



## 2025 BOMA Candidate Responses

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Ward 1 (Cool Springs, McEwen Drive)

**Bev Burger** (Incumbent)

Q: How often do you and your family walk or bike in Franklin? Are these trips for recreation, work, or errands?

A: My family and I walk daily—primarily for recreation, health, and walking our dog—but we also regularly walk to run errands.

Q: Residents gave low marks to the City of Franklin in the [2025 Community Survey](#) for ease of walking (58th percentile) and ease of biking (37th percentile). What action would you take on BOMA to improve this type of connectivity in our city?

A: As a member of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, I have consistently been one of the most vocal supporters of improving road and bike connectivity. I have even voted \*against\* certain projects that failed to include proper infrastructure connections. City and county governments must work together to ensure better integration where our infrastructure meets or parallels, rather than operating in silos.

Over the years, developers have increasingly embraced the importance of smarter connectivity. However, progress has often been hindered by resistance from certain resident groups and the county highway commission, who have not fully recognized how critical connectivity is to our community's quality of life, health, and freedom of movement. Ending streets where sensible connections could exist creates unnecessary gridlock and limits mobility.

Franklin must continue to build sidewalks that serve multiple users—walkers, runners, parents with strollers, and cyclists—making them wider and more accessible. Expanding and connecting our trail system is equally vital to promoting healthier, more active lifestyles. While the city has done well adding bike lanes to new and redeveloped roads, we must also embrace “share the road” strategies where new lanes are not feasible.

I strongly support expanding multimodal trails throughout the city. At the same time, we need stronger road safety measures: stricter enforcement against distracted driving, tougher penalties, and ongoing public awareness campaigns to keep both drivers and pedestrians safe.

Q: While the city continues to grow, roads cannot be expanded indefinitely. How can local government best promote walking and biking as an alternative option to driving?

A: Expanding roads is not a sustainable solution. Instead, Franklin should prioritize roundabouts, connectivity improvements, and dedicated turn lanes over simply adding lanes.

We must enhance and I support expand sidewalks, improve pedestrian crosswalks to make them safer and more visible, and ensure new developments and public amenities are connected to the existing sidewalk and trail network. Connectivity is key to reducing congestion and creating viable alternatives to driving.

Equally important is public education. Our Parks and Communications Departments should actively promote biking and walking through marketing campaigns, wayfinding resources, and community programs. Residents need easier access to trail maps, clearer identification of safe biking areas, and ongoing encouragement to choose walking or cycling over driving when possible.

Q: What area of your ward do you believe needs the most urgent safety improvements for people walking and biking? What infrastructure changes are needed from the city or TDOT at this location?

A: The stretch of Oxford Glen from McEwen Drive south to Candytuff Court. This section urgently needs a multimodal trail. Today, far too many residents—including families with strollers—are forced to walk and run in the roadway itself. With a Publix just south of Candytuff Court, safe pedestrian access to the store from nearby subdivisions is essential. Installing a multimodal trail here would first provide a safe, practical, and much-needed connection.

Q: What is your favorite or most used bicycle/pedestrian facility in Franklin?

A: My favorites include Eastern Flank Battlefield Park and Harlinsdale Farm, both of which provide tranquil, scenic spaces for walking and biking. For a more urban setting, I greatly value the longer multimodal paths and sidewalks along McEwen Drive, Carothers Parkway, and Mack Hatcher.

I am especially excited about the new multimodal trail being built on the south side of McEwen Drive (Phase IV). This project will be a tremendous asset to the east side of Franklin, giving families safe access to Liberty Park and Smith Park. Beyond these, the many trails built across our city are a true benefit to residents and should remain a priority for future investment.

## Ward 2 (Hillsboro Road, Franklin Road)

**Matt Brown** (Incumbent)

Q: How often do you and your family walk or bike in Franklin? Are these trips for recreation, work, or errands?

A: We're lucky to live in one of the most connected parts of Franklin. Our home in Chestnut Bend sits right on a trail network that ties together our daily life—work, church, favorite restaurants, and parks—all within about two miles. Julie and I get in weekday evening or weekend morning walks (and yes, we fully believe in earning those La Hacienda/ Starbucks/Dairy Queen calories). We've both walked to work—Julie to the Five Points Post Office and me to my office nearby—and we frequently stroll to Bicentennial Park or downtown for events. Since the Harlinsdale Bridge opened, it's even easy to walk to Church of the City and over to The Park at Harlinsdale Farm. We try not to take any of this for granted— every crisp morning over the river reminds us how blessed we are to have these trails.

Q: Residents gave low marks to the City of Franklin in the [2025 Community Survey](#) for ease of walking (58th percentile) and ease of biking (37th percentile). What action would you take on BOMA to improve this type of connectivity in our city?

A: I'm proud of the progress we've made—especially in Ward 2—but we've got more to do. Over the last four years we've added nearly five miles of trails and multi-use sidewalks in Ward 2 (including on 96W and Mack Hatcher), funded and built the Harlinsdale Bridge, finished the eastern sidewalk connection through Bicentennial Park, and advanced grant funding to complete the Mack Hatcher trail between Franklin Rd and Hillsboro Rd.

Here's how I'd keep pushing:

- Double-down on “small links that unlock big networks.” Beyond major capital projects, I'll keep using sidewalk-gap funds to stitch neighborhoods into the main trail grid—like we did for Carlisle and Cornerstone to reach the 96W path—because a few hundred feet can open miles of safe walking/biking. Note: The City's “Improving Walkability” program and Sidewalk Gap initiative is exactly the kind of tool we can keep scaling.
- Protect what we've built. When we re-strip or widen for vehicles, we must not unintentionally sever existing bike/ped connections. My bias is to hold the line on trail continuity and safety first.
- Bring in outside dollars. I'll continue chasing TDOT Transportation Alternatives (TAP) and federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants to accelerate trail, crossing, and safety projects without overburdening local taxpayers.

And because partnerships matter: I serve on the Friends of Franklin Parks (FOFP) Riverwalk & Trails Committee, which works alongside the City to expand and enhance our trail network. That collaboration helped raise visibility and momentum for the Harlinsdale connection and other links around town.

Q: While the city continues to grow, roads cannot be expanded indefinitely. How can local government best promote walking and biking as an alternative option to driving?

A: Two big levers: how we build and how we move.

1. Build better neighborhoods (not sprawl). That's why I developed the Village Green concept modeled after Serenbe—preserving ~70% open space while clustering a mix of homes, services, and amenities so daily needs are a short walk or ride away. This approach conserves land, lowers infrastructure costs, and cuts car trips.

I also supported Middle Eight in our downtown core - because an activated, walkable mixed-use community adds life to Main Street and the Factory district, and it brings the “missing middle” housing our small businesses need for workforce and second-story tenants. All of which is walkable, bikable or serviced by transit.

2. Design for safe, low-stress trips.

- Roundabouts in the right places. They calm speeds, reduce severe crashes, and can let us reclaim space from extra lanes for wider multi-use paths and streetscapes—think 96E/Murfreesboro at Mack Hatcher, Royal Oaks, and Carothers.
- High-quality bike infrastructure. Protected lanes and intersections grow ridership and cut crash risk—much more than paint alone—so we should use them where feasible on key corridors and at complex junctions.
- Health + economic wins. Walkable design helps residents meet daily activity needs and supports local businesses; national studies show active-transportation investments yield outsized health and economic returns.

Q:What area of your ward do you believe needs the most urgent safety improvements for people walking and biking? What infrastructure changes are needed from the city or TDOT at this location?

A: Hillsboro Rd at Fulton Greer. When the state re-striped north of that intersection after the Mack Hatcher work, it created a pinch point and squeezed the bike lanes— right where we see heavy bike/ped activity alongside fast traffic. I've been working with the Brownland Farms team on a non-residential, recreation-focused plan that would add trails and bike repair stations to bypass the pinch point, and I've asked TDOT to include this segment for a recreational/safety upgrade as they pursue floodplain improvements on Hillsboro.

Q: What is your favorite or most used bicycle/pedestrian facility in Franklin?

A: Living in Chestnut Bend, I'm spoiled: our neighborhood trails flow straight into Downtown and, thanks to the new Harlinsdale Bridge, over to the incomparable Park at Harlinsdale Farm—that's our regular loop. What I'm most excited about next is access to Roper's Knob. With the City's Creekside acquisition and planned 13-acre access purchase, the vision of hiking/biking up to that historic overlook is finally in sight. That connection would be a special “only-in-Franklin” experience—history, views, and trails in one trip.

## **BK Muvvala**

No Response

## **Erinn Watkins**

Q: How often do you and your family walk or bike in Franklin? Are these trips for recreation, work, or errands?

A: When I was stationed in Arlington, VA I sometimes biked to work in the summer. It was about three miles away. I also participated in a beginner bike ride in the city. After retiring from the military I moved to Franklin and lived near Del Rio Pike. This neighborhood was a great area to ride my bike. I've since moved to Cool Springs and recently traded in that bike for a newer one to hopefully join a beginner biking group as a source of exercise. I think biking/walking for recreation, work, or errands should be a safe option for anyone who wants to take part.

Q: Residents gave low marks to the City of Franklin in the [2025 Community Survey](#) for ease of walking (58th percentile) and ease of biking (37th percentile). What action would you take on BOMA to improve this type of connectivity in our city?

A: The City has many places that provide good biking and walking opportunities, but many people don't know where the trails/routes/paths are located, and where there is free parking to access these opportunities. The City could do a better job of publicizing this information and promote biking/walking in partnership with private and non-profit organizations that are engaged in these endeavors and events. I would also encourage a "beginner bike ride" event during the summer months as a way to get to know the city. Another problem is that many working people don't have much time for walking and biking because they spend over an hour and a half each day going to and from work. The traffic is getting worse. Requiring a Comprehensive Development Impact Study for large developments will allow BOMA to better plan for growth by knowing how it will affect the city as it relates to walkable and bike-friendly streets.

Q: While the city continues to grow, roads cannot be expanded indefinitely. How can local government best promote walking and biking as an alternative option to driving?

A: Local government must use Comprehensive Development Impact Studies to better understand how uncontrolled growth affects the quality of life for Franklin voters. A quick search in the ["Verbatims" document](#) in the linked study yields 76 times the word "growth" was used by respondents. This demonstrates that voters are aware that growth is a major concern here in Franklin. Developers have contributed a lot of money to BOMA candidates. The huge amount of campaign funds from developers has been viewed by other cities and states as a conflict of interest and has been banned, though it is not illegal to do so here in Tennessee. Unlike many on BOMA, I will not accept campaign funds from developers. I believe biking/walking should be promoted as an option for those who want to take part in doing so and the City can do a better job of publicizing what Franklin has to offer especially regarding trails. However, uncontrolled growth may inhibit more voters from actually wanting to consider biking and/or walking.

Q:What area of your ward do you believe needs the most urgent safety improvements for people walking and biking? What infrastructure changes are needed from the city or TDOT at this location?

A: The areas in my ward that are closest to the City's core are where safety should be improved first. I live in Cool Springs and as a beginner biker, I presently don't feel comfortable biking or walking due to the heavy congestion and infrastructure gaps. I have walked on Mallory Station Road before, out of necessity, and I don't believe I'd do it again. I would rather seek out biking or walking groups and stick to trails. The current BOMA has placed growth first, and infrastructure development as a much lower priority. This has resulted in urban sprawl, congestion, and a lowering of our standard of living. As many of the comments in the survey suggest, there needs to be better planning prior to approving more developments. We can do that by requiring a Comprehensive Development Impact Study for all large developments, both current and future.

Q: What is your favorite or most used bicycle/pedestrian facility in Franklin?

A: I walked the trail behind the Franklin Recreation Complex and it was quite enjoyable. When I lived off of Del Rio Pike, I did ride my bike in the neighborhood a few times during the summer months. When I lived in Fieldstone Farms, I did want to bike into downtown Franklin but I never did because the traffic was too much for me to manage. I've used the bikes and treadmills in the Franklin Recreation Complex. I've also used the bikes in another local gym. Since moving to Franklin in 2020, I've lost about 30 lbs.

## Ward 3 (Lewisburg Pike, Berry Farms)

**Jason Potts** (Incumbent)

No response.

## Ward 4 (Downtown Franklin, Westhaven)

**Patrick Baggett** (Incumbent)

Q: How often do you and your family walk or bike in Franklin? Are these trips for recreation, work, or errands?

A: My family and I walk and bike very regularly in Franklin. We live close to both parks and Downtown, so it's a common activity for us. Most often, we walk for recreation at Pinkerton Park, but we also walk or ride to Downtown events, including the Pilgrimage Festival each year. We often walk or ride to other events throughout the city, especially those near Downtown. One of my favorite routines with my wife is walking or biking to dinner in the spring and fall when the weather is nice—it makes the time together even more special because we get to enjoy our town outside the car. I also regularly walk to meetings in Downtown and love that I'm able to do so.

Q: Residents gave low marks to the City of Franklin in the [2025 Community Survey](#) for ease of walking (58th percentile) and ease of biking (37th percentile). What action would you take on BOMA to improve this type of connectivity in our city?

A: We need to build sidewalks and fill gaps at a much faster pace. Many of the neighborhoods I represent are legacy neighborhoods, and it is very costly to retrofit them. I want to implement an annual program of sidewalk improvements in these legacy neighborhoods that currently have none. We'll never have the money to do them all at once, but by phasing them in annually, we can make steady progress. This effort goes beyond just filling "gaps" and requires a long-term plan. I would work to incorporate this funding into our regular annual budget or the CIP, depending on available sources.

Q: While the city continues to grow, roads cannot be expanded indefinitely. How can local government best promote walking and biking as an alternative option to driving?

A: It comes down to balance. While roads cannot be expanded indefinitely, we must work with TDOT to ensure proper funding for major roads that serve commuters. At the same time, we need to make walking and biking more practical and attractive, especially for major events, by strengthening our pedestrian infrastructure. Our new Safe Streets Plan does a great job of identifying priority projects, and I fully support moving quickly to fund and execute them. I would continue to promote and support these initiatives as I have for the past four years.

Q: What area of your ward do you believe needs the most urgent safety improvements for people walking and biking? What infrastructure changes are needed from the city or TDOT at this location?

A: Our legacy neighborhoods are the most urgent need. Many of these neighborhoods were built without sidewalks, and right now we have no plan to address that. The sidewalk gap fund is helpful when filling missing connections, but it doesn't address neighborhoods with no sidewalks at all. My proposed phased plan for funding and building sidewalks in these areas over time is the solution. We just need to commit to it and fund it.

Q: What is your favorite or most used bicycle/pedestrian facility in Franklin?

A: My favorite is the Hwy 96 East sidewalk. It has connected multiple neighborhoods and created a true sense of community. Now, neighbors can wave as they pass by and engage in ways that weren't possible before. I also really appreciate the Franklin Road sidewalk, which has become a hub of activity for both residents and tourists. These facilities show that sidewalks do more than reduce traffic, they build community. The sense of connection they create cannot be captured in data, but it's deeply felt in how neighborhoods interact and grow closer.

**Rodney Taylor**

Q: How often do you and your family walk or bike in Franklin? Are these trips for recreation, work, or errands?

A: I try to walk several times each week, but it is generally along the sidewalks of my complex. I would love to have more places closer for me and my dog, Charley, to walk. I have also been considering doing some biking as well but have not yet purchased a bike. As soon as I do, I plan to make that a regular part of my daily regimen. Bike trails nearby would also be helpful and desirable.

Q: Residents gave low marks to the City of Franklin in the [2025 Community Survey](#) for ease of walking (58th percentile) and ease of biking (37th percentile). What action would you take on BOMA to improve this type of connectivity in our city?

A: I would encourage the establishment of more parks and recreation areas. Some of the lands that have been annexed and developed residentially over the last four years could have been used for parks and leisure activities. I would propose more accessible parks with walking and biking trails that are closer to all residents. While the parks we have are wonderful, it is a long drive for some residents, especially older ones, to access them.

Q: While the city continues to grow, roads cannot be expanded indefinitely. How can local government best promote walking and biking as an alternative option to driving?

A: It is really all about making walking and biking the easy choice, safe, direct and enjoyable, so that choosing not to drive seems a natural, not burdensome decision. Some of my suggestions would include: Add sidewalks, protected bike lanes and multi-use trails that connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, shopping areas and transit hubs. Use clear signage, wayfinding maps and safe crossings at busy intersections. I would also ensure that walking and biking routes connect directly to transit stops and then provide bike racks on buses and at transit stations. I would also support local businesses in pedestrian-friendly districts. These are just a representative few of my ideas.

Q: What area of your ward do you believe needs the most urgent safety improvements for people walking and biking? What infrastructure changes are needed from the city or TDOT at this location?

A: Probably the Columbia Avenue corridor between the police station and Mack Hatcher. Traffic poses a problem and in spite of the concentration of population west of Columbia and south of 96, there is simply not a safe way to walk or bike along this particular corridor. I would propose a dedicated bike lane both north and south as well as well-maintained sidewalks along the entire corridor, especially once Columbia Avenue has been restructured by TDOT.

Q: What is your favorite or most used bicycle/pedestrian facility in Franklin?

A: Probably Pinkerton Park.