Oakland County Candidates on Transit

August 2020 Local Candidate Questionnaire

The Motor City Freedom Riders questionnaire was sent to candidates with public email addresses in Oakland County seeking the following offices:

- Representative in State Legislature
- County Executive
- County Commissioner
- Local city and township positions

Submitted responses are listed below. Positions which received no responses have been omitted.

Last updated July 31, 2020 (v2)
Representative in State Legislature

Survey questions were as follows:

- **Transit Experience**
  What is your experience using public transportation in the greater Detroit region? (Examples include SMART, DDOT, FAST, TheRide, etc.)

- **Detroit Area Funding**
  The greater Detroit area currently funds transit at less than half the national average per capita. Do you believe the region needs to invest in improved public transportation? What are some specific improvements you would like to see in your community?

- **State Funding Limit**
  The State of Michigan currently limits state spending on public transit to less than 10% of the Michigan Transportation Fund. Do you believe this limit should be lifted? Why or why not?

- **“Fix-It-First”**
  Despite the poor state of Michigan’s existing roads and highways, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) continues to spend millions of dollars on adding new capacity to highways like I-94 and I-75. Do you believe the state should instead adopt a “fix-it-first” approach, focusing on the maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure? Why or why not?

- **Ride with Us?**
  If elected, once the threat of COVID-19 has receded, will you commit to spending an afternoon riding the bus with us to gain a better understanding of the needs of bus riders in our community?

Candidates in districts including SMART “Opt-Out” communities were asked an additional question:

- **Joining SMART**
  You are running in a district which includes one or more communities that have opted out of bus service from SMART. Do you support these communities joining SMART? Why or why not? If not, what conditions would have to change for you to support these communities joining SMART?
27th District

Regina Weiss (D)

Transit Experience
I have ridden SMART and DDOT in the past, though I do not use them often. I would use SMART and DDOT much more often if there were more frequent service and more routes.

Detroit Area Funding
I firmly believe that we need to invest substantially more in public transportation. I supported the 2016 and 2018 RTA plans and volunteered to try to turn out votes for those proposals. I would like to see more routes and more frequent service in my area, such as along 9 Mile and Coolidge. I would also like to see a BRT route on Woodward and other major corridors.

State Funding Limit
Yes, I believe that this spending cap should be lifted, and I do not support capping public transit spending at all. Investing in public transit supports the community and working people, improves economic development, reduces strain on infrastructure and roads, and reduces negative environmental impacts.

“Fix-It-First”
I firmly support a fix-it-first approach, as it is a fiscally responsible way to manage infrastructure spending. I do not believe that MDOT should finance urban sprawl at the expense of maintaining roads and infrastructure in our population and commerce centers.

Ride with Us?
Absolutely, I look forward to it.
41st District

Evan Agnello (R)

Transit Experience
I have rode a SMART bus, Q line, and the people mover downtown many times.

Detroit Area Funding
I believe transportation has taken large steps forward over the past few years. It is important that investments are made but with the idea that we are building for the future. I would like to see Michigan become the leader in transportation once again through non traditional measures. We should be looking to work with private companies like Lyft or Uber who are making new strides in transportation. We need to focus on the whole journey a rider takes. From when they leave their door to when they arrive at their destination. It is important that the right service is placed to fit the community.

State Funding Limit
I think with our current transportation plan this limit is okay. If there was a new plan to improve and change our system I would be for increasing funding. This would also have to come after COVID-19 is resolved.

“Fix-It-First”
I believe roads, bridges, rail, and dams need to be repaired or rebuilt first before we start adding more funds for additional work.

Ride with Us?
Absolutely.
Padma Kuppa (D)

Transit Experience
I have used SMART buses in the area, but infrequently. I have also been a supporter of TRU, and an interfaith initiative to promote regional transit.

Detroit Area Funding
We must invest effectively in our region, and a critical to is improving our public transit. We must improve frequency and reliability, and leverage federal funds. We should work with local communities to use data driven solutions to map routes based on an understanding of the needs of all the constituents who use public transportation. We need to connect transit to housing and other locations that make sense - colleges, universities, hospitals and more.

State Funding Limit
We are in the midst of an economic and climate crisis. We need to make sure that we provide decent public transportation for all our constituents but particularly those who rely on public transportation for essential services such as employment, food, school, daycare, and medical needs. The economic crisis and the climate crisis are interlinked. By providing better public transportation options, we are helping to solve the climate crisis as well as address some of the economic crises that are hitting our at risk communities so hard.

“Fix-It-First”
As a legislator, one of the frequent complaints that I hear is the poor state of our roadways. I believe we should fix our existing roads first before spending millions of dollars adding capacity to interstates.

Ride with Us?
Of course! I love riding the bus and I love learning about the challenges my constituents face with public transportation.
43rd District

Nicole Breadon (D)

Transit Experience
I live in the rural part of Independence Twp and I am neither disabled or over the age of 55 so I do not have access to public transportation. However, when traveling to other cities, I gladly use public transportation.

Detroit Area Funding
Yes, I do believe the region needs to invest in better public transportation. I would like to see our communities connect to the greater SMART system. There are disabled people in my community that would like more opportunities to connect with other parts of the Metro Detroit area.

State Funding Limit
It does need to be lifted. A good public transportation systems adds a huge value to the region. It creates jobs and opportunities.

“Fix-It-First”
Yes. We as a state cannot maintain the roads we have with the budget allotted. Adding more lanes to maintain only creates more of a burden.

Joining SMART
Yes, I would support my community joining SMART. The disabled and elderly people in my area have such limitations of where they go with the resources currently available.

Ride with Us?
100% yes I have a son with a physical disability and I would love to see what is possible for him since he may be unable to drive.
45th District

Barb Anness (D)

Transit Experience
Unfortunately, living in the greater Rochester area doesn’t give me an opportunity to ride public transit as our municipalities have chosen to opt of participating in ridership opportunities. 0____0 I did live in NYC and SF during college and was able to utilize public transit while living in those cities and it was awesome.

Detroit Area Funding
YES. To be competitive on a national and regional level, and in turn enhance not only our southeast region but the state of Michigan as a whole we MUST not only improve but INVEST in public transit. Citizens can’t access jobs due to the lack of reliable, public transportation and, in my community this lack of access impacts seniors who could also could use reliable, and accessible, public transportation that travels outside of district boundaries. Within greater Rochester, allowing the SMART bus system to actually have routes throughout the 45th and allowing for park and ride locations for local residents to access public transportation are improvements that could be easily implemented.

State Funding Limit
In order for us as a state to get serious about public transit (and we should!) we need to make it a shared investment between the state, county and local municipalities to encourage participation in and seriously adopt a long term plan for public transit.

“Fix-It-First”
Infrastructure is clearly a much neglected and a “needs to be addressed yesterday” issue here in Michigan. Can anything seem more biblical than a flood displacing 10,000 people during a pandemic in Michigan? I don’t think so. The “fix-it-first” approach would need a robust analysis system to ensure that dangerous infrastructure is invested in where the need is greatest. I also believe we need a combined partnership between the federal government and states to address woefully inadequate infrastructure (a Works Progress-type Infrastructure program) which also could have the potential to include a robust public transit program here in Michigan.

Joining SMART
Yes, I’ve heard first hand from local residents that are frustrated by the lack of public transportation access for their families and also from local seniors who utilize the local OPC bussing service but that only runs for a limited time of day and doesn’t go beyond the district boundaries, which is an issue when they have appointments beyond our community. The need is there and the time is right to invest in SMART for the greater Rochester area.

Ride with Us?
Yes, I would welcome the opportunity to do so.
**Brendan Johnson (D)**

**Transit Experience**

As you correctly note, my hometown communities (the Rochester area) have opted out of nearly all public transportation, so my experiences are quite limited. That being said, I have used the Michigan Flyer several times to travel between East Lansing, Southfield, and Ann Arbor. It’s perfectly fine, and I am glad to see a forthcoming dedicated service between Ann Arbor and Detroit. I used to fly often out of DTW, and I have also thus used FAST, with my greatest FAST usages going from DTW to the Detroit Zoo via downtown Detroit. This has been my experience (in addition to usage of the People Mover and the QLine) with public transportation in Detroit.

However, it is important to note that, I have lived in several cities (Brussels, Madrid, and Washington, D.C.) where public transportation is amazing, and in each of those cities, I grew to love their systems, relying on them to get me everywhere. I have seen what transit can be. I know what a good system looks like. I know the histories of those systems and the commitment of those populations to having good transit. And because of that, I know what we could also have here and what we need to do to get to that point. We could have a great public transit system in Metro Detroit, and I am here to see it through.

**Detroit Area Funding**

The Metro Detroit region sorely lacks for cohesive public transportation, and we need to invest more. At the most basic level, I would love to see a system of public transportation (buses are cheapest) that actually covered the entire region, rather than the patchwork “system” we currently have in place. I would like to see bus rapid transit installed along major corridors and commuter rail running between Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Pontiac. I would love an expanded light rail system in the city of Detroit proper to augment the existing QLine and allow it to function like a system, not just a solitary line. I would also be interested in expanding our regional bikeshare program and in being a welcoming environment for R&D into future public transit technologies.

**State Funding Limit**

We should think about public transit less like a useless decoration for urban areas and more like the genuine engine of economic development and human connectivity that it is. Investing more in our public transit system makes Michigan a better place to live, do business, and raise a family, so yes, I would support lifting that cap.

**“Fix-It-First”**

Generally speaking I am not a fan of adding capacity to highways in Metro Detroit, especially where public transportation options have not been explored or developed. I agree that we should absolutely repair and maintain our infrastructure (and reconstruct where dilapidated), but we should do that in concert with transit systems that encourage people out of their vehicles to lessen the congestion in the first place. This saves millions of dollars in construction costs, not to mention the environmental impact of transitioning to public transit systems.
Joining SMART

I do support this, yes. However, I also know that the reason my communities do not currently participate in the system is that the system is not perceived to offer our community with the connectivity and efficiency to “merit” the cost of accepting that tax burden. I am very well aware that this is a matter of inertia however, and that the more communities sign-on, the better and cheaper the system is for everyone. In an ideal scenario, however, SMART is merged with other Metro Detroit systems, and commuter rail is added, to improve the efficacy of public transportation in the entire region. You have me on board, but the criticisms of my community are legitimate.

The other side of this is that my community is not designed for public transportation. Save for, perhaps, an express bus from Downtown Rochester to Oakland University and to Pontiac (to hub into other routes), the actual mapping of routes in my district is difficult for me to consider. There is little to do to fix this in the short-term. That being said, SMART does have a chance at success here: our Older Persons Commission uses SMART, and our community does pay a nominal millage for that. This is very popular, and a smart campaign could extrapolate its successes onto the rest of our city.

Ride with Us?
As a very proud NUMTOT, I can hardly think of a better way to spend an afternoon. Yes, of course!
County Commissioner

Survey questions were as follows:

- **Transit Experience**
  What is your experience using public transportation in the greater Detroit region? (Examples include SMART, DDOT, FAST, TheRide, etc.)

- **Detroit Area Funding**
  The greater Detroit area currently funds transit at less than half the national average per capita. Do you believe the region needs to invest in improved public transportation? What are some specific improvements you would like to see in your community?

- **Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
  Local governments often have authority over local roadways, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. What is your experience with bicycle and pedestrian facilities in your community, and what are some improvements you would like to see?

- **Ride with Us?**
  If elected, once the threat of COVID-19 has receded, will you commit to spending an afternoon riding the bus with us to gain a better understanding of the needs of bus riders in our community?

Candidates in SMART “Opt-Out” communities were asked an additional question:

- **Joining SMART**
  You are running in a district which includes one or more communities that have opted out of bus service from SMART. Do you support these communities joining SMART? Why or why not? If not, what conditions would have to change for you to support these communities joining SMART?
District 3

**Steve Martin (R)**

**Transit Experience**
I have not experienced SMART, DDOT, FAST or TheRide.

**Detroit Area Funding**
I believe the region needs to continually evaluate the needs of its riders and ensure the level of transportation services meets those needs within the constraints of the budget. Specific improvements would be focused on meeting the current and future ridership needs with ever increasing pressures to reduce costs.

**Joining SMART**
I support the communities’ decisions to opt out or opt in to transportation services. Not every community is the same and nor are their transportation needs. There should be choice and I support the right for the community to choose what is right for them.

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
I support local governments in their authority and pursuit to developing pedestrian and bicycle pathways that preserve the safety for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles. I would like to see improved alert systems for entrance and exit areas where vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles have a greater probability for interaction (crossing paths through retail/shopping/commerce areas).

**Ride with Us?**
Yes. If not elected, I would still welcome the opportunity.
District 7

Karen J. Adams (D)

Transit Experience
None

Detroit Area Funding
I believe public transit is a good investment. It would help senior citizens age in place and young people afford to commute to work and school opening up more opportunities for them. The metro area has lost out on large corporations (and the jobs they’d bring) locating here due to lack of mass transit. We need to bring Oakland County into the 21st century by investing in a public transportation system.

Joining SMART
Whether it is SMART or another consortium, District 7 needs a transportation service. There are residents that do not drive or own a car but need transportation. There is an economy of scale if all communities join in the effort. I believe we need to serve more than just senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
The bike trails are nice for recreation but I would like a safe trail that connects homes to shopping and businesses. The trail does not connect to my area (in fact it’s very far away). I would like to use a bike rather than a car to run errands that are close to home but I do not feel safe biking on the secondary roads in my community. I would support bike and walking trails that connect housing developments to each other and to commercial areas.

Ride with Us?
Yes

District 9

Gwen Markham (D)

Transit Experience
I have not ridden transit too often here, as my communities have no transit.

Detroit Area Funding
I’d like to see more Smart service into western Oakland County, for one.

Joining SMART
Yes. We have over 30,000 people come to Novi to work, with no public transit.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
When on City Council, I served on the Walkable Novi committee. We have installed over 20 miles of trails and sidewalks in the past 10 years.

Ride with Us?
Absolutely.
District 12

**William Gage (D)**

**Transit Experience**
I grew up in Detroit and two buses to and from school daily. Since moving out of Detroit and not use public transportation.

**Detroit Area Funding**
I believe we need a significant investment in public transportation for the entire region with particular emphasis on solving the first and last mile problem.

**Joining SMART**
I support join a smart and looking for other systems that might solve our transportation problems in the Quad county area.

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
I have seen improvements in Birmingham and Ferndale with the development of bike lanes which I support.

**Ride with Us?**
Yes

District 13

**Marcia Gershenson (D)**

**Transit Experience**
I grew up in Detroit and used the bus often to go to the library and downtown. I still use the bus when I can, however having to skirt the opt out commuites sometimes makes the time commitment prohibitive.

**Detroit Area Funding**
Yes. I would like to see the transit issue on the ballot for the voters to decide. I also do not support the opt out option for communities.

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
I have seen many great bicycle and pedestrian options throughout Oakland County. I would like to see more options in Bloomfield Township, West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills, which are the communits I represent. I would be a strong advocate for programs like Complete Streets to be studied and implemented.

**Ride with Us?**
YES. Look forward to it!
Sean Thomas (D)  
**Transit Experience**  
I have used public transportation in Michigan since childhood. As a Teenager to school and work shopping or entertainment venues. As an adult I have rode smart and D dot. I truly understand the necessity of good public transit.

**Detroit Area Funding**  
Yes. I would like to see viable clean and affordable transportation investment. with connections making it easier for our citizens to commute

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**  
I”m a bicycle rider and I appreciate the bike lanes for safety. I would like to see more dedicated pedestrian facilities and improved roads and side streets.

**Ride with Us?**  
Yes, once I am elected. I will ride and listen to current riders and transportation officials and help come up with ways to better improve our transit bus system.

District 16

Penny Luebs (D)  
**Transit Experience**  
Traveled on the Q Line; Made arrangements for seniors to travel by SMART

**Detroit Area Funding**  
Regular transportation for people to and from work, appointments and recreational activities is needed. We do need to invest in public transportation

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**  
Communities adopted the Complete Street Philosophy. Improvements are additional bike lanes connecting cities

**Ride with Us?**  
Yes. (I did spend the afternoon in a wheelchair moving from a sr high rise to downtown shopping. Discovered sidewalks are slightly slanted to the road for water run off so if you are not careful you may tip sideways; Intersections may be difficult to stop at; and the nice looking brick paved sidewalks are so difficult to maneuver in a wheelchair.)
District 17

Mykale Garrett (D)

Transit Experience
It was during my tenure on the City of Lathrup Village’s City Council that we decided to opt in to having SMART bus stops. Prior to my tenure, SMART had no stops in Lathrup Village.

Detroit Area Funding
I do believe that the region needs to invest in improved public transportation. I would like to see rapid transit from downtown Detroit to at least Pontiac.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
I recently signed the $60,000 Transportation Alternatives Program grant from SEMCOG for bike paths in the City of Lathrup Village. The City will match the grant funds with an additional $20,000 for a total cost of $80,000 for the bike paths. The City of Lathrup Villages ultimate goal has always been to be a walkable community.

Ride with Us?
Absolutely!
District 18

Charlie Cavell (D)

Transit Experience
I have been an avid transit rider out of necessity for the most of the past 15 years. It was only in 2017 when I purchased my first car. I rode DDOT/SMART daily for over 10 years. In high school I rode the AATA most days as well.

Detroit Area Funding
Absolutely. Our lack of effective regional transit is holding back our entire region, and it is far past time for us to invest in improving our regional public transportation. To start, I would like to work with the new SMART Board to make sure we are leveraging our existing County infrastructure to its greatest potential, and make strategic investments in improving it based on their ridership statistics. More than that, I want to work to expand SMART’s footprint in our local municipalities, and provide County support to see that through. Above all else though, I hope to work with my regional and State counterparts to support the approval and funding of a comprehensive regional transit plan and ballot measure so we can lay the foundation for solving our regional transit gap once and for all.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
Having gone to High School in Ann Arbor I was spoiled. I arrived in Detroit the summer of 2008 and saw that there were minimal pedestrian options and bike lanes were non-existent. Having lived in a place where biking/walking are a part of the common culture gives me hope that we can convert our region into a similar place. With that in mind, I would like to see the County support municipalities in coordinating the establishment of new bike lanes and pedestrian malls, support the expansion of the regional bikeshare program, and work with our Parks Department to identify opportunities for new innovative bike paths to connect the County’s parks. I would also like to work with our Roads Commission to develop a plan for giving road diets to more of our County roads, so that they can become more multi-modal friendly.

Ride with Us?
Absolutely! I am an avid bus rider, and I would love to go on a ride with you to learn even more!
Dan Cherrin (D)

Transit Experience
I have periodically used public transportation in Detroit and while I am a more frequent user of public transportation outside of Detroit, I facilitated a county-wide transit plan in Washtenaw County and helped launch the Detroit Area Regional Transit Authority strategy twenty-years ago. I also served as the Communications Director for the City of Detroit and Press Secretary to Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel and advanced the cities positions on transit.

Detroit Area Funding
Yes. Twenty years ago, I lead our region’s efforts in the Reauthorization of the Federal & Transit Law, TEA-21. Twenty years later, our region is still not getting its fair share of resources for transit, improvements to existing infrastructure, and transportation planning. We need a coordinated approach to transit and a concerted effort by our Congressional Delegation to bring back our region’s fair share of resources.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
We need to broaden our discussion around mobility to all types of options, including bikes, scooters, ride-sharing, transit, and the use of personal vehicles. As a recreational mountain biker, I would encourage the use of bicycles and work on creating more bike paths. However, to ensure everyone’s safety we must evaluate their use in each community and let the local governments lead to finding the balance between bicyclists and people traveling in vehicles. While our local communities find that balance, we can work at a county-level to include bike paths as part of our county park network. A county connected by bike paths, trails and lanes could also mean that bicyclists have the right to safe passage on streets through protected bike lanes that connect to park pathways. This includes raising awareness around Michigan’s safe passing laws that require vehicles to pass each other at a safe distance and that those using scooters, rollerblades, and even skateboards have the right to use bike lanes. Regardless, we need to work harder at encouraging people to spend more time outdoors and staying active.

Ride with Us?
I would welcome the opportunity and if possible, I would like to bring a few other people to join us.
Local city and township positions

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Candidates in SMART “Opt-Out” communities were asked an additional question:

- **Joining SMART**
  You are running in a community which has opted out of SMART service. Do you support your community joining SMART? Why or why not? If not, what conditions would have to change for you to support joining SMART?
Bloomfield Township
Township Trustee

Mitsuaki Murashige (D)

Transit Experience
When I moved to Michigan about a decade ago, I rode the SMART for several months. I had difficulty with delays during snow, where I would miss my transfer. But overall decent experience.

Detroit Area Funding
Yes. Having better access to shopping and restaurant areas can lead to reducing our carbon footprint.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
There have been few pedestrians in the past, but due to COVID, I have noticed some increase. Also bicycle lanes are not common, so I often see bicyclists using sidewalks. I have also bicycled to work, and I often rode on unlighted roads when I worked late. So I would like to see better lighting installed.

Ride with Us?
Yes. Definitely. I enjoy public transportation when I travel, so I would like to see similar joy locally.
Commerce Township

Township Supervisor

David Scott (R)

Transit Experience
Great deal of exposure and use as I was a deputy sheriff for 28 years so I used, patrolled and interacted all across the region when available personally and professionally.

Detroit Area Funding
We need to create a system for us not use someone else’s idea. In areas where transit does not exist we have established a base line service for our senior and disabled citizens with great success with approximately 12 of the 21 township government participating, better leading to solve a problem. I would like to see our hours of operation expand to include Saturday and Sunday. Eventually expanding ridership to be more inclusive, and have it supported by a millage.

Joining SMART
We are not served by Smart it fails to provide any coverage and is only making our community a cash contributor which is not acceptable. Smart has to be inclusive but they remain exclusive, unresponsive and provide little or no service to western Oakland county.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
I’ve been a leader when my neighbors wanted to obtain a rails to trails project and keep it a gravel path. I fought and won a “donation” to improve it, pave it, install hawk and beckon crossings expanding alternate mobility by 5.3 miles and growing.

Ride with Us?
I’ve done it here and in many communities but I’m always open to share ideas and ride. I can show you a better solution avoiding overpriced antiquated methods like the Qline that was far over budget with a bleak ridership.
Oxford Township

Township Supervisor

**Jack L. Curtis (R)**

**Transit Experience**
I wouldn’t step foot on any of those systems.

**Detroit Area Funding**
NO

**Joining SMART**
NO. Political nightmare where northern communities receive no benefit

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
We are 50% of where we would like to be. We need a mileage to improve our pedestrian paths.

**Ride with Us?**
NO!!!

Township Treasurer

**Joseph G. Ferrari (R)**

**Transit Experience**
N/A

**Detroit Area Funding**
Transportation is important, but there should not be a "one size fits all" approach. Many communities in the outlying areas of Oakland County implement a "dial-a-ride" approach and that works well for them. In Oxford Township, we are part of the North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA) and that works very well for us.

**Joining SMART**
No, because we have our own transportation system for less of a cost than what it would be to join the SMART bus system. We should be looking at my collaboration between the various bus systems.

**Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements**
I current chair the Oxford Township Safety Path Committee and we are always looking for way to expand our safety path system. The main obstacles to overcome are securing the necessary rights-of-way as some property owners are willing to negotiate a transfer, while other are more reluctant.

**Ride with Us?**
Yes
Waterford Township

Township Supervisor

John Paul Torres (D)

Transit Experience
My father is a retired Army Veteran, he uses SMART Bus lines from Pontiac to attend appointments and meet other transportation needs. We have no public transportation in Waterford.

Detroit Area Funding
I would love to see greater investments in public transportation. There is not only a need here in Waterford; there is a strong desire for it. I would like to see bus stops on some of our major highways. We are the center of Oakland County, and one of the largest townships in Michigan with nearly 80,000 people. This would specifically allow the disabled and the elderly a reliable means of transportation, and the opportunity to participate in different activities in and around Oakland County and Detroit. Additionally, the community would enjoy an alternate means of transportation to venture off to different locations. It’s a great opportunity for everyone.

Joining SMART
I would use my position as Township Supervisor to explore opting into SMART services. I am a Public Administrator by profession and by education. I have seen the many benefits of public transportation having lived in Washington D.C. for a period of time, and I have worked in Detroit for several years. I have lived and raised my family these past 20 years here in Waterford. I believe our community is ready for it. It can be done efficiently, effectively, and affordably.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
I have long been an advocate for more sidewalks and pathways throughout Waterford. I have a specific plan on community development that includes utilizing state and federal dollars for these kinds of innovations. I think more walkable areas and outlets for recreation will work well with public transportation.

Ride with Us?
Yes. I believe a lot can be learned, specifically through engaging in the experience. As a local School Board Trustee in a school district with approximately 8,000 students, we run several bus lines in Waterford, White Lake, West Bloomfield, Clarkston, and Lake Angelus. I have learned a great deal about our transportation system by participating in bus ride alongs. Feel free to learn more about my platform at www.JohnPaulTorres.com
Transit Experience
The only public transportation that I have used in the Detroit Region are the People Mover and Q-Line. I have utilized both of these while visiting Detroit, but I do reside in Waterford, and most public transportation does not extend that far.

Detroit Area Funding
Yes, the metro Detroit region severely lacks proper public transportation. Having family who lives in the Chicagoland area, it is impressive with what extent public transportation can impact an individual's life, from making the commute easier and cheaper, to making traveling in bad weather safer. I believe that while there have been improvements in public transportation in the region, those improvements have only been baby steps. In one of my few experiences with the Q-line it was faster to walk the two miles I needed to go rather than wait for the train. This is not what people expect with public transport. If public transportation is going to successfully take root in the Motor City, I believe the Woodward corridor would be the place to start. It would have to extend the full length of Woodward and be able to transport residents in a timely manner.

Joining SMART
While I personally do believe that Waterford should be part of the SMART program, if elected I would be bound to represent my constituents and not push for my own personal agenda. If elected, I would work to get proposal on the ballot for 2022 for Waterford Township to opt into the SMART service. If supported by the residents of Waterford, I would be an advocate of getting the service implemented as quickly as possible.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
As an avid biker I find the resources for bikers in Waterford nonexistent. While Michigan Law mandates anyone over the age of 12 to ride there bike on the motorway, doing so on many of the main roads in Waterford would simply be a death sentence. Some major roads in Waterford do offer a shoulder to ride on but others like Highland Rd. and Dixie Highway offer no such space. The resources for pedestrian walkways are better than that of bikers in Waterford, but they are still very limited. Most neighborhoods in Waterford do not have sidewalks so you see children riding their bikes or walking in the street. I believe that this is something that can be slowly but surely changed in Waterford. Constructing additional sidewalks for pedestrians would not only increase property values it would improve the safety of our residents.

Ride with Us?
I would definitely want the opportunity to spend at least an afternoon riding the bus, not only to understand how the system functions, but to get a better grasp of how this could help the residents of Waterford.
Township Trustee

Arthur Frasca (R)

Transit Experience
Never have, but I am aware of folks who do....

Detroit Area Funding
The best choices for this are simply too expensive. If a system could be built so that all citizens had access within a walkable distance, it would make sense. A single line system benefiting those communities it ran through would NOT be a reasonable improvement from what some communities have provided for their citizens already. WOTA is sufficient for western Oakland County. Rail service btw Det and pontiac or Ann Arbor and Det would be useless for many citizens.

Joining SMART
Waterford has joined several other communities in providing transportation for those that need it. The system is new and it is called WOTA.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
More pathways would be nice, but Waterford is developed and finding the area for pathways is difficult vs communities that are undeveloped.

Ride with Us?
Of course...I would prefer a weekend or evening as I have a day job and I am self-employed...If I am not there, I am not making money...we can find the time if we try.
West Bloomfield Township

Township Trustee

Howard Rosenberg (D)
Transit Experience
None

Detroit Area Funding
A Complete public transit system for the region

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
Dedicated bicycle lanes

Ride with Us?
Absolutely

Jonathan Warshay (D)
Transit Experience
I grew up in Detroit and rode DDOT to high school. I moved to Ferndale and worked in Downtown Detroit and road SMART for several years. I have not taken local area transit for several years.

Detroit Area Funding
Before the pandemic, the traffic was very heavy in my area. The roads were not large enough to handle the traffic. I would like to see reliable and efficient transit down our main roads. I think people would use transit if it were a viable alternative. We subsidize cars and trucks but we don’t subsidize transit in the same way. Transit can improve the quality of life.

Cycling and Pedestrian Improvements
West Bloomfield has been building large "safety paths" and has plans to add to them. This allows cyclists and pedestrians to exercise and travel safely. Because West Bloomfield is a township, it does not have jurisdiction over the roads. The roads are really too narrow to add bicycle lanes, so the safety paths are really the only way to create safe ways for cyclists.

Ride with Us?
Yes