

2023 City Commission Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Courtney Shipley

1. How long have you lived in Lawrence and what do you do for a living? I have lived in Lawrence over 30 years and I am a city commissioner as well as a property manager.
2. What experience do you have that you believe qualifies you to be a strong city commissioner? I have served as city commissioner for one term. I also had the honor of serving as Lawrence's first Latina Mayor. My strength as a commissioner derives from consistent communication with people from every corner of our community.
3. What do you believe is the City's role in supporting the development of high paying jobs and economic development in general? In addition to the City itself being one of the largest employers, it has taken a significant role in job creation through such tools as the catalyst program. We should also remember that tourism and the arts are demonstrably a part of economic development in our community. These are all investments that the City has committed itself to through The Strategic Plan.
4. In your opinion, what are the three most important issues facing the City right now and how would you propose to address them? If your solutions require additional funding, how would you propose to fund them?

I have championed the need for our development code revision and have great faith in the process toward modernization. I am proud that the appointments I made to that group were diverse and balanced. As Mayor I could have selfishly placed myself as chair of that group in an ideological or political grab, but I recognized that the best team member for that role was Commissioner Finkeldei.

Infrastructure and assets should always be a primary concern. We are haunted by unwise investments such as overbuilt roads and antiquated development patterns. Decisions regarding infrastructure spending must consider today's tax payer and the future taxpayer.

Resilience and sustainability both environmental and economic. We have been fortunate enough to receive a number of grants in the last few years. We must stay vigilant in seeking out creative funding opportunities as well as encouraging innovators.

5. What is your experience with organizational budgets? As a city commissioner I've been through the municipal budgeting process. This includes our priority based budgeting and the alignment of priorities with our Strategic Plan. Also notable is the auditing process.
6. (Two part) On a scale of 1-10, how important is creating new residential home ownership opportunities (not rental)? What resources should the City of Lawrence deploy to assist with housing creation? Home ownership is not a priority for all generations. Other municipalities are envious of our Affordable Housing Trust Fund. We should continue with thoughtful and efficient investments through that mechanism.
7. What are your thoughts on the City's response to the homelessness issue and/or the current version of the *Community Plan to End Homelessness*? Does anything stand out that you would change, add, or delete? While it is finishing up its cycle through public engagement there are a few things I hear the public has interest in and I will be watching for and encouraging community discussion. Evaluating the possibility of residency requirements, the thoughtful and kind relocation of campers from all parks, and clear behavioral and safety expectations at the palette home site (which is already required but the neighborhood needs clear communication regarding those expectations.) While these are minutia in the broader scheme, they are the most frequent comments I hear from people and I can't ignore them.