**Mode Shift Omaha/Omaha Bikes 2013 Candidate Questionnaire**

Name: ­­­­

1. What do you see as Omaha’s most pressing transportation needs? If elected, how would you address these needs?
2. During the past two years, the City Council approved the Transportation and Environmental Elements of the City’s Master Plan. Both include a commitment to shift modes and accommodate all users of streets, including: pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users of all ages and abilities. What would you do to ensure this policy is advanced?
3. Various laws and procedures require the city to solicit public comments for projects related to transportation planning and project design. What will you do to ensure that citizens representing all areas of the community have opportunities to authentically engage in these processes?
4. Expanding suburbs requires expanding expensive public services such as sewers, police and fire protection, schools, and building and widening streets; these costs get higher the farther out you build. Researchers at UNL project a 60% or greater increase in population, employment, and housing in the Omaha area by 2050. What will you do to ensure fiscally sustainable growth for Omaha?
5. Given the increasing congestion and travel times in the Omaha Metro area, as well as decreasing financial resources for transportation from federal and state government sources, what should the city do to address congestion?
6. The number of traffic deaths in Nebraska, most of them in Omaha, reached its highest level in the past decade last year. Of the 207 traffic-related deaths, about 20 percent were pedestrians or motorcyclists. What would you do to help improve safety? In particular, what role do you think the OPD should play as the primary agency charged with keeping Omaha safe?
7. A frequent constraint the city faces around improving transportation choices are state standards that pre-empt local needs. What will you do to work with the State of Nebraska to enable Omaha to build infrastructure that is more context-specific for our urban environment?
8. The transportation needs of our community are diverse and changing:
* Baby boomers have begun retiring and increasingly cannot drive. Currently, about one-in-seven adults ages 65 and older cannot drive according to Pew Research. This number will continue to increase as baby boomers move deeper into their 70s and 80s.
* A recent survey of Gen Y showed that 46% of drivers aged 18 to 24 said they would choose Internet access over owning a car. According to the National Household Travel Survey, from 2001 to 2009, the average annual number of vehicle miles traveled by 16 to 34-year-olds decreased by 23% while bike trips, walking and transit used increased: 24% for biking, by 16% for walking to destinations and by 40% for passenger-miles travelled on transit.
* Studies in Omaha have shown that more than half of the households in parts of North Omaha do not have access to a private vehicle for transportation.

What would you do to make sure that Omaha accommodates the transportation needs of all citizens now and in the future?

1. A growing number of studies find that biking and walking, for transportation or recreation, are associated with significant health benefits. Currently, 64% of adults and 28% of youth in Douglas County are obese or overweight. What would you do to promote increased biking and walking as a public health priority?
2. Do you support retaining the Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator position with the City? Why or why not?
3. Would you support high speed intercity passenger rail that is now being considered in Iowa? If so, what will you do to encourage the implementation of a useable passenger rail option between Omaha and Chicago? If not, why not?
4. The City of Omaha recently completed a study of parking and determined that “Downtown Omaha has enough public parking to meet today's needs, and the needs for the next 20 years.” Research shows that plentiful parking leads to higher emissions, greater congestion, and depreciated land use. Now that the City of Omaha has a Parking Manager, what role do you see her/him play in reducing the demand for parking and better utilizing currently available parking in the city?
5. How often do you use a Metro bus, bicycling, or walking for transportation? If you have school aged children, how often do they take the bus, bike, or walk to school?