



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

## **CLEVELAND CANDIDATES AND MOBILITY**



**Candidate Name:** Justin Bibb

**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.** To encourage more residents to walk or ride their bikes, we must do simple infrastructure upgrades like adding protected bike lanes to increase safety and repairing cracked sidewalks to reduce walking hazards, particularly for our seniors. Basic city services are a public safety issue too and as mayor, I'll prioritize infrastructure upgrades like this to reduce our reliance on cars and actively encourage more people to bike and walk.

**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.** There are very few protected bike lanes in Cleveland, this is the biggest and most dangerous gap in our bike network - I would start there. To develop a cohesive and connected bike network, the next step must be to conduct a network analysis to target and prioritize connections between neighborhoods and Downtown and we can apply for state and federal grant dollars to fill in the gaps - this is a big opportunity we are missing right now. Finally, we need to change how we approach traffic engineering, it's antiquated and we need to be ahead of the curve when it comes to planning and implementation. In my opinion, these are the most urgent gaps and opportunities.

**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, absolutely. Protected bike lanes are a no brainer. We shouldn't leave a rider's safety to chance. I support the installation of protected bike lanes because they save lives, reduce traffic incidents, increase the level of comfort for new cyclists and benefit all road users.

**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.** The NextGen bus system redesign is an important step in the right direction but there is still a gap in mobility across Cleveland. NextGen is RTA's first comprehensive system redesign since 1975, it shouldn't take nearly half a century to revisit our city's transit infrastructure. The same route analysis should be applied now to our railways, bike and path trails to ensure that we have a cohesive mobility strategy going forward.

**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 mayor, I would work with the County and seek community input to identify and prioritize shelters for high traffic stops to improve conditions for riders in transit.

**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.** Growing up, I used to be embarrassed about the beat up Cavalier that we had to start with a screwdriver but my mom couldn't afford to fix it. On the days it didn't start, we were transit dependent. Later in life, I lived car-free in some of America's biggest cities including New York and Washington DC. When I returned to Cleveland, I lived without a car for a year. I understand that having access to an automobile is a barrier to education, employment and healthcare because I've lived it. Through my personal experience, I've seen what works and I've seen what doesn't. My vision for public transportation in Cleveland starts with planning for a 15 minute city, expanding high frequency public transit so that it is functional year round, and making our streets safer and more usable for pedestrians and riders. It aligns with Bike Cleveland's Active Transportation Vision for Cleveland core values and intends to make Cleveland the most bikeable and walkable city in the midwest.

**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 fully support free or highly subsidized transit for low-income riders and I would pay for it by generating new sources of revenue from smart parking meters, which I plan to install all across the city, replacing coin operated meters.

When I worked Downtown, I often took the HealthLine to work and paid \$5 per day and it took between 10 to 15 minutes. For full-time workers, the current monthly fares are \$99 - that's too much and wait times are much longer. Door to door trips should be no more than 15 minutes, as we reimagine Cleveland to become a 15 min 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, we must stay laser focused on achieving Vision Zero. As mayor, my first priority is to get back to the basics and that means prioritizing infrastructure improvements like adding traffic calming elements like speed humps, high visibility signs and crosswalks to our most hazardous streets, which have been primarily identified on the East Side. To advance Vision Zero, I would advocate for federal dollars from the Infrastructure Bill to repair and upgrade the Kinsman Road and East 55th Street roadway and other hazardous streets across the city to prevent future injuries and fatalities.

**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.** The most frequent interaction an average citizen has with police is a traffic stop and the model of armed transit police perpetuates the same racial bias. We need unarmed traffic enforcement officers to encourage more people to walk, ride and take public transit.

**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.** Support

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

**A14.** Expanding high-frequency transit to give residents more options, reduce wait times and increase ridership. Residents who are transit-dependent to get to work, buy groceries, or go to the doctors deserve a public transit system that is truly there for them. It is central to improving economic and health outcomes.

**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.** Public transit is one factor in Cleveland's population decline as we continue to lose young families to the suburbs. My transportation agenda will prioritize partnerships with the County, Chamber and NOACA to develop a larger regional strategy for mobility to ensure our systems are connected and well funded. If we have any chance of bringing residents back to Cleveland, this must be a priority.

As mayor, I'll also incentivize the use of public transit by updating zoning codes and incentivizing development in neighborhoods that haven't seen investment for generations to build more transit hubs across the city. I will instruct my Director of City Planning to develop and apply a 15-minute city vision for Cleveland, which recognizes that transportation and land use policies are inextricably tied together. Every resident should be able to walk to their job, school, grocery store or doctor within 15 minutes and land use policies play a critical role in incentivizing this development.

**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.** Yes, riders understand the pain points of the GCRTA system better than anyone. I believe in appointing board members on merit and having frontline experience using public transit is a key part of that.

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

**A17.** As a former Board Member of the GCRTA, I fought for equitable public transit and greater transparency. I launched a technology committee before the pandemic to livestream board meetings, helped stop a fare increase, advocated for body cameras on transit police and added wi-fi to buses. I'm asking for your vote because I am a proven leader in advancing a transportation agenda. I know how important it is in the daily lives of our residents to get to work, school, the grocery store etc. If we get this right, outcomes will improve across the board.