



**Candidate Name:** Basheer Jones

**Office Seeking:** Mayor

**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.** I think Cleveland needs more bike lanes and walking paths as well as to install more bike racks on city government properties and encourage private business owners to install more bike racks. As an elected official, I would be willing to implement a study to determine best locations for more lanes, paths and racks then do my best to develop where feasible.

**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 think the most urgent gaps are the lack of bike lanes on main streets and connecting corridors. At minimum, installing bike lanes on these roadways will make it safer for cyclists on these routes.

**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.** I would support protected bike lanes. Protected bike lanes make the roads safer for everyone, and are proven to reduce fatalities.

**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 believe GCRTA will need to do a better job at reaching out to the community to determine rider's needs and how to best serve them.

**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.** I would work closely with GCRTA to determine what's feasible and how we the city can provide support if necessary to ensure we are providing the best access for riders.

**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 have been transit-dependent and car-free. But, that does not make me a public transportation expert. However, I am open and willing to listen to the experts, hear their recommendations, and do as much as I can as mayor to help implement the best ideas - those that make our city safer and greater.

**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.** I think the current rate is fair. It's cheaper than a gallon of gas. However, I do think an increase would begin to become problematic for many Cleveland residents. It's hard to say how fast I expect the trip to be from door to door since the speed of the trip depends on its distance as well as time of day and number of stops. But, if inside the city core, I would imagine it should be under a half an hour.

**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.** An average of 37 traffic fatalities and six people seriously injured per week in Cleveland are extremely high. So, yes, I do see the Vision Zero Action Plan as a priority. I will advance this initiative by first following up on the work already done by the city then by making sure it receives the attention and resources necessary to see it through.

**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 envision listening to the experts to hear what are the best recommendations then examining how we can best implement them.

**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.** Making sure buses are clean and safe and keeping fares affordable.

**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.**

Land use policies should always be taken into consideration when developing a transportation agenda. I will make sure we are always consulting with our commissioner of planning as well as the county planning commission.

**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.** I think there should be a balance of riders as well as professionals and business leaders on GCRTA board.

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

**A17.** I ride a bicycle. So, I am just as much concerned about road safety as any other cyclist. I will actively listen to the concerns of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians as well as infrastructure and transportation experts then work to implement the practices that will make Cleveland safer and better.