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# In their own words...

## 2024 Bike Scottsdale Candidate Questionnaire

 Natalie@BikeScottsdale.org  July 7, 2024

Scottsdale has maintained its designation as a Gold-Level bicycle friendly community by the [League of American Bicyclists](#) since 2011 – but what does that mean? For some, it means we have [a coveted 280 miles of bike lanes, 125 miles of multiuse paths, and 160 miles of unpaved trails](#). But there is room for improvement. When Scottsdale City staff surveyed residents last summer regarding how bike friendly Scottsdale is, outside of not having a bike to ride, the biggest barrier or challenge that prevented respondents from biking more often was *that they did not have safe routes to bike near their homes or work*.

Scottsdale City Council provides influential direction that makes a difference in how safe, active, and healthy our community is. The office of mayor and three council member positions (i.e., four of seven voting members) will be decided during the [upcoming Scottsdale Election cycle](#). If a candidate receives a majority of all legal votes cast during the primary on July 30, 2024, they will be elected. If not, the candidates will participate in a runoff election held on November 5, 2024. **Bike Scottsdale** recently asked the candidates to respond to a questionnaire regarding issues that are important to the Scottsdale bicycling community. Here are their responses. If the candidate is not listed below, they did not respond to the questionnaire. Happy Voting!

### Candidates

MAYOR

[Linda Milhaven – Response](#)

[David Ortega – Response](#)

CITY COUNCILMEMBER

[Tammy Caputi – Response](#)

[Stephen Casares – Response](#)

[Tom Durham – Response](#)

[Maryann McAllen – Response](#)

### Questions

1. What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?
2. How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?
3. Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?
4. Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?
5. With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?

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## Responses

### Linda Milhaven – Mayoral Candidate

#### **What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

Traffic is not moving smoothly through our City. Improving signals and better coordination of construction projects will help. Our signal timing used to be the envy of other cities - no longer. We need to do better. Our left turn signals used to be all lagging signals but now they are a mix of leading and lagging signals that interrupt the smooth flow of traffic. We need to improve signal timing around construction projects. We need to make sure that we coordinate construction projects so when folks drive an alternate route to avoid road construction they don't run into another construction project.

Public transportation is also an issue but I don't have a solution. There is no political will to consider light rail and it would require a resident vote. We need greater ridership to improve bus service. Rideshare may help as it expands. In the meantime, it is a challenge without an obvious solution.

#### **How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

When we make our roads safer for cyclists and pedestrians, we make our roads safer for motorists as well. I am cautious passing cyclists when they are in bike lanes and even more careful when there is no bike lane. As we go through the routine maintenance of our streets, and when we build new streets, we must make safety our first priority. Adding bike lanes and wider sidewalks will help.

Some people have invented a conspiracy called Road Diets. I do not support the flawed argument that the City is intentionally making traffic worse by replacing vehicle lanes with bike lanes. We can have both. We can improve the safety of a street, by adding bike lanes, wider sidewalks and hawk lights, and support the efficient flow of traffic. The project on 68th St between Indian School and Thomas did exactly that.

#### **Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

I support the tax but it was not my first choice for how we fund the needed improvements. If it fails, I would work to ask the residents to expand the use of the second Preserve tax to include investments, maintenance and operations of the Preserve and parks. The second tax is limited to purchasing land and building trailheads. All the trailheads have been built and after the land is paid for there will be \$250 million dollars left over. If we expand the use of that tax, the \$250 million would be equivalent to 10 years of the new tax and go a long way to meeting these needs.

#### **Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

As we complete routine repaving projects, we need to be improving the sidewalks and be adding bike lanes where possible.

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**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

The City's proposed Sustainability Plan provides information and tactics for the community and City operations to produce fewer greenhouse emissions by being more energy efficient and making better use of solar power. We need to get the plan approved, dispel the myths around it and begin a communication campaign to help the community understand how they can help.

**David Ortega – Mayoral Candidate**

**What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

Awareness and double caution when driving in Scottsdale, as a leisure or avid cyclist, and every-day pedestrian are paramount.

I highlighted multi- mode bike safety in my 2024 State of the City-- announcing a program for "Zero Bike Fatalities" which I initiated in October 2023. Awareness begins with partners such as schools, bike clubs and Police and Fire departments. City communications in tandem with SUSD prepared and rolled out PSAs to promote safety highlighted by the April 2024 Tour de Scottsdale. As mayor I will continue this effort.

**How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

As mayor I have increased bike lanes, paths, and filled important bike lanes and sidewalk gaps. All new roads include bike lanes, and when possible restriped roads have buffers between cars and bike lanes.

I also have increased the number of lighted pedestrian crossings and bike underpasses. Pedestrian and bike infrastructure are a crucial part of Scottsdale's healthy lifestyle and an essential economic driver.

**Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

I unconditionally support the Protect & Preserve ballot measure which renews our portfolio of 48 parks, multi-use paths, addresses vulnerabilities in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and assigns police, fire and park ranger personnel at each site. Our quality of life and residential and commercial property values are underpinned by our amenities. I will work tirelessly to win the Ballot measures in November.

**Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

Scottsdale is a Gold level bike-friendly city and we are striving for platinum level. Connectivity for safety is of upmost importance and missing segments have been identified and others are in planning stages at the Transportation Commission. Council adopted the Bike Routes plan including the Old Town connections which are needed. Representing Scottsdale at MAG, we garnered support for grant funding to interconnect the Green Belt at 2nd Street as an east west linkage to bring more users to Old Town and connect to the Arizona Canal.

As mayor I will continue to seek excellence especially since maintenance and safety park rangers are needed.

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**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

As mayor I championed the adoption of the IgCC Green Building code which integrates EV charging stations by ordinance for multi-housing locations. For single-family residences, provisions include solar rooftop areas for future installation and increased building insulation to reduce energy use. Saving energy, water and good health/fitness practice are not optional.

City of Scottsdale participates in the MAG regional Transportation Plan and I support Prop 479 to respond as a region. Decades ago we started within the city organization to consolidate efforts, model communitywide measures and deliver excellent city services while saving energy. Most major corporate organizations such as Scottsdale Unified School District, Honor Health, Vanguard and Nationwide have actionable plans.

In 2024 under my leadership, we will complete the first Sustainability Plan, then move forward to establish baseline performance and measure results over the next three years.

**Tammy Caputi – City Council Candidate**

**What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

The biggest transportation problem we have is the 150,000 people driving in and out of the city every day to work. Any solution is tied to our housing inventory and supporting live/work/play options that decrease the need for a long commute. We can improve traffic with careful monitoring and timing of our lights, timing construction projects to not coincide with major events, and improving traffic flow and safety with appropriate signals and roadway configurations. When all the long-term planned improvements that have been made since 2006 are complete, over 146 new lane miles will be added to our roadway network. We're continually positioning ourselves to best-handle projected traffic flows, and we don't implement any policies to reduce road width or remove car lanes.

**How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

I'm a regular cyclist on our roads (and occasionally our mountains too!), so these questions are personal for me. As a City Councilwoman, I recognize the importance of cars to our Scottsdale lifestyle. Improvements are guided by our [2022 Transportation Action Plan \(TAP\)](#), which provides an overview of Scottsdale's current transportation infrastructure for all modes, as well as a roadmap for the city's transportation future over the next ten years. Per our TAP, we will continue to make sure our transportation network maximizes travel route choices, travel mode choices, and access and mobility for all ages and abilities. The TAP features policies to develop safe, efficient and consistent roadways for all modes of transportation.

The overwhelming amount of transportation projects planned and in progress are adding capacity to the network for all users in various ways. Here are some examples:

- Pima Road will be expanded to a four lanes cross-section from Indian Bend to McDowell Road.
- Dual left turn lanes are being constructed at Indian Bend and Hayden for additional turning capacity.
- A pedestrian/bicycle underpass will be constructed at Hayden/Chaparral that will provide safety for all users and additional green time for the traffic traveling to the Loop 101.
- 68th St will have a sidewalk from Indian School to Camelback to protect pedestrians in the neighborhood.

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When neighbors and staff identify specific hotspots and solutions, we support them! When we repave roads as part of regular maintenance, we improve crossings, ADA accessibility and where appropriate add bike and pedestrian lanes. We advocate for streets that accommodate all users.

**Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

Our residents must decide this issue, which is why I voted to put the question on the November ballot. We have 44 parks and a \$1 billion investment (30,000 acres) in our Preserve. Our residents voted to tax themselves to acquire the land, and they deserve a voice in how to pay for its maintenance. The recent “Wildcat” and “Boulder” fires started next to the Preserve and highlight the need for ongoing maintenance. Our open spaces are what set us apart from other cities. It would be helpful to have a dedicated funding source for our parks and Preserve, but this is the residents’ decision- I represent their voices. Without the tax we can fund park maintenance and improvements the way we always have- with a strong economic engine that generates vibrant sales tax revenue.

**Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

The TAP [Bikeway Element](#) serves to expand and enhance the on-street and paved path network to travel to destinations in Scottsdale and neighboring communities. We have 206 miles of bike lanes, 125 miles of paved shared-use paths, and 110 miles more paths planned. Paths link to the on-street network while providing connectivity to a wider range of bicyclists. They also feature crossings for comfort and separation from vehicles. Goals from the Bikeway Element include building a continuous network with seamless connections to destinations, expanding the network to increase biking for all trips, increase bike usage and improve safety, and Achieve a Platinum-level Bicycle Friendly Community certification from the [League of American Bicyclists](#) (LAB).

**Implementation** of the TAP involves placement in our annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process for funding improvements and prioritizing non-motorized access. City staff regularly applies for regional and federal funding opportunities to leverage the city’s 0.2% Transportation Sales Tax to fund improvements. Citizen input, connection to regional networks, and completion of network gaps are key to our transportation investments. We prioritize connections to schools, businesses, homes, transit, and city facilities like parks, community centers and libraries along planned improvements. Bike lanes, paved paths and sidewalks, and unpaved trails are integrated into roadway improvements such as the current improvements along Pima Road.

On the streets we try to continue bike lanes to intersections so they don’t end midblock. In most cases where bike lanes end, we’re limited by space and available right-of-way until better improvements can be added in the future. In these locations the city posts warning signs to warn of the change in advance.

The Strategic Transportation Safety Plan, funded through the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All program, will kick off soon with the goal of reducing serious traffic injuries across all modes. The plan will include extensive public input, and we hope residents will get involved in this process.

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**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

As I mentioned in my first answer, supporting live/work/play options can decrease the need for a long commute. Roundabouts and properly timed signals keep cars flowing and reduce the need to idle which decreases pollution. I like to cycle, but I recognize we are a car-centric city, so finding ways to optimize car trips, making sure people know where centrally located garages are so they can park once, and reducing idling and speeding with left-turn cutouts, right-sized roadways and signal timing are the biggest bang for our buck.

**Stephen Casares – City Council Candidate**

**What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

I believe our most pressing transportation issue is the amount/pace of development and new residents coming into our City, concurrently with construction/contractor vehicles during high traffic hours.

**How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

Very simply, re-stripe turn lanes and bike lanes, concurrently with pavement improvement projects.

**Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

Yes, I support the sales tax extension to pay for repairs and maintenance of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and our 44 parks. Very simply, it's worth it -- our preserve and parks system provide an invaluable, intangible and positive social service to our community and visitors. Our citizens deserve the highest quality of parks and recreation, because it is what makes Scottsdale unique and special.

**Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

First, receive detailed information from citizens on the specific locations. Second, present information to the City Manager's office to task the staff to draw a proposal for improvements; very likely the Street Operations Division within the Transportation Department. Lastly, measure the proposal against the budget, and vote on the safety benefits.

**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

Mitigate, if not outright tailoring back on new multi-unit construction. The influx of new, fellow neighbors has had the unintended consequence of placing both near and long-term constraints on social services, water, and traffic congestion. Curtailing development will likely reduce the transportation-derived greenhouse gas emissions.

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## Tom Durham – City Council Candidate

### **What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

Despite what some people think, our traffic is and has been relatively flat over the last few years. There are a few trouble spots, such as Scottsdale Road and the 101. But generally I think Scottsdale traffic moves pretty well for a City of this size and popularity. We are expanding roads in growing areas, such as north Pima and Happy Valley. More work will be done on north Scottsdale Road, also.

### **How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

I would add more bike lanes where needed. I would also add more HAWK beacons (pedestrian hybrid beacons) where appropriate. The example of 68th Street shows how I would approach the problem. 68th Street had a stretch without bike lanes, while there were bike lanes to both the south and the north. So bike lanes were needed to make a complete stretch of bike lanes. The neighbors also wanted HAWK beacons to help pedestrians walk east to Old Town. The Council voted for a project, using mostly federal funds, to solve these issues.

I have received enormous criticism, along with other members of the Council, for this project. But I am absolutely convinced it was the right thing to do for Scottsdale residents.

### **Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

I enthusiastically support the 0.15% sales tax proposal. I voted to create the Task Force which created the tax proposal and I think it is an excellent idea. First, the sales tax will be going down. Second, the burden will be shared with tourists and visitors who will use our parks and the Preserve. The burden won't be solely on Scottsdale residents. Finally, these types of maintenance expenditures can't be funded by bonds, despite what some critics say.

If the sales tax doesn't pass (I think it will) we will continue to fund park maintenance and improvements out of the General Fund. But there is a lot of pressure on the General Fund, especially since most of it goes to fire and police. So parks and the Preserve sometimes take a back seat. That is one of the reasons I strongly support the 0.15% sales tax.

### **Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

We should address these gaps. As I mentioned above, I strongly supported filling in the gap on 68th Street. I rode this street before and after the "road diet" (to visit Mr. Bonura's bakery) and there is a world of difference between the two.

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**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

This is a tough issue because pollution is not limited to Scottsdale. Our neighbors, especially Phoenix, are big contributors and we need more of a Valley-wide solution. And people are not going to give up their cars. Bicycles are not a solution during the summer. We don't have the infrastructure for trains--I commuted to work in Chicago for 35 years on subways and trains. MAG (the Maricopa Association of Governments) is working on this problem but I don't have an easy answer.

**Maryann McAllen – City Council Candidate**

**What is Scottsdale's biggest transportation problem and how would you fix it?**

Population growth in our state and being a desirable place to work and live has added to our transportation issues. Working on effectively moving traffic through Scottsdale is imperative. It is a combination of many solutions, our ability to move traffic safely to our major thoroughfares keeping our minor collectors less traveled and traffic features such as roundabouts in areas to keep cars moving efficiently. Making sure our Transportation Master Plan is followed and evaluated annually is an important factor in solving issues.

**How would you make Scottsdale's streets safer and more accessible for everyone, especially vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians?**

As a former member of the Paths and Trails sub-committee I know that Scottsdale is a Bicycle Friendly city at the Gold Level, however we can always work to better our city to achieve a platinum level. By looking at and evaluating our policies, regional coordination, transportation access points, bicycle networks, community education and the encouragement of a bicycle culture in our neighborhoods we will help improve our overall transportation safety for our city. Continually improving our processes and knowing how our paths, trails and lanes are used and by whom will help us to improve safety for both cyclists and pedestrians.

**Do you support the proposed 0.15% sales tax proposal for park improvements in Scottsdale? Why or why not? If the sales tax proposal doesn't pass, how would you suggest funding park maintenance and improvements, including bicycle and walking paths?**

I resolutely support this proposal. As a former member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, I fully supported the work of the Protect and Preserve task force and attended community meetings giving input on all issues pertaining to our Parks and open spaces. We have an award-winning Parks and Recreation Department in our city, one of the many reasons tourists come to Scottsdale and we must maintain it.

Our Parks in the south end of town have long needed repairs to some of the physical structures (Ramada at McKellips lake, Dog park at Vista, and Eldorado Park softball fields and restrooms). Their deterioration and age have added to this dilemma.



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**Many of Scottsdale's bike lanes and sidewalks have missing segments, creating safety hazards as people are forced to merge with fast-moving traffic. How would you address these gaps, especially near schools, businesses, and community centers?**

As a former member of the Transportation Commission's Paths and Trails sub-committee we were continually brought up to speed on these types of issues and conditions. We advocated for the prioritization of addressing and fixing these safety issues. We also worked with staff in assisting them with citizens' complaints and questions. Over the past two years our transportation department has added many needed traffic measures to assist in keeping our pedestrians and cyclists in Scottsdale safer. The most recent one, on Jackrabbit Road, will allow pedestrians and bicyclists to cross safely at what was a very vulnerable curve. As a city councilmember I will continue to advocate for pedestrian and cyclist safety.

**With 41% of Scottsdale's greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation sources, what is your solution for reducing this pollution in our city?**

Our City/Transportation Department should continue to move our traffic efficiently by using the most effective means. We need to keep our residents informed of transportation route issues and keep our cars moving. Our continued efforts on educating our residents and visitors on our paths and trails systems and how they can best get around our city whether it be by bicycle, electric bicycle, ride share or public transportation. Communication and education is a key factor in keeping our greenhouse gas emissions low.



**Bike Scottsdale is a passionate group of civic-minded cyclists working to promote safe, active, multi-modal transportation in the West's Most Western Town.**

*If you would like to join our distribution list to learn more about bicycling advocacy in Scottsdale please email us at [info@bikescottsdale.org](mailto:info@bikescottsdale.org).*