursue a balanced funding strategy by leveraging federal transportation grants, state partnerships, and responsible local budget allocations, ensuring Detroit riders receive reliable service. My focus is on efficiency, workforce readiness, and equitable access before committing to simply doubling costs.

## **2. Riders with Disabilities**

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

Yes, I support getting same-day paratransit services on the road as soon as possible. As a former and returning Detroit City Council Member, I have consistently advocated for expanding and strengthening paratransit services because one in five Detroiters lives with a disability and deserves safe, timely, and respectful transportation. Beyond funding, this requires contracting with professional, passionate paratransit providers, ensuring drivers receive specialized training, and creating accountability standards for service quality. I will collaborate with community advocates, regional partners, and transportation agencies to expand routes, increase accessibility, and guarantee that disabled Detroiters can reach destinations both within and beyond the city.

## **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

Yes, I support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers. Competitive pay is critical to reducing turnover, improving safety, and ensuring better rider experience. As a former Detroit City Council member and Chair of the Internal Operations Committee, I addressed driver protection, rising crashes, and costly lawsuits, while advocating to the mayor for increased training, benefits, wages, and improved bus cleanliness. Returning to office, I will continue this collaboration by prioritizing budget adjustments, pursuing state and federal transit funding, and collaborating with unions to secure fair wages that make DDOT positions competitive, stable, and attractive for long-term service.

## **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

Yes, I will support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026 because equitable investment in regional transit is essential for Detroit's growth. Returning to City Council, I will collaborate closely with Wayne County Commissioners to ensure Detroit receives its fair share of resources. I will advocate that revenue be directed toward expanding bus frequency, improving paratransit services, enhancing safety measures, and supporting driver training and retention. Additionally, funds must be used to improve infrastructure, such as shelters, lighting, and accessibility so riders experience safe, reliable, and respectful service that connects Detroiters to jobs, education, healthcare, and opportunities throughout the region.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

Yes, I will commit to working collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels. As a Detroit City Council Member, I have visited and observed other state transportation systems, which makes it clear that Detroit must demand the same level of investment and quality. While Detroit should invest in its own high-quality rapid transit, these efforts must be supplemented by regional and state partnerships. I will advocate Lansing and across metro municipalities to secure funding, emphasizing how the DDOT Reimagined Plan can serve as a blueprint for connecting Detroit to Ann Arbor, Lansing, and beyond.

### **6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

Yes, I fully commit to ensuring Detroit's sidewalks and bus stops are accessible to residents of all ages and abilities. Accessible, comfortable mobility begins long before a rider boards the bus t starts with safe sidewalks, curb cuts, well-marked crosswalks, and dignified bus stops. Returning to City Council, I will prioritize infrastructure investments that include paved landing pads, shelters, and seating, while partnering with community organizations and disability advocates to set clear accessibility standards. I will also

network with state and federal partners to secure funding, ensuring our public spaces reflect respect, safety, and inclusion for every Detroiter.

### **7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Yes, I commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure outlined in the City's *Streets for People* plan. Detroit's streets must serve everyone, drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians safely and equitably. Returning to Council, I will work collaboratively with the Detroit and State Departments of Transportation, law enforcement agencies, and community partners to expand protected bike lanes, crosswalk improvements, and traffic-calming measures. I will also advocate for stronger pedestrian education programs and enhanced enforcement against reckless driving. Together, these efforts will reduce traffic violence, save lives, and create a safer, more walkable, and connected Detroit for all residents.

### **8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

Yes, I support eliminating outdated parking minimums for new or redevelopment projects, especially in areas like the Avenue of Fashion and McNichols, where parking challenges hinder growth. As a returning Council Member, I will advocate for policies that promote higher-density, mixed-use development near major transit lines. Mechanisms include zoning reforms to encourage walkable, transit-oriented communities, tax incentives for developers who build housing and retail near transit, and investments in structured parking that free up land for businesses and housing. By prioritizing people over surface lots, we can create vibrant corridors that strengthen mobility, economic opportunity, and neighborhood vitality.

## 9. Appointments and Leadership

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

Yes, I will support efforts to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT. As a Councilmember, I worked directly with two Transportation Directors, including participating in a confirmation process and meeting with both to address pressing concerns. I also engaged the Mayor on the importance of appointing leaders with strong knowledge of DDOT operations, a commitment to Detroit residents, and collaboration with DDOT drivers and ATU Local 26. While the Mayor appoints directors, City Council must provide oversight, accountability, and resources. Returning to Council, I will continue advocating for leadership stability, professional development, and transparent communication to strengthen DDOT's long-term effectiveness.

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## Candidates for City Council District 3

Cranstana Anderson did not respond by the deadline provided.

### Scott Benson

Candidate for Detroit City Council, District 3

#### DDOT Investment

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

Yes.

But, any funding increases have to allow for a balanced budget. It is unlikely that Detroit will be able to make this type of commitment due to impending budget

reductions based upon reduced tax revenue. I am, however, committed to improving our transit system and creating a system of choice, rather than a system of last resort.

## **2. Riders with Disabilities**

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

Yes.

Same-day paratransit service is essential to ensuring full access and independence for residents with disabilities. I will continue to work with Detroit Disability Power and DDOT leadership to expand vehicle availability, improve driver training, and modernize scheduling technology. I will also support funding for accessible sidewalks, curb ramps, and shelter pads to ensure mobility to and from bus stops.

## **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

Yes.

I support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers. To make these positions more competitive, I'll advocate for a phased pay increase tied to service performance and retention benchmarks. We must also invest in training, mental health supports, and workplace safety to make DDOT employment sustainable and respected.

## **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

Yes.

I will support the 2026 Wayne Countywide transit millage. Transit tax revenue should expand evening and weekend service, improve bus frequency in high-need corridors, and increase investment in DDOT's workforce and infrastructure. Equitable funding must ensure Detroiters see visible improvements in reliability, safety, and comfort.

## **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

Yes.

I will work collaboratively at the regional and state levels to expand transit funding, advocating for Detroit's fair share of resources. I'll build coalitions with neighboring communities, business leaders, and advocacy organizations to advance a unified regional transit plan that connects Detroiters to jobs, education, and opportunity.

## **6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

Yes.

I am committed to ensuring all Detroit sidewalks and bus stops are fully accessible. I will prioritize city contracts to repair sidewalks and add curb ramps, expand partnerships with bus shelter providers, and leverage federal infrastructure grants for complete streets projects. Every Detroiters deserves a safe, comfortable, and dignified wait for their bus.

## **7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Yes.

I fully support accelerating the Streets for People plan. I'll continue pushing for more protected bike lanes, improved crosswalks, and traffic-calming infrastructure in District 3

and across the city. I'll also work with neighborhood groups and schools to identify and redesign dangerous intersections to save lives.

### **8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

Yes.

I support eliminating parking minimums for new development and encouraging mixed-use, higher-density projects along major transit corridors. I'll promote zoning updates, transit-oriented development incentives, and partnerships with developers that include affordable housing, local business space, and reduced reliance on cars.

### **9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

Yes.

Consistent leadership is critical to DDOT's long-term success. I'll support stable executive appointments, transparent performance evaluations, and adequate operational resources to retain qualified leaders. Strong management, clear goals, and accountability will build trust with riders and workers alike.

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## **Candidates for City Council District 4**

**Latisha Johnson**, the only listed candidate, did not respond by the deadline provided.

## **Candidates for City Council District 5**

**George Adams Jr., Michael Hartt, Esther Haugabook, Tatjana Jackson, and Michael Ri'chard** were eliminated in the August primary.

**Willie Burton** and **Renata Miller** did not respond by the deadline provided.

## Candidates for City Council District 6

Tyrone Carter did not respond by the deadline provided.

### Gabriela Santiago-Romero

Candidate for Detroit City Council, District 6

#### 1. DDOT Investment

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

Yes.

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

I support the creation of a downtown entertainment tax, which would help to generate substantial revenue from concert venues and professional sports teams. Additionally, this needs to be a priority of the DDOT, the Mayor and City Council. I motioned to invest the funded gap that would double DDOT and was turned down by both DDOT and Council. We can prioritize this in our general fund.

#### 2. Riders with Disabilities

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

Yes.

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

In 2024, I was proud to submit a resolution supporting the purchase of low-emissions, wheelchair-accessible vehicles for paratransit services. I will continue to work with my colleagues and the mayoral administration to ensure that riders with disabilities receive the services they need. As the chair of Public Health and Safety, our committee receives quarterly updates on our Paratransit services and I continuously advocate for better service. Paratransit is moving towards same-day services due to community and council advocacy.

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

Yes.

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

I'm proud to have consistently supported budget increases for DDOT, including dedicated funding for competitive wages. Moving forward, I will continue to advocate for budgets that prioritize fair compensation and work toward achieving wage parity between DDOT and SMART drivers. I have previously submitted inquiries to Human Resources to ensure that they are working with DDOT on addressing this issue. Drivers and their union will also need to make difficult decisions. SMART was able to raise its hourly rate, but unions decided to lose out on their pensions to do so.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

Yes.

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

I believe we should be leveraging the transit tax revenue to address the most urgent of DDOT's needs, including insufficient bus drivers, a shortage of bus shelters, and improved bus stop accessibility. I am proud that our recently passed budget makes progress towards all of these goals, but we must leverage this millage to ensure that our transit system is meeting the needs of Detroiters. Our transit advocates have also called for a low-income fare discount or free ridership program and free rides for school-age children, which is something we could pursue if we're able to stabilize our core infrastructure and operations using millage dollars.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

Yes.

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

I support Governor Gretchen Whitmer's MI Road Ahead Plan, which proposes a \$3 billion investment in transportation, with 10% dedicated to public transit. While I recognize that the House passed a road funding bill with inadequate transit funding, I am committed to advocating for a stronger investment. I commit to meeting with our local delegation of state senators to ensure that the Senate version of the bill includes increased, sustainable funding for transit.

**6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

Yes.

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

This budget season, I was proud to support increased funding for sidewalk repairs and bus shelters. Going forward, I will continue to listen to residents about the specific infrastructure challenges in their neighborhoods and push to leverage local, state, and federal funding for infrastructure projects. I'll also continue championing budgets that fund more shelters and accessibility upgrades at DDOT stops. This year I invested an additional \$2 million in bus shelters. It's unacceptable that so many of our bus stops lack shelters, considering the long waits our riders face in harsh winter conditions. My office will also continue to explore options to utilize renewable energy to heat our bus shelters during the winter.

**7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

Yes.

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

I support the implementation of traffic calming measures like speed humps and curb extensions on streets where we want to increase foot, wheelchair, and bike access. These measures have been proven to reduce motor vehicle speed and volume by an average of 20%. Additionally, I am supportive of a slow streets program, which restricts portions of mainly residential streets to local and emergency traffic and lower speed limits. In 2024, I secured \$1.45M for a Slow Streets Improvements project in 48217. So far, more than 645 flags of sidewalk have been replaced in Phase 1. In Phase 2, we're set to repair more sidewalks and install an ADA Detectable Warning Surface. I'm dedicated to continuing to fund and improve safety for residents who walk, roll, and bike in Detroit, and by doing so, encouraging residents to find viable transportation alternatives to cars.

**8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

Yes.

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

I would support a combination of zoning reform to allow greater residential and mixed-use density on surface parking lots, tax incentives/abatements for projects that include truly affordable housing near transit lines, and ensuring our land bank is strategically acquiring property near transit lines to avoid speculative buying that delays meaningful development.

**9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

Yes.

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

I look forward to continuing to work with our new DDOT Director, who has served our community for years at the Detroit People Mover. I will continue to prioritize strong, consistent communication between City Council, the Mayor's Office, and the Department to ensure that we are adequately meeting their needs. As the chair of PHS who oversees DDOTs contracts, I work closely with our Director to receive timely reports that share the status of our transit services and the needs council can support to better service.

## Candidates for City Council District 7

**Bobbi Johnson** and **Regina Willis-Ross** were eliminated in the August primary. **Karen Whitsett** did not respond by the deadline provided.

### **Denzel Hines-McCampbell**

Candidate for Detroit City Council, District 7

#### **1. DDOT Investment**

**Do you support doubling the DDOT budget in order to double DDOT bus service, as called for in the DDOT Reimagined plan, by 2030?**

Yes

**How would you develop the funding to achieve it?**

We must look at all avenues to fund public transportation. The freedom of movement is essential to getting folks to better opportunities and having access to all of the City of Detroit and ultimately, the metro region. I would make sure our budget is prioritizing the services our residents need, first and foremost. From there, I would work with the administration to ensure we are engaging stakeholders and philanthropy in the community to help fund public transit as well. From there, I would be an advocate with our elected officials on the state and federal level to pull down as many funds as possible.

#### **2. Riders with Disabilities**

**Do you support getting same-day paratransit services on the road ASAP?**

Yes

**What steps will you take to ensure that disabled Detroiters can access the places they need to go in and outside the city?**

I believe in centering the most vulnerable and marginalized when it comes to policymaking. Riders with disabilities are severely impacted when access to timely a paratransit is not available. I hope that the same day paratransit service will be in full swing before the next city council takes office, but I would work to ensure that that is up

and running ASAP. I would also work with DDOT to explore ways to expand paratransit further out to other areas. I think above all, riders with disabilities and all transit riders deserve a regional system with seamless services – I am advocate for that.

### **3. Competitive Wages**

**Do you support wage parity between SMART and DDOT drivers?**

Yes

**How will you improve wages for DDOT employees to make positions more competitive?**

Although city council does not have a direct say in collective bargaining, I would work to make sure we are allocating the necessary funding to DDOT to pay our workers the wages they deserve.

### **4. Transit Funding on the Wayne County Ballot**

**Will you support the Wayne Countywide transit tax millage in 2026?**

Yes

**How would you like to see the Wayne County transit tax revenue used to improve transit service in the City of Detroit?**

First, I would like the revenue to increase routes and frequency for Detroiters and all Wayne County residents, including routes inside the city and routes connecting to our communities in the county. I would also like the revenue to be used to truly connect Detroit to Washtenaw County through public transit.

### **5. Building Regional and State Support for Transit**

**Will you commit to work collaboratively and aggressively for increased transit funding at the state and regional levels?**

Yes

**How will you build support for additional transit funding measures in Lansing and the metro region?**

Organizing. Organizing other elected officials on the local and state level. Partnering with transit advocates to educate residents in Detroit and across the region on the importance of a regional system. Brining examples from other major regions to show what can be possible and using my platform to lift up the need.

**6. Bus Shelters and Accessibility**

**Will you commit to ensuring all of Detroit's sidewalks and bus stop stops are fully accessible to Detroiters of all ages and disabilities?**

Yes

**How will you improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops?**

I would work with my fellow councilmembers and the Administration to develop a plan to repair sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops starting with those with the most critical need. I understand that Detroit has a lot of infrastructure and upgrading infrastructure is expensive, but we must start somewhere before the situation gets even more dire.

**7. Safe Streets for All**

**Do you commit to accelerating the build-out of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as called for in the City's Streets for People plan?**

Yes

**How else will you improve safety for Detroiters walking, rolling, and biking on our streets?**

Many residents in District 7 are concerned about safety in our neighborhoods, especially when it comes to speeding and reckless driving. I am committed to working towards safe streets and infrastructure for pedestrian bicycle travel. I believe we must also involve residents in the design and education on how to effective use such infrastructure as well.

## **8. Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use**

**Would you support eliminating parking minimums for new or re-development?**

I need to learn more about the city's parking minimum laws, but I am in favor of higher density development and increasing mobility and the ability for folks to access housing, businesses, and schools regardless of access to a car.

**What mechanisms would you use to encourage denser development, especially along major transit lines?**

I believe we have to use the city's leverage to encourage denser development and development that addresses the needs of our residents in the neighborhood. This must be development that is accessible by walking and are along major transit lines. Upon taking office, I would convene intentional conversations with residents, small businesses, community stakeholders, and city governmental entities to explore and define what is needed in District 7 and encourage and push for that development to occur along and close to major transit lines to ensure they are accessible.

## **9. Appointments and Leadership**

**Will you provide DDOT with the support to provide consistent leadership?**

Yes

**What steps will you take to ensure consistent leadership at DDOT and provide the department with the support it needs?**

While the mayor has control over who they want to lead departments such as DDOT, I would be a true partner in both ensuring that our budget matches the collective priorities for public transit.