



## 2015 Walk Bike Nashville Vice-Mayoral/Council Candidate Questionnaire

Name of Candidate: John Cooper

Office Sought (Vice-Mayor, Metro-Council): Council at Large

District (if applicable):

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1. If (re)elected what would you do to promote walking and biking in Nashville and ensure all Nashvillians, regardless of who they are and where they are trying to go, have access to real transportation options?

Walking and and biking need to be important parts of our lifestyle. Mass transportation begins first with sidewalks and safe bicycle routes.

2. The [Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways](#), which prioritizes where to build new sidewalks and bikeways, was last updated in 2008- before Nashville began experiencing explosive growth. The plan was slated to be updated every 5 years, and thus is due for an update. What should our priorities for walking and biking be in the next version? How would you go about updating the plan?

Essentially every residential/commercial location planned in Nashville needs to have walking and bicycle access. The Planning Commission should ask this question for every applicant and expect applicants to connect safely with the system.

3. In 2014, 18 pedestrians were killed, and many more injured, on the roads of Davidson County. Nashville is currently ranked the 15th most dangerous city in America for pedestrians, according to [Dangerous by Design](#) (Smart Growth America). [Vision Zero](#) is an international effort dedicated to the belief that even one preventable pedestrian injury or death is too many. Streets should be engineered to protect all road users – especially pedestrians, who are most exposed to dangerous conditions on the road. How can we apply Vision Zero policies in Nashville? What can we do as a city to increase safety for all road-users in Nashville?

Let's apply the best in traffic and transportation engineering to making pedestrian and bicycle use safe. We shouldn't wait for tragedy for action.



4. Where do you think Metro should construct sidewalks first? How should Metro prioritize sidewalk projects?

Sidewalks should be a city priority. Connector roads and arterials should have sidewalks first. Any successful mass transit still requires people being able to get safely to bus or train stops by foot or by bike.

5. As part of the [Nashville Next](#) process, the Planning Department has collected public input to create a long-term transportation plan called [Access Nashville 2040](#). The plan recognizes that our citizens do not desire, nor can our city afford, expensive new roads. Rather than pursue costly widening projects that provide a temporary solution to congestion and a permanent maintenance burden, we must operate our existing street network more efficiently by expanding access to multimodal transportation. Do you support this conclusion? What would you do to ensure Nashvillians can use walking and biking as real transportation options, and not just forms of recreation?

The car-only environment has to make way for other, parallel forms of transportation. This will produce a healthier lifestyle, better environment and a better community.

6. Studies consistently show that the greater the population density in a given neighborhood, the more walkable that neighborhood will be (e.g. walking to grocery store, work, transit). What are your thoughts about density in Nashville and how it relates to transportation challenges?

Density requires more transportation options. Successful planning for that density requires making those choices available.

7. There is clear support in the Nashville community for spending more money on sidewalks, but the source of funding is always the major question. Do you think the city should spend more, less or the same amount on sidewalks and bikeways? If more, what policies or initiatives would you propose to increase funding for sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects? If less, what would you opt to not fund and why?

By popular demand, the City should build more sidewalks. One source for funding this sidewalk expansion is the water and sewer fee. Water and sewer work is the largest part of the cost of new sidewalk construction.



8. While our sidewalk, greenway and bikeway networks are expanding, there are still many gaps in connectivity that rule out biking and walking as real transportation options for many Nashvillians who would otherwise be interested in biking or walking to work, school, the grocery store or to community events. What initiatives or policies would you propose to bridge the gaps that separate walkable and bikeable areas from adjacent communities?

Nashville needs a master plan to connect all major greenways. This kind of connectivity will make us a truly livable city.

9. Everyone wants to be able to get across the city quickly, yet roads designed to carry cars as quickly as possible are usually the most dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Do you support adding traffic calming approaches (example: [bulb outs](#); [road diets](#); [slow zones](#)) along Nashville's major pikes and arteries? When are these projects appropriate?

In so many ways, lots and lots of slow traffic is better than lots and lots of fast traffic. From the neighborhood perspective, traffic calming creates livable communities. For every arterial traffic path, there should be a parallel connector/neighborhood traffic path for safe walking and cycling with appropriate calming.

10. Nashville is currently a Bronze [Bicycle Friendly Community](#), as determined by the [League of American Bicyclists](#). What would you do to move us towards becoming a Silver Bicycle Friendly community?

Make walking and cycling a city-wide development goal and part of every new redevelopment project.

11. Are there any specific bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure projects or initiatives that you would work to complete during your term?

These projects need to be a county wide priority. The safer we make it, the more it will be used. The more it is used, the more Nashville will be a uniquely livable community. Sidewalks to get us to greenways, greenways that connect to each other, safe alternate routes to arterials. Everyone brought into the plan.