



**I BIKE, I RIDE TRANSIT, I WALK, I VOTE.**

## **CLEVELAND CANDIDATES AND MOBILITY**



**Candidate Name:** Rebecca Maurer

**Office Seeking:** Ward 12

**Q1. Bicycling/walking and bike/pedestrian infrastructure enhances quality of life and addresses issues such as affordability, equity, access, health, and the safety of our streets. What can the City of Cleveland and you as an elected official do to actively encourage more people to bike and walk?**

**A1.** People walk and bike and walking and biking is safe and accessible for adults & kids.

There are a whole host of tools at the City's disposal. As a member of Council, I will lean heavily on leveraging proven policies adopted by other cities to increase biking and walking. I think the most important response is embedded in the first part of the question -- that is, we must invest in building the infrastructure to invite residents to safely bike and walk in neighborhoods across all 17 wards. This means protected and well designed bike lanes for a start. Additionally, I would encourage the new administration to consider partnering with CMSD to integrate educational programming focused on the biking skills and maintenance of students.

**Q2. People bike and walk when it's safe, comfortable, and connects to the places they need to go. Cleveland's bike infrastructure is still disjointed. In your opinion, where are the most urgent gaps in our bike network and what steps do we need to take to close these gaps?**

**A2.** I would work to fulfill the Clean & Green streets policy put forward by NOACA:

<https://www.noaca.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=25242>. In particular, I will emphasize the need for connection and transition options between different modes of transit (i.e. biking lanes to transit centers, making sure that designated bike paths on main thoroughfares and designated bike paths are connected)

**Q3. Cities across the country are installing protected bike lanes, bike lanes with physical separation between bike and automobile traffic, to encourage more people to ride and make roadways safer for all users. Do you support the installation of protected bike lanes on Cleveland's streets? Please explain why.**

**A3.** <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2019/05/29/protect-yourself-separated-bike-lanes-means-safer-streets-study-says/>

A 13-year study from multiple cities found that protected bike lanes are safer for cyclists and promote bicycling. As we move towards a future with more protected bike lanes, I am comfortable with installing more on-board bike lanes, but we should keep our eyes on a long-term plan with more protected paths.

**Q4. People take public transit when it's frequent, fast, reliable, safe, clean, and comfortable. The NextGen bus system redesign goes a long way to improving on this, but there is still much to be done. In your opinion, what steps do we need to take to close these gaps?**

**A4.** I've taken the new NextGen route (the new Route 18 comes to my ward, for instance), and agree with the premise of this question that Next Gen is an improvement but doesn't go far enough. Personally, I would like to see us go to a fare-free system and advocate at the statehouse for the funding we need to expand service and frequency.

**Q5. Public transportation riders want a safe and comfortable place to wait for their bus or train and easy access to get there. Yet, often a bus stop is little more than a sign and pole stuck in the middle of a treelawn. How would you work to improve bus shelters and train stations and the sidewalks and pathways to get there?**

**A5.** Bus stops are a critical piece of infrastructure. We've seen some improvements with shelters specially along high-frequency named routes like the Metro Health line and the CSU line. I would be excited to bring a similar line to Ward 12 along Broadway Avenue. Moreover, The City should consider partnering with the GCRTA in investing resources from the American Rescue Plan in building this network.

If it's not done already, we should ID the number of the bus stops that are "signs with poles" and then set a goal for how many are converted to shelters every 6 months.

**Q6. About 25 percent of Cleveland households have no access to an automobile, and are dependent on public transportation/biking/walking. Peer cities are advancing multimodal transportation to improve safety, access to jobs, community health, the environment, and attract population. Have you ever been transit-dependent or car-free? What's your vision for public transportation and increased active transportation in Cleveland, how will you advance it, and how will you keep it functional year around?**

**A6.** Yes, I've been transit-dependent and car-free in three cities -- Chicago, San Francisco, and New York. I haven't been car-free in Cleveland because of my jobs, but i'd be game to work with Bike Cleveland and CPT to institute a "Car free week" where elected officials get around all week on public transit and use that as a jumping off point to engage with riders and bikers on next steps for our public transit system.

**Q7. Fare revenue makes up about 10% of all funding for GCRTA while the agency spends \$1.8 million on police fare enforcement. Meanwhile, agencies like LA Metro and Kansas City are exploring free fares and other systems such as in Pittsburgh have introduced low-income fare discount programs. How much would you personally pay to ride public transit to work? How fast would you expect the trip to be door-to-door?**

**A7.** As mentioned above, I support moving us to a fare-free system and I think we should have a goal of promoting the number of folks who have access to jobs within a 60 minute bus ride of their home.

**Q8. Vision Zero is the principle that transportation should focus on safety of all road users (cyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and motorists) as a foundation, and that the only acceptable number of deaths on the road is zero. The City of Cleveland is in the process of creating a Vision Zero Action Plan and committing to eliminating all serious injury and fatal crashes in the City. Do you see Vision Zero as a priority and how will you advance it?**

**A8.** Yes, and I would look to Bike Cleveland for expertise on how to best craft and ensure proper implementation and oversight of a Cleveland Vision Zero plan. Additionally, I would be happy to consider codifying essential parts of the plan, if appropriate, as an ordinance.

**Q9. The HealthLine, as originally planned and operated, used what's called a "proof-of-payment" fare collection system, which GCRTA enforced with armed police until the practice was declared unconstitutional in 2017. In response, CPT has called for the creation of a transit ambassador program consisting of unarmed, non-deputized civilians to conduct fare enforcement but also to serve as another set of eyes on the ground and a smiling face to help guide riders, similar to the Downtown Cleveland Alliance Ambassadors. Do you support the creation of a transit ambassador program as CPT has proposed?**

**A9.** Yes

**Q10. Fare evasion is currently a 4th degree criminal misdemeanor, punishable up to 30 days in jail and up to \$250 fine while parking tickets are treated as civil offenses, not criminal offenses, with a small fee and no jail time. Do you support decriminalizing fare evasion?**

**A10.** Yes

**Q11. There was a racial reckoning in 2020. How do you envision working toward safe streets for biking, walking and public transportation users while also reducing the dependence on armed officers to enforce traffic laws?**

**A11.** I'd be interested in a broader conversation on this topic, but overall, I found this article from the Washington Post very helpful

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/04/16/remove-police-traffic-stops/>

"Get police out of the business of enforcing traffic laws. Rather than continuing to allow weaponized police officers with a tradition of anti-Black violence to enforce traffic laws, we should create dedicated traffic agencies whose sole mission is road safety. As University of Arkansas law professor Jordan Blair Woods argues in a forthcoming Stanford Law Review article, new traffic safety agencies, staffed by

unarmed employees, could enforce routine traffic laws with less violence and damage to communities of color. "

**Q12. Do you oppose or support a property tax levy in Cuyahoga County to raise additional funding for GCRTA?**

**A12.** Oppose

**Q13. Do you oppose or support a sales tax levy in Cuyahoga County to raise additional funding for GCRTA?**

**A13.** Oppose

**Q14. What should GCRTA's top priority be with any additional funding secured?**

**A14.** I need to have a better understanding from Bike Cleveland, GCRTA, and CPT on the nuances of the sales tax vs. property tax issue. In particular, I've been very active in ways that property tax increases have disproportionately lead to foreclosures on Black and Brown residents But historically sales taxes are also far more regressive. I'd like to learn a bit more about this issue before deciding.

**Q15. Suburban sprawl has been a major theme in greater Cleveland's decades of decline, and as the population spreads out, maintaining transit service becomes less efficient. How will you proactively integrate land use policies into your transportation agenda?**

**A15.** Cleveland City Council need to be more proactive about creating relationships with suburban city council members. We are all in this together. But currently Cleveland is dealing with the issue by ignoring the existence of suburbs.

First, we need to be advocating at the state level to curtail sprawl.

Second, we need to tax cars and parking so that people coming in from the suburbs are contributing dollars for investment in transit and bike access.

Third, we are a very fragmented county so I would also be interested in broader conversations about regional government. Ultimately, we need to demand more from the county and the state because at the end of the day, Cleveland City Council doesn't have control over the the suburbs.

**Q16. The current GCRTA board president and city of Cleveland appointee, Rev. Charles Lucas, is a regular paratransit rider and the newest member of the board and Cuyahoga County appointee, Roberta Duarte, is a regular bus rider. CPT believes it is important that these voices are represented**

**on the board of trustees and would like to see more riders appointed to the board. The city of Cleveland has the largest share (4) of appointments to the 10-member board. Will you commit to appointing more riders to the GCRTA board?**

**A16.** Of course!

**Q17. People care about street safety and bicycling, transit and walking issues. Why should these voters vote for you?**

**A17.** Because I'm one of you. I bike from my house all over the city. I take public transit. I know we deserve safe, accessible, clean modes of transit other than cars. Let's build a better Cleveland together.