

ALDERMANIC SURVEY

The City of St. Louis has its next General Election on **April 8, 2025**. We believe all residents have the right to be informed on the opinions of their representatives. Therefore, we reached out to every aldermanic candidate up for election, asking for responses to relevant transportation infrastructure topics. Find out the candidates' responses:

What is your name?

Michael Browning

What ward are you running for Alderperson in?

9th Ward

How do you envision your role as an Alderperson in creating a future for St. Louis where all forms of transportation are safe, equitable, and accessible?

I have spent my first two years as Alderman making sure that we remove politicians from decision making around streets and put those decisions about design and funding in the hands of professionals. Notably, I sponsored the creation of St. Louis city's first Department of Transportation. The language of this charter change was drafted in coordination with Trailnet to shift our current Street Department from just maintenance to thinking about the safety of all road users no matter how they choose to get around. While we assemble the funding, staffing, and policies necessary to make the DOT as effective as possible, I work to use my ward capital to fully fund sidewalk replacement and conduct traffic studies to improve dangerous roads like Lindell Avenue and Chouteau Avenue with the aim of adding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to these roads.



Please rate the following on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 7 (very good):

For the City of St. Louis, how would you rate the current conditions of: Infrastructure planning and maintenance of our streets

3

For the City of St. Louis, how would you rate the current conditions of: Safety of our streets

2

For the City of St. Louis, how would you rate the current conditions of: ADA Accessibility

4

Please rank each option below in priority order, with 1 being the highest priority and 4 being the lowest priority:

Lobby other Alders for Ward Capital funds to be distributed to Streets Dept.

4 Highest Priority

Advocate for another 1/2 cent sales tax devoted to street maintenance

3

Work to increase the number of people using public transit

1 Lowest Priority

Support efforts by cycling organizations and businesses to increase the number of cyclists commuting to work.

2



Research from the National Traffic Safety Board shows that reducing average travel speeds by just 5% could reduce fatal road crashes by 30%. Based on this research, should the City set a citywide speed limit to 25 mph on arterials and 20 mph on local streets? State yes or no, and explain your response:

I'm not convinced that lower speed limits alone will make any difference. The posted speed limits are not followed currently, and enforcement is lacking. Road design is much more impactful at encouraging lower speeds. If the research suggests that reducing average travel speeds is effective in reducing crashes, we should look to measures that achieve that. The traffic calming improvements on Natural Bridge Avenue have shown that road design is effective in reducing crashes.

In a survey conducted by the St. Louis Coalition to Protect Cyclists and Pedestrians (CP2), respondents suggested multiple strategies to re-envision a safer St. Louis, including investing in protected bike lanes, car free districts, and pedestrian friendly infrastructure. How will you work to shift the culture in St. Louis to prioritize non-car forms of transportation?

I am very vocal about how cities built for walkability and multi-transit options are better cities to live in. I work with groups like CP2, St. Louis Urbanists, Great Rivers Greenway, Trailnet, and more to make sure we are touting the benefits of being car-free, or at least having the option of being car-free. I routinely talk about the nine years my wife and I spent as a one-car family, how it was very possible, and how bike commuting to work all of those years made my life better. I will continue to work to change the culture at the city's Street Department as it makes its transition to a Department of Transportation. The charter language will be changed, now we need to make that new mission a reality.

St. Louis City currently awards over \$40M to Bi-State every year for transit operations. What metrics will you use to determine if this money has been spent effectively, and how will you hold Bi-State accountable if it isn't?

All of this is uncertain with the current federal government. When Bi-State is in front of the Board of Alderman, I have not been shy about holding them accountable for failures to deliver services for our disabled residents. I have spoken with Taulby Roach and discussed the folly I believe the secure platform project to be. I believe the key to increasing ridership on Metro is to make it easier to access, not harder. I also work with Bi-State to improve bus facilities along Lindell and Delmar boulevards as we see major changes come to those roads.



How will you pressure Bi-State to make changes to their transit operations to ensure public transit is equitably accessible for all?

I will continue my efforts by pressuring them when they are in front of our Board committees, calling them when appropriate, and working with groups like SMART to ensure everyone has safe, accessible transit options.

In St. Louis City, numerous pedestrians and cyclists have recently been badly injured or lost their lives due to reckless driving. What will you do to protect the lives of pedestrians and cyclists through infrastructure improvements?

Work to fully fund the Department of Transportation, create a Planning Division within the department that seeks to improve the safety of our roads, and move funding away from aldermanic control and into the DOT.

How will you champion the implementation of more protected lanes and a city wide bike network, which are necessary to increase bike ridership in St. Louis?

Put a Planning Division in the DOT.

Transform 314 intentionally surveyed a majority of Black St. Louisans between the ages of 18-45 to get a sense of their biggest issues concerning their communities' built environments. Overwhelmingly, addressing the condition and safety of our City's streets was the top concern identified. In thinking of this feedback, how does your vision for the City of St. Louis support equitable transportation infrastructure and work to increase funding for these initiatives?

The DOT is the most equitable thing we can do. Moving away from using ward capital as the primary source for maintenance and safety improvements is perhaps the single-most equitable thing we can do for our city and its black residents. Currently, the same amount of ward capital is allocated to each ward even though some wards have far more streets (and more dangerous streets) than others. Some alders spend none of their ward capital on making their ward streets safer, and their residents suffer as a result. That must change, and it will be a priority for me. Ward capital is inequitable.



How would you support an increased role by the City in facilitating access to active transportation, i.e., bikes, buses, and trains?

When the new DOT is making plans, I will ensure that their policy is oriented towards creating networks, which includes making sure people can get across the city by bike, bus, train, or on foot. Making sure bus stops are safer, bike lanes connect to other protected infrastructure, and sidewalks are in good repair should all be priorities for the DOT.

In 2025, St. Louis will implement a comprehensive update of the zoning code - the first such update in over 65 years. What are your top 3 (or more!) changes you would like to make to the Zoning Code, and how do you plan to pursue them in your role?

St. Louis needs to grow, and the best way to do that is with more transit-oriented development. I trust the team we have in place in our Planning and Urban Design Agency, but what I would like to see is upzoning around current and planned transit, banning the installation of new gas stations in the city, and the elimination of parking minimums (and maybe even parking maximums!) to encourage less car use and more use of non-car transit options.

In the past month, what different modes of transportation have you used to get around the city? You may choose multiple options:

Walking, Biking, Taking the bus, Personal vehicle

Improving transit infrastructure requires active maintenance plans to ensure our investments are properly sustained. How will you ensure transit infrastructure is maintained over time (e.g., purchasing a mini street sweeper for bike lane cleaning):

Make sure our city actually purchases mini-street sweepers to clean our bike lanes, create a paving plan to make sure our streets are equitably and routinely maintained, create a new sidewalk policy that removes it from the responsibility of homeowners and instead has the city maintain and replace broken sidewalks so that we can have a complete network of pedestrian infrastructure.



With an increase in people who are seniors, have a mobility impairment, or disability, what will you do to advocate for developments and transportation infrastructure in your ward to be accessible?

Having a DOT will allow us to fully implement our ADA transition plan. The department will be able to work with our Office of the Disabled to make sure our infrastructure is accessible. I also plan to change the sidewalk system to move away from the 50/50 system we currently use, which leaves a patchy, poorly maintained network of sidewalks.

Will you commit to walking, biking, or riding the train or bus to city hall once a month? (Note: CP2 hosts a 'bike bus' to City Hall the third Friday morning of every month!)

If the City can fix the 14th Street/Clark intersection, I would gladly take the metrolink more. Transit is great but if you get off the train and immediately have to cross a dangerous intersection, we have to do better. Otherwise I do plan to join the bike bus as often as I can. The date doesn't always match up with my schedule depending on what I need to do that day, but I have joined the Bike Bus and will again.

