

Candidate Name: Rebecca Maurer

Ward: 5

1. In 2024, more than 600 people walking or biking in the city were struck by drivers. In 2022, the City adopted Vision Zero, committing to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2032—yet there is still no dedicated annual budget for traffic calming. During budget season, would you advocate for increased funding for street safety improvements?

Of course. I've put money additional discretionary money into speed bumps and traffic calming in my current ward and would do the same in Ward 5. I think one thing to note is that the annual budget mostly goes to salaries and I think we'd want to make sure that there is capital improvement money set aside for traffic calming.

2. Last year, the City adopted Cleveland Moves (our city's new Mobility Plan) and, with that, committed to building 50 miles of low-stress bike facilities over the next 3 years. Protected bike lanes are a proven safety countermeasure for not just bike riders, but people walking and driving as well. Will you support upgrading existing bike lanes in your ward to be physically separated from car lanes?

Yes, absolutely.

3. In 2022, City Council changed the name of its Transportation Committee to the Transportation and Mobility Committee. Still, the vast majority of legislation that this committee sees is related to the airports and the Port of Cleveland. What role do you see this committee playing going forward?

Well, I serve on the committee and I think that the legislation is a function of the airport and the Port of Cleveland having a high volume of very average legislation that they need to adopt to continue their day to day operations (money for snow plowing at the airport, for instance). By comparison, multi-modal transit options including RTA, bikes, and scooters don't require regular legislative updates. All of the RTA budget flows through their board, not ours.

So we'll never be able to compete on the volume of legislation that the committee hears. But we can compete on time. And I think the last 4 years we've made strides in the right direction. For instance the last T&M committee exclusively focused on Bike Cleveland's annual crash report.

4. Last summer, the city upgraded coin-operated parking meters to accept online payments and has continued adding new on-street paid parking zones in Ohio City, Downtown, University Circle, and

Detroit-Shoreway—creating a new revenue stream for the city. Surface parking lots in Downtown and other neighborhoods are also taxed, with much of that revenue currently directed toward stadium funding. Would you support dedicating this money to mobility and safety improvements instead? Why or why not?

Overall I fully support finding dedicated funding for mobility and safety improvements. But I'd like to understand a few technical questions first. First, did the ParkMobile payment stream actually increase funding to the city? Or did we net out even because of fees to ParkMobile? If we didn't increase the funding stream, then I'm not sure we should dedicate the funding to anything else. Second, I'd like to understand some of the structural limitations in setting aside the funding for capital improvements. We're not allowed to do this within Building and Housing, for instance. The permitting fees cannot be set aside for B&H salaries. They have to flow back into the general fund. So I'd want to make sure we structure this "set aside" in a way that is permissible.

5. Historically, community engagement around street projects starts after design is well underway, leaving little room for meaningful feedback. Even now, public meetings often happen on short notice and promotion for these meetings is limited. How do you plan to collect feedback from constituents and ensure they know about opportunities for input on projects?

My office has worked to fill gaps created by deficiencies in the notice and community input process. For instance when we had a important BZA or traffic change, we sent letters to the entire surrounding neighborhood so that people could weigh in. Another example is in the Forest city area we have the Metroparks doing some planning around the Downtown Connector Trail. I've made sure the Metroparks receives resident feedback multiple times at the block club.

That being said, during my first term a battle over painted cross-walks in one of my neighborhoods also helped me see some of the limits of encouraging process alone without clear outcomes values. I believe we should be clear-eyed in our values around transit and we shouldn't let an endless process get in the way of reaching clear outcomes that we can act on. We'll never be perfect on community outreach -- there's always room for improvement. But we have to be willing to say when we've done enough to get genuine diverse feedback from the community.

6. Cleveland's ability to deliver safer streets is limited by staffing levels that fall short of many peer cities. Would you commit to support funding additional mobility positions – including a dedicated crew for installing traffic-calming measures like speed tables and more engineers – to bring Cleveland in line with similar cities and accelerate street safety improvements?

Absolutely

7. What is your experience with public transit? Do you ride the RTA?

I've been public-transit only in Chicago, New York and the Bay Area. In Cleveland I have always owned a car, in part because of job responsibilities like client work where I had to be able to drive anywhere in the city on short notice. However, I still take the RTA to many special events and sports games. I also participate in the "Week without driving" weeks to make sure to get my time in on the RTA

8. The 2025 Cleveland Health Survey found that unreliable transportation prevented 20% of residents citywide from getting to medical appointments, work, or other essential needs over the past year – with even higher rates in some wards. What role should public transit play in ensuring residents can meet their daily needs, and how would you support RTA in making that happen?

As many people have said, this is the job paradox. No job, no car. No car, no job. Reliable transit is a barrier to better employment, such as manufacturing jobs in the suburbs. I have supported tackling this problem from a few different angles, including last-mile transportation at job sites in Solon. But we also deserve safe, reliable public transit that works. Unfortunately the RTA budget does not flow through Cleveland City Council, so I don't want to make promises I cannot deliver on. But if you're looking for somebody to share your values on public transit, you have one in me.

9. GCRTA will be broke in a couple years once they run out of federal COVID relief dollars. If that happens without finding new sources of operating funds, the transit authority will be forced to drastically cut service and raise fares. We are already seeing this happen across the country. As a legislator in a city where 20% of the population doesn't have access to a car, how will you ensure we don't face the same fate? Do you support a countywide sales or property tax levy to fund public transit? What other local funding opportunities would you explore to fund transit?

We need to do everything we can to make sure the RTA remains solvent. I do support a countywide sales tax levy on public transit. I'm unaware of city funding options that aren't tapped because the GCRTA budget flows through county dollars. I welcome the chance to be educated further on this issue.

10. Public transit infrastructure, from shelters to bus lanes, can conflict with the desires of motorists and real estate and business owners. How will you approach the needs of public transit riders to conveniently get where they need to go in the face of opposition to new or existing public transit infrastructure?

I suspect this question is coming up because of the specific situation around the dedicated bus lane around W 25th. I think that bus lane makes a lot of sense and hits the appropriate balance of the needs of transit riders and business owners. However, I want to be clear that I think we should evaluate each

circumstance as they come. The answer isn't always going to bus lanes every time. But it is our responsibility to find the right balance.

11. What does being a good partner with GCRTA look like to you as a city councilor?

I've worked hard in my first term to coordinate with GCRTA on a variety of issues in my ward, including the BRT planning along Broadway and specific issues with shelter access and vandalism along W 25th and Pearl. To me, I strive to be consistent, reliable, and trustworthy in my engagement with both transit riders and advocacy organizations like Clevelanders for Public Transit as well as GCRTA leadership.

12. How would you ensure that the needs of all citizens are represented on the city council?

I suggest that you review the Core Values Statement that I released my first year in office, which gets to the heart of my beliefs around the dignity of all residents (not just citizens).

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Around making my council office accessible, I upheld these values in my first term by taking steps that no other council office took to make my website and e-newsletters ADA accessible by meeting WCAG guidelines.

13. How do you stay informed about current events and issues affecting the city?

I read a variety of local media from Signal and Cleveland.com to the Cleveland Ohio Remembrance Page.

14. What will you do to increase the availability of affordable, integrated, safe, and accessible housing for people with disabilities?

We are struggling to make Cleveland's aged housing stock truly ADA accessible. That is why I've focused on builds for permanent supportive housing and ADA accessible options. Projects like the Fullerton School Site are great ways we can add more affordable and accessible housing stock to our city.

15. What do you know about the crisis facing the disabled community in regard to availability of transportation and employment opportunities? And what will you do to mitigate these barriers?

I see and acknowledge the crisis facing the disabled community in terms of transportation and employment. I attended two of the Disability Town Halls that LEAP put on in recent years. They helped me to hear personal stories from residents about the challenges they face. However, I didn't leave those townhalls with any action items that we were supposed to tackle at City Council specifically. I would like to discuss with LEAP the advocacy that they'd like to see from Cleveland City Council.

16. How do you see the impending changes to both State and Federal programs impacting your community? And what solutions can you offer in your community to combat the loss of these programs and funding?

We have a crisis on the horizon with cuts to programs like Medicaid and Medicare. I don't want to promise that any one of us have figured out a solution at the local level to compensate for these significant cuts. But I do coordinate with groups like Local Progress to identify best practices from other cities that we can implement here in Cleveland: <https://localprogress.org/issues/federal-response/>

17. Why does Cleveland not currently have contracts with Uber and Lyft to provide wheelchair accessible vans options at a fixed rate like larger cities such as Chicago and New York? Can you assist with this?

I'd love to learn more about this issue. Thank you for bringing it to my attention! If I win, after the election let's set up a meeting to discuss next steps.

18. Cleveland will be hosting the Special Olympics in 2030, bringing more than 5,500 athletes and coaches and over 125,000 fans and family members to our city. How will you work to ensure Cleveland is a welcoming, accessible place for people with diverse disabilities, not only through trained volunteers, but also by encouraging accessibility across restaurants, stores, rideshares, museums, casinos, theaters, and other public spaces?

This is the time to get down to brass tacks. For instance, even to win the Special Olympics bid, we had to make improvements to the accessibility of restrooms in the airport. That was a very specific ask that the city was able to follow through on. We will need partners in organizations like LEAP to help us audit and assess similar changes, whether they to be city assets or to privately owned ones like our hotel stock. I look forward to identifying the improvements we can make and take on the advocacy for each one so we can make Cleveland as welcoming of a city as possible.