



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

CLEVELAND CANDIDATES AND MOBILITY



Candidate Name: Azel Bolden

Office Seeking: Ward 2

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. As elected to office what I can do to help is provide more information and inform on reasons how this helps enhance the conditions of life. Creating a better environment and place to live with less pollution. Also show how through this we can help the city create revenue and also give a return on the investment of residents saving money to use these areas of transportation.

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. What I believe we have to do is inform the community of the project and the idea. What it is bringing to the area, build and add to the main roads. Also take ideas from the residents to see what ideas they would like to see being that this will directly impact their every day life.

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. Yes i believe this is a more then needed because if we are going to cater to providing the lanes, we see the drivers and dangers this put our bikers at this would be a way we can encourage riders they are safe and to get out and ride more often. The most important persons now would be the bikers with the way things are set up protecting the pedestrian is always the goal with providing safety and security.

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. There are many of steps that we have to take in order to bridge this gap of covering all of these concerns, but what we want to do is work towards a better future and start small and chop away. One

thing we can do is encourage more Cleaning stations within our public transportation system, speaking with some of those individuals who do ride the public transportation system they have mentioned being safe and clean. One of the ideas is to implement the sanitation stations with the season of virus we are in and looking to not spread germs we can add places on the public transportation system where there is a hand sanitizer cleaning station to keep germs down and keep the spread down. What we have to do as well is make sure our system is affordable to those who need public transportation.

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. As elected I will ensure that as we can understand the amount of troubles we have that we need to see more visibility of the transit police taking care of the shelters and riders needs. Also we want to ensure the paths that our residents are walking and taking to wait on the bus is lighted and also a clean open area with no vacant places close for access or opportunity for troubling situations as we have witness around our community more now then ever. Also we want to make sure these areas are being covered with a camera access rather city cameras or new ones within places where we can cover these areas to ensure safety. Also something I will work towards is placing call buttons in the area to notify authorities in area.

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 had many times in life and for quite a while in my youth I rode the bus around and used it as my stepping stones for getting around because I believed me making the sacrifice to take the bud would lead me to my car. The one thing to keep something going is to invest in it and make it worth the people who you are attracting. so we have to invest in the public system and we see done on Euclid and there is a direct return on the investment for everyone.

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. A trip to work I would say \$5 and expect trip to be hour to hour and half. As elected I will work to ensure that we are spending money to benefit the people and not just the city.

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 I see Vision Zero as a priority to the community seeing that this is another way we can ensure safety to the community. I will be behind this vision to push it forward and what I can do is to make sure to inform my community and also come up with more ways to secure riders safety. starting with the separating of riders should be good start to bridging this gap and bring change.

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. No

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. The only way to ensure safety if we have the set up with reducing the armed officers is to increase cameras and safety measures like call buttons being installed in the area that will contact the authorities to come.

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

A12. Support

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

A13. Support

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

A14. To Make sure that there is a return on the investment and see that the people's needs get met by asking and using strategic information to create plans for funding with the people we are planning for more involved. My top priority is seeing the prices more affordable for the community and safer and cleaner rides to make residents want to take a trip on the public bus even if they have a vehicle.

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. Well one of the biggest issues that I feel we have is that most of our city offices don't work together to see where we can do more with less is what I like to say. One way we can use this is to create places that are safe and utilize what we have to keep the area clear of any chances that we see an opportunity for trouble. Maybe even create new and better places for our riders.

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. What I will do is commit to ensuring the voice is being heard. If there comes a need for this and it makes sense for all parties and includes and develops enhancements I would commit to appointing those needed to provide equality.

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

A17. These voters should vote for me because I understand the issues of this community and have grown up around here to see it go from a striving community with a vision to now where we have leaders that are sitting back and seeing what's happening with no moves to create change. I am willing, ready and able to get the job done with honesty, integrity and transparency. My goal before I left for college in which I returned home with my BA in Economics was to go and obtain skills and come home to better my community and it is time to work.