

Candidate for 5th District (In-District)
Ryana Parks-Shaw



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- 1. Each candidate brings a passion for office and special skills to help them succeed. Describe what drives you most to run for office, your qualifications and skills, and why we should elect you versus your opponent. Include any current endorsements.**

I have worked as a healthcare executive for 25 years, including service as Associate Administrator at Truman Medical Center. I am also a small business owner. I am a former union member and strongly support that workers earn a living wage.

I served on the Eastern Jackson County Workforce Development Board. I also served as a board member of the Missouri Hospice and Palliative Care Board of Directors, and have a deep passion for community service and improving the quality of life for Kansas Citians. You should elect me because I possess diverse qualities and collaborative skills that will allow me to bring consensus and progress to the 5th district.

- 2. If elected, what will your top 3 priorities be in your first year of office? Name 3 things you plan to accomplish during your term.**

My vision for the citizens of the 5th district is that we have a life expectancy comparable to citizens in other districts. My priorities are quality affordable housing, livable neighborhoods, improved infrastructure, low crime and economic development. During my term, I plan to establish policies and programs that will increase the life expectancy of residents in the 5th by Improving basic services and infrastructure, creating jobs and making quality housing more affordable.

- 3. Over the last decade, Kansas City has experienced so many positive changes, but the murder rate and number of violent crimes are still major issues. What suggestions do you have for reducing crime in Kansas City?**

I would suggest increased resources for neighborhood policing and evaluating “focused deterrence policing”. This program brings law enforcement and neighborhood groups together to focus on specific problems in a community. It then focuses on the specific individuals and groups who drive most of that activity. I support more involved community policing and crime prevention. I will encourage that we take a trauma informed approach when addressing crime. I will push for more mental health and substance abuse resources and improved access to social services in the community. I will also advocate for resources and programs for our youth such as apprenticeships, job training and enrichment programs.

- 4. The limited availability of affordable housing and limited access to public transportation options make it challenging for low-income residents to find stable housing and employment opportunities. Likewise, employers describe difficulties filling jobs and finding stable employees because housing, transportation and distance to work. How do you propose to increase affordable housing and access to employment opportunities in Kansas City?**

I support the city heavily regulating housing to ensure affordability and giving current residents more of a voice. I would advocate for developers who receive incentives to include affordable housing options in their developments. I support opportunities to increase connectivity with other transportation organizations within the region.

- 5. Many citizens are still confused about what the approved GO Bonds will fund, how moneys are being used, when improvements are expected, property owner responsibilities in the interim, and whether there are still shortfalls in funding. This has led to unrealistic expectations, mis-information and frustration. How would you propose to educate the community, and improve communication and transparency about projects and schedules?**

The city has an opportunity to improve its communication to residents about the projects and business in the city. Communication methods should include a aspects of media, including print, radio, social media, texts and phone calls to reach ALL residents. Improving communication with the neighborhoods is also important to increase transparency. I would include neighborhood leaders to ensure that the community is engaged in the conversation to help me prioritize projects and establish communication with my constituents to encourage that they attend public meetings.

- 6. The condition of roads, curbs and sidewalks is a major issue for the City. Developers and property owners often cite infrastructure as a major issue impacting property values, development feasibility and decisions about private investment. Likewise, the perception**

of well-established centers like Brookside or re-emerging corridors like Troost are impacted by crumbling infrastructure. How would you propose to prioritize infrastructure for established and emerging areas versus infill or new infrastructure? What ideas do you have for additional funding to address shortfalls?

No response.

- 7. Illegal dumping, neglected properties, and deferred maintenance are major issues. The City's limited resources often mean these issues go unaddressed for long periods impacting the surrounding community. How do you propose to deter bad actors and improve enforcement?**

I would offset the need of code enforcement officers by expanding the Volunteer Inspection Program (VIP.) A trained neighborhood leader could conduct the initial inspection and work closely with codes enforcement. I would also look at expansion of programs to address issues and renovations for homeowners. I would also look at identifying funds such as community development block grant funds and other sources to develop programs that will assist residents at fixing their issues. I would also investigate a system similar to the tips hotline that would pay a portion of the fines collected as rewards for tips that lead to that fine.

- 8. Vacant, abandoned, and run-down buildings and housing can attract crime and destabilize surrounding areas. Likewise, the vacant lots left behind after demolition can have the same impact. What do you propose to address vacant/abandoned, run-down buildings / housing and to stabilize the surrounding areas?**

I would advocate for another round of \$10 mil to demolish dangerous buildings in the city. I would also look to use the community development corporations and other leveraged financial institutions to provide low interest loans to rehabilitate those that are appropriate to rehabilitate.

- 9. The delivery and cost of basic City services including sewer, water, trash collection, and snow removal affect us all. What suggestions do you have to improve and maintain city services without major financial impacts to residents?**

I would assess existing processes and look for opportunities to streamline processes; review outsourced services and determine the most cost effective way to provide the highest quality services.

- 10. Tax incentives have helped spark new investments but have come under scrutiny for use for high-end projects and projected impacts to taxing districts. At the same time, real incentives can be warranted in distressed areas or for rehabilitation where development and reinvestment are challenging. Would you propose to modify tax incentive policies, and if so how? If so, how would you help ensure investment in distressed areas like**

Troost Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard, and 63rd Street is encouraged and what incentives or other tools would you support using?

I would support using creative strategies and tax incentive tools to spur development and investment in highly distressed areas. In general, I support a review or re-prioritization of tax incentive process to ensure that the communities and constituents that are impacted by the incentives are benefited.

- 11. A lot of resources are dedicated to attracting large companies, but statistics show that Kansas City's small businesses create more new jobs and have a more financial impact on the local community. How will you help foster and support small businesses, and minority and women owned businesses, in addition to working to attract major employers? Any suggestions on how incentives or resources might be better weighted toward small businesses?**

As a small business owner, who owned a brick and mortar store in Kansas City, I know firsthand how tough it is to start and run a business in Kansas City. I would support more resources and reducing some of the unnecessary documents for small businesses to assist with the administrative aspects of running a business. Finding trained workers can be a challenge for a small business. Establishing or expanding the workforce development programs like apprenticeships, internships, to train the workforce will assist the small businesses while creating jobs.

- 12. The 1/8th Central City Economic Development Sales Tax is intended to help a portion of the City's distressed neighborhoods and commercial corridors but doesn't include several fringe areas just outside the sales tax district like Troost Avenue or Marlborough Heights. What incentives, programs or support do you propose to help other distressed areas, or areas on the fringe? Do you support the creation of similar districts or use of other tools, and if so, how would you fund them?**

No response.

- 13. Community Improvement Districts have helped improve several KC areas including commercial districts and neighborhoods through cleaning, security, added maintenance, promotion and other efforts. However, the use of CIDs has come under scrutiny when used for single properties or when controlled solely by development interests. Do you support the use of CIDs, would you propose any limits or conditions, and if not supported, what other tools would you propose be used to achieve improvements?**

No response.

- 14. Many projects like redevelopment of City property at 63rd and Prospect require long-term support and coordination across multiple council districts. How do you plan to**

work with other council members to address these types of issues? Do you have any suggestions on how to energize stalled projects like at 63rd and Prospect?

I am excited that there is finally movement on the 63rd and prospect area. I will continue to advocate and collaborate with council to move that and other projects forward.

- 15. Kansas City's population has been affected by the limitations and perceptions of public education. Alternatives and improvements are helping change that perception. Although the City has limited authority, what are some ways you would propose to help foster improvements and collaboration around education?**

Continue to support public education, maintain engagement, and collaborate whenever possible.

- 16. Elected officials have to balance time needed to make change, with need to engage the community and be available to constituents. Likewise, there has been recent frustration over limited public engagement in some major projects and initiatives. How would you propose to remain available to constituents and to work with organizations like ours, area neighborhoods, and other major stakeholders if elected?**

If elected, I will make it a priority to continue to attend neighborhood meetings. I will also establish my own neighborhood advisory board of key neighborhood stakeholders who have their finger on the pulse of the 5th district. With over 25 years working as a healthcare administrator I have to balance competing agendas everyday. I have worked with large pharmaceutical companies to negotiate contracts while keeping in mind the needs of patients who need to be able to afford their medicine. This corporate experience has been excellent training for having to maintain balance and time management.

- 17. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about you or how you would serve?**

Learn more online at www.RyanaParksShaw.com.