

Candidate Name: Tanmay Shah

Ward: 12

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?

Yes

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

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?

I believe it should take up more mobility and public transit related legislation so we can truly be a city that prioritizes walking and biking.

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?

Yes, I would like to divert this funding source to mobility and safety improvements.

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?

I will push for more transparent decision making and debates on the floor and commit to bringing City Hall to my ward through more accessible meetings with constituents.

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?

Yes.

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

I actually bought my home specifically for its proximity to a Red Line station. I regularly biked to work downtown when I was working there and still employ it as a means to get around town. Personally, I am more of a biker than walker and really appreciate the ability to bring my bike on the train and buses.

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?

I believe public transit is an asset we must develop for our city. It is one of the big reasons why I live in a city. If I wanted to drive everywhere, I would've lived in the suburbs. I want to be a capable and willing partner with the RTA to improve their services in the city. This means fighting for increased funding from the city but also an actual partner who is proactive about the ways my constituents could benefit from better RTA services. I want to increase the number of stops that have covered resting areas and improve city services related to these stops such as snow plowing and cleaning.

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?

I will fight to increase the funding from the city for this service and work to convince other municipalities to invest in the RTA because we are all better off with a regional transit services that can effectively improve the lives of all working class people. I personally am open to a sales or property tax levy to fund public transit but would actually prefer a method of funding that targets corporations and businesses in our communities. The burden on providing services has gradually shifted to homeowners

and we must ask businesses to take on their fair share.

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 believe we have to start prioritizing public transit riders more if we want to be a city that actually works for working class people. This is a huge way to improve people's lives in the city and actually attract more people to come live here. We do not need a mega suburb.

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

I believe I answered this above.

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

By listening and being in the community.

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

I read a lot of local news, attend community meetings, and follow social media accounts related to different interests.

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

Affordable housing is actually my top priority. As a housing attorney at legal aid, I represented so many clients with disabilities who were unable to find affordable safe and integrated housing. I think when we give tax subsidies to developers, we must get ironclad guarantees that housing for people with disabilities will be included and I will make sure to do that if elected. I also believe we desperately need a city wide tenants union and will fight to increase funding for this and help organize it.

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 would love to develop more affordable transit oriented development housing around our transit points in combination with what I mentioned above. Overall, our city is facing a crisis of exploitation and I believe disabled community along with other minority communities such as trans and immigrant neighbors are being disproportionately impacted. We must address the root causes of these issues in order to make all of our lives better. I believe this starts with affordable housing, affordable groceries, and reliable city services.

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?

It is going to get worse before it gets better. This is true across the board for so many of our communities that will be harmed by a state and federal administration that is intent on serving the billionaires. In order to fight back and protect our communities, we have to start inverting the exploitation. We have to invest in our communities and start holding bad actors accountable.

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 was not aware of this issue and would absolutely work to make it happen. It makes sense and if other cities have done it, we should as well.

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?

I would love to designate partners who are working with the city to make this happen and give them special recognition during the ceremonies. As part of reliable city services, I have talked about building trust with stakeholders. This includes the businesses that serve people and we have to start this relationship much earlier so they know the city is a capable and willing partner. I will foster these relationships and help stakeholders buy into why it is crucial we make public areas accessible for people with disabilities.

