

## **Brandon Huckaby**

### **Introduction**

- ❖ Please briefly describe yourself and why you are running for Knox County Commission.
  - *I'm Brandon Huckaby, a small business advocate, mortgage lending professional, and community organizer here in Knox County. I was raised in a working-class family in East Tennessee, and that background shaped how I see service, opportunity, and what local government should do for everyday people.*
  - *In my career, I've worked closely with families trying to buy their first home, small business owners trying to grow, and neighbors navigating real financial challenges. I also serve in leadership roles with organizations like the Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce, Keep Knoxville Beautiful and the Appalachian Equality Chorus, where I've seen firsthand how strong communities are built through collaboration and local investment.*
  - *I'm running for Knox County Commission because I believe our local government should be focused on practical, people-first solutions. That means addressing housing affordability, supporting smart growth, investing in infrastructure, and making sure working families are not left behind as our county continues to grow.*
  - *This campaign is about bringing a grounded, community-driven voice to the Commission—someone who understands both the challenges and the opportunities Knox County is facing, and who is committed to building a future where more people can live, work, and thrive here.*

### **Use of Active Transportation**

- ❖ How often do you walk for transportation?
  - *Somewhat infrequently*
- ❖ How often do you walk for recreation?
  - *Occasionally*
- ❖ How often do you ride a bicycle for transportation?
  - *Very infrequently*
- ❖ How often do you ride a bicycle for recreation?
  - *Very infrequently*
- ❖ How often do you take public transportation?
  - *Very infrequently*

### **Allocation of Resources for Active Transportation**

- ❖ How do you feel about the current allocation of County resources to pedestrian infrastructure?
  - *Needs to be greatly increased*
- ❖ Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
  - *Pedestrian infrastructure in Knox County has not kept pace with our growth. Too many of our roads lack sidewalks, safe crossings, and basic connectivity, which puts residents at risk and limits access to jobs, schools, and local businesses. This is especially true in areas outside of the urban core, where families often have no safe option but to walk along busy roadways or in ditches.*
  - *Investing in pedestrian infrastructure is not just about walkability. It is about safety, economic development, and quality of life. When we build safer streets, we support small businesses, improve public health, and make our communities more accessible for seniors, children, and people with disabilities.*
  - *We need to take a more proactive and strategic approach by prioritizing sidewalks and greenways in growth areas, coordinating with land use planning, and ensuring that new development contributes to safe, connected infrastructure. As Knox County continues to grow, we have a responsibility to build a community where people can move safely and freely, whether they are driving, biking, or walking.*
- ❖ How do you feel about the current allocation of County resources to bicycle infrastructure?
  - *Needs to be greatly increased*
- ❖ Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
  - *Bicycle infrastructure in Knox County remains limited, disconnected, and in many cases unsafe for everyday use. While there have been meaningful investments within the City, those networks often stop at the city limits, leaving county residents without viable options for commuting or recreation. This is especially important because many working-class families live in the county and travel into the city for work, yet lack safe, alternative transportation routes.*
  - *Investing in bicycle infrastructure is about more than recreation. It creates affordable transportation options, reduces traffic congestion, and supports healthier communities. It also strengthens our local economy by increasing access to jobs and commercial areas without requiring additional car trips.*
  - *To meet the needs of a growing county, we should be prioritizing connected, protected bike lanes, expanding greenway access, and ensuring that new developments contribute to a more complete transportation network. A*

*safer, more connected system benefits everyone, whether they bike daily or simply want the option to do so.*

- ❖ Please describe what your active transportation priorities would be as a member of the Knox County Commission.
  - *As a member of the Knox County Commission, my priorities for active transportation would focus on building a safer, more connected, and more equitable system across the entire county.*
  - *First, I would focus on safety. This includes investing in protected bike lanes where appropriate, improving crossings on high-traffic roads, and incorporating pedestrian and cyclist safety into all road projects from the beginning rather than as an afterthought.*
  - *Second, I would prioritize connectivity. That means expanding greenways, sidewalks, and bike infrastructure beyond the city limits and ensuring they connect to where people actually live, work, and go to school. We need a countywide approach, not isolated projects.*
  - *Third, I would support smart growth and coordination with land use planning. As new developments are approved, they should include sidewalks, bike access, and connectivity to existing infrastructure so we are not creating gaps that are expensive to fix later.*
  - *Finally, I would advocate for leveraging state and federal funding opportunities to expand our impact without overburdening local taxpayers. Active transportation investments are cost-effective, improve quality of life, and help ensure that Knox County grows in a way that is accessible and sustainable for everyone.*

### **Active Transportation Safety**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), which provides comprehensive transportation planning to Knox County, recently published the Regional Roadway Safety Action Plan, making the commitment to reduce fatalities by 66% by 2045. A critical aspect of this work is improving safety for vulnerable road users, as cyclists and pedestrians are 25 times more likely to be killed in a traffic crash compared to a motorist.

- ❖ As a member of the Knox County Commission, what would your priorities be regarding safety for all roadway users, especially vulnerable roadway users such as cyclists and pedestrians?
  - *My priority would be simple: safer roads for everybody, not just faster roads for cars. Too many people do not feel safe walking or biking in Knox County,*

*and the safety plan makes clear that speed, missing infrastructure, and dangerous major corridors are a big part of the problem.*

- *As a County Commissioner, I would push to focus investments where the risk is highest, especially on the High Injury Network and other dangerous corridors. That means sidewalks, safer crossings, better lighting, protected space for bikes where possible, and roadway designs that slow people down and reduce severe crashes*
- ❖ What opportunities do you see for Knox County to pursue the goal of reducing roadway deaths and serious injuries?
  - *Knox County has a real opportunity to be more proactive instead of waiting until after somebody gets hurt or killed. The regional safety plan already gives us a roadmap: focus on the HIN, use predictive analysis to address risky corridors earlier, and move faster on practical safety improvements.*
  - *I think there is also a big opportunity in speed management. Lower speeds, better crossings, and safer street design can make a major difference in whether a crash is survivable, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. The public is ready for that conversation too, because many residents have already said they want safer streets and more walking and biking infrastructure.*
  - *Just as important, Knox County can better align transportation, growth, and development so new projects add connectivity instead of more dangerous gaps.*

### **Active Transportation Infrastructure**

- ❖ Please indicate your support for the following:
  - Sidewalks
    - *Strongly favor*
  - Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
    - *I strongly support sidewalks because they are basic safety infrastructure. Too many roads in Knox County force people to walk in unsafe conditions or not walk at all. The regional safety plan specifically points to missing pedestrian space as a major issue, especially on major corridors and in parts of unincorporated Knox County. It also recommends sidewalks as a proven safety countermeasure.*
  - Unprotected bike lanes (bike lanes without any physical barriers providing separation from the lane of vehicular traffic)
    - *Neutral*
  - Please explain the reasoning behind your response.

- *I selected neutral because unprotected bike lanes can help improve connectivity in some lower-speed, lower-volume areas, but on many of our higher-speed roads they do not provide the level of safety people need to feel comfortable biking.*
  - Protected bike lanes (bike lanes with physical barriers providing separation from the lane of vehicular traffic)
    - *Strongly favor*
  - Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
    - *I strongly favor protected bike lanes because physical separation gives people a much safer and more realistic option for biking, especially on busy roads. If we want more people to actually use bicycle infrastructure, it has to feel safe for everyday riders, not just the most confident cyclists.*
  - Greenways
    - *Strongly favor*
  - Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
    - *I strongly favor greenways because they create safe, connected space for walking, biking, and recreation away from traffic. They improve quality of life, expand access to parks and jobs, and give families a practical way to move through the community without always getting in a car. I also believe Knox County needs to do a better job extending these connections beyond the city limits so county residents benefit too.*
  - Traffic calming (improvements in non-motorist safety, mobility, and comfort typically achieved by reducing vehicle speeds or volumes on a single street or a street network)
    - *Strongly favor*
  - Please explain the reasoning behind your response.
    - *I strongly favor traffic calming because speed is one of the biggest factors in whether a crash becomes a tragedy. Safer street design protects pedestrians, cyclists, kids, seniors, and drivers alike. Traffic calming is not about making travel harder. It is about making sure our roads are designed for safety, not just speed.*
- ❖ Please describe your vision for active transportation infrastructure in Knox County, and how you would use your position as a member of the Knox County Commission to achieve that vision.
  - *My vision is a Knox County where walking and biking are safe, connected, and realistic options for more people, not just recreational activities for a few areas. Right now, too much of our infrastructure is fragmented.*

*Sidewalks broken or nonexistent. Bike routes feel unsafe. Greenways often stop short of where people actually live, especially in the county, even though many working families commute into the city every day.*

- *As a County Commissioner, I would push for a more connected countywide approach. That means prioritizing sidewalks, safer crossings, greenway expansion, and protected bike infrastructure where it makes sense, while making sure transportation planning keeps pace with growth. I would also work to better align infrastructure decisions with land use and development so we stop creating gaps that are expensive and dangerous to fix later.*
- *Just as importantly, I would use the position to advocate for collaboration between Knox County, the City of Knoxville, the TPO, TDOT, and developers so projects are not planned in isolation. My goal would be to help build a transportation system that improves safety, expands access, and gives more people the freedom to get to work, school, parks, and local businesses without having to rely on a car for every trip.*

### **Miscellaneous**

- ❖ In respect to active transportation in Knox County, what do you think the County has done well?
  - *The County has at least helped move the conversation in the right direction. There is more recognition now that greenways, sidewalks, and safer road design matter, and that growth has to come with better infrastructure. That is important progress, even if the work is far from finished.*
- ❖ In respect to active transportation in Knox County, what do you think the County could do better?
  - *Knox County needs to be more proactive, more connected, and more countywide in its approach. Too often, sidewalks, bike infrastructure, and greenways feel fragmented or stop where the city ends, even though many working families live in the county and commute in every day.*
- ❖ Is there anything else you would like to share related to active transportation, safety, and/or infrastructure?
  - *I believe active transportation is about more than mobility. It is about safety, access, health, and fairness. Not everyone can or wants to rely on a car for every trip, and our infrastructure should reflect that reality. As Knox County grows, we have a real opportunity to build a community that is safer, more connected, and more accessible for everyone. I would be proud to support that work on County Commission.*