

Greetings,

Welcome to the Omaha Streetcar 2008 mass transit survey. Below, you'll find the results of our survey that was conducted in October leading up to the election. We selected candidates from offices and/or areas that were viewed as most appropriate. Two questions were asked:

- 1.) As [insert elected position here], what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha.
- 2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

You will notice that the questions go include not only streetcars, but also mass transit in general. I would like to reiterate Omaha Streetcar's view that streetcars should be an integral component of our mass transit system however other modes will be necessary to create the effective system this community needs. Therefore, it is important to strive for the overall mass-transit system that we need, while we promote streetcars at the same time.

The answers to these questions are provided below. The responses are largely unedited to preserve the integrity of the answers. Throughout the process we strived to remain nonpartisan and gave candidates from all sides the ability to respond, however, you will find that we did not successfully receive responses from all candidates.

A sincere thank you goes to the candidates that took the time out of their busy schedules to answer our questions.

Please peruse the results and take them into consideration as you vote on November 4th.

Highest Regards,
Gerald W. Kopiasz
President, Omaha Streetcar

**Douglas County Commissioner-District 1
Mike Boyle**

I have supported mass transit for my whole life! I used a bus to get to school in my youth. I rode the bus to work and home for many years. I even take the bus from the Old Market to the Court House, now. I am in complete support of a strong, dependable, frequent mass transit system. In fact, I called Curt Simon and had lunch with him to see what I can do to help him establish a dependable system.

Recently, I asked the head of MAPA, to appear at the County Board Meeting to tell us how the study of mass transit was progressing. This HDR study is to tell us if a new "belt" around Omaha is feasible or if mass transit would be a better solution. Obviously, I have pushed for mass transit.

I'm a dedicated supporter of mass transit. You can count on me to support plans that are affordable and that will be used.

Scott Hoffman

1.) As a State Senator, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

Thank you for your questions and interest. Yes, I would definitely support greatly expanding mass transit options within Douglas County. And I say "greatly" because I think that we barely have a mass transit option at all now, and I believe it makes more sense to subsidize mass transit than to continue subsidizing environmentally damaging transit such as roads and air transport. This would certainly be a major part of the environmental audit I propose for Douglas County.

I believe a streetcar system definitely belongs in that mix, especially along routes where it would carry the most traffic. (How about along Dodge Street and from the airport, through downtown and the Old Market, to the zoo?) I am also opposed to construction of any new major expressways in or around Omaha, such as a beltway. Instead, let's build light rail to West Omaha and then on to Lincoln.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

In the past, I have argued against expansion of the Interstate system and suburban sprawl in Omaha through letters to the World-Herald and current office holders, to no avail. And I am on your organization's mailing list (as pioneerzephyr.com). (By the way, my mother told me that she and I got around Omaha quite well on streetcars when I was an infant!)

**Douglas County Commissioner-District 3
Chris Rodgers**

As far as the county's support for a streetcar, I have not [sic] position to date.

Derek Glaser

No longer campaigning

**Douglas County Commissioner-District 5
Chip Maxwell**

No Response

Susan Koneck

No Response

Marc Kraft

No Response

Legislature-District 5

Heath Mello

1.) As a State Senator, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

I believe our state needs to develop a new long-term transportation policy and a mass transit strategy must become an integral aspect in relation to the growing greater Omaha area. I support developing a new public-private partnership for both mass transit and streetcars for the greater Omaha area.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

Beyond using Omaha's mass transit system, my experience has been in more of economic and community development policy than urban transportation policy. However, I am interested in learning more about mass transit issues and would support holding a town hall meeting in District 5 to hear more about what taxpayers think about our current transportation policy and strategies.

Rebecca Barrientos-Patlan

No response

Legislature-District 7

Jeremiah Nordquist

1.) As a State Senator, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

In the Legislature, I will propose legislation to create a Division of Public Transportation within the Department of Roads to study the demands of public transportation throughout the State, so we can appropriately address the transportation needs of Nebraskans. It is my hope that we can take a broad look at mass transit, including workforce needs and tourism potential.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

I have been a long-time proponent of strong mass transit. Together with Senator John Synowiecki, we often brought public transportation needs into the debate in the Legislature. I will continue to make this issue a priority.

Christopher Moles

1.) As a State Senator, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

If elected to the legislature, I will support legislation that promotes alternative mass transit in metropolitan class cities.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

As a member of the downtown improvement district board I have long supported a 10th street trolley and expanding mass transit.

**Legislature-District 9
Gwen Howard**

No Response

**Legislature-District 11
Dennis J. Womack**

No response

Brenda J. Council

No response

**Legislature-District 13
Kurt L. Geschwender**

1.) As a State Senator, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

As a state Senator, I'm not sure what I could do directly for Omaha. I believe that mass transit especially in light of the high fuel costs is becoming a more viable answer to transportation. First and foremost anything we do must be fiscally responsible and cost effective as well as an attractive mode of transportation in the eyes of the public. Without a strong public support of any form of mass transit, it will not be successful. I believe we need to look at all surface transportation across the state as well as investigating a form of light rail.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

Having not held elective office in the past I have not had the opportunity to take a position on mass transit.

Tanya Cook

No response

**Public Service Commission-District 2
Anne Boyle**

1.) As Public Service Commissioner, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

While the Commission has no authority to force mass transit, I will continue my interest and seek to determine how it can be achieved.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

I called for and chaired meetings with Omaha Metro Area Transit, Lincoln Star Tran and others to determine if there were programs that could be developed for commuters between the two cities. Furthermore, I sat on a study committee several years ago to look at mass transit for Nebraska.

We found that even though some federal programs are available, inter city commuter service coordination would be achieved with agreements between the cities. I do not believe they have pursued anything since our meetings were held. So far, private carrier commuter services cannot afford to offer the service without guaranteed ridership and possibly local taxpayer subsidies.

The Nebraska mass transit committee, which was looking primarily at rail service, determined that the costs are extraordinarily high to provide a limited statewide service. In the more condensed areas of Omaha/Lincoln, population density in our metro statistical area (MSA) must be over one million to access federal funds. A state financed service is regrettably unaffordable. Federal funding, achieved by a contiguous population to meet the one million funding mechanism, would merit reconsideration.

John S. McCollister

1.) As Public Service Commissioner, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

I would propose that a portion of motor fuel taxes support mass transit, including streetcars in Omaha. Unfortunately, the decision of how motor fuel tax revenues are spent is a question for the Governor and the Legislature.

2.) What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

I rode street cars as a young kid and loved the experience. Mass transit is a viable alternative to our dependence on automobiles.

Doug Paterson

No response

**US House of Representatives-District 2
Lee Terry**

No response

Jim Esch

1. As our Congressman, what will you do to support expanded mass transit and streetcars in Omaha?

A hallmark of my energy policy has been and will continue to be that all options which could reduce our dependence upon dirty and unsustainable sources of energy should be on the table as part of the proposed solution. Certainly, an effective transit

system in the Second District of Nebraska is an important option in the myriad of strategies that will be necessary for an effective and comprehensive American energy policy. I am determined to actively pursue an energy policy that minimizes our vulnerabilities and seizes the opportunity for the Second District of Nebraska to capitalize on our valuable local resources, industries, and expertise. As Congressman, I will actively support a more comprehensive system of public transit in our community, which also includes a more integrated bus system. I support the vision of Omaha Streetcar and would be willing to work with the grassroots community that has rallied in support of this vision to move toward more concrete proposals.

2. What actions have you taken in the past to support mass transit and streetcars?

My experience will show that I have a record of building bridges and fostering public-private partnerships. After I graduated from law school, I had the opportunity to work at the Steier Group, a national consulting and fund-raising firm for non-profit organizations. I had the great privilege of helping numerous schools, churches, and non-profits raise funds to support their critically important work in our community and around the country. Following my time at the Steier Group, I took a position at the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, directing the Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership (GO!). At the Chamber, I raised \$15 million in an effort to attract more business, jobs, and investment in the Omaha Community. I am certainly proud of the work that I have done to make a difference in our community, and I see the creation of a comprehensive public transit system in the Second District of Nebraska as another opportunity to make Omaha an even better place to live and do business.

**US Senator
Steven R. Larrick**

Firm believer in investing in public transportation and providing green jobs. Need to train peoples in science for innovations in renewable energy, which is good for the environment, the highest priority. Is opposed to the bail-out of investment bankers because it does not solve the problem of lack of investment in infrastructure. Supports an Omaha to Lincoln rail line and believes railroad corridors should be protected for future trails and transit lines.

Mike Johans

No response

Scott Kleeb

No response

Kelly Renee Rosberg

No response