



MERA KATHRYN CORLETT

POLITICAL PARTY: DEMOCRATIC

POLITICAL RACE: LOUISVILLE METRO COUNCIL

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What are your top budget priorities as a member of Metro Council?

Louisville's budget is our most pressing issue, and the Covid-19 outbreak exacerbated this situation. I look forward to identifying new revenue sources for the city in order to attract businesses to the area. Advocating for a local option sales tax is a focus of many councilmembers right now. Creative solutions are necessary for us to sustain and ensure a better future for Louisville. I will work to do everything in my power to protect vital public services. Doing this will ensure that we can best serve Metro Louisville now and in the future. City services provide strong returns on investments in our community by increasing property values and promoting growth in our business community. I am committed to implementing smart data tools and technologies in order to increase efficiency and set standards for organizational and residential collaboration.

What steps do you think Metro Council should take to address racism and inequality in Louisville?

The first step is making sure historically under-represented communities have a seat at the table when decisions are made. There are a number of programs that have been implemented in our peer cities that could be explored in Louisville. One option would be a property tax abatement for West Louisville for primary residences with the goal of ensuring the individuals that live there can not only build long-term generational assets but also prevent displacement where property values quickly increase.

Utilizing the Racial Equity Tool would be an excellent support mechanism to address systemic problems present within our government practices. We should use the RET to examine business permitting, hiring practices within Metro Government, infrastructure allocation, health disparities, and housing. These are all vital components of city management that support the health and financial well-being of our residents.



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What are your top transportation and infrastructure priorities for your district?

Rapid public transit is of the utmost importance. Dedicated bus lanes for rapid transit are an excellent option for Louisville, especially because we lack the population density of many other midsize cities. We are also seeing many young professionals choosing to live closer to their places of employment. With the presence of so many corporate headquarters within District 18, we should be attracting people who want to live and work in the area. Traffic, however, has been a deterrent. As someone who often teaches off of Dixie Highway, I have been particularly impressed with the improvements made by the Bus Rapid Transit. I can see demonstrable differences especially with the enhanced sidewalks. I am concerned with safety for bike-rides and pedestrians within my own district. I have been encouraged by the changes and am interested in the possibility of having a similar goal for the Hurstbourne Parkway corridor. I am also an advocate for improving our sidewalk connectivity. This will not only encourage people to move about more freely within the district, but also will enhance safety for individuals with accessibility needs.

What are your views on the state of land development and redevelopment in Louisville?

Leaders in this city should be focused on sustainable redevelopment. We need more robust and effective tax incentives to encourage higher-end development with a density that creates a diverse economic offering (service, manufacturing, information) while also establishing a solid tax base that requires less public investment in the infrastructure to support these redevelopments. We should use our role as a Metro Council to facilitate economic expansion through land development and redevelopment in Louisville.

What are your top economic development priorities for your district?

We need to ensure that the tax incentives we offer equally reward business service and technology jobs as much as they do manufacturing jobs. The fastest growing companies in Louisville and the rest of the country are in the technology sector. We have to provide a supportive business environment for these new and growing businesses. This district is home to numerous corporate headquarters and yet we're seeing many areas surrounding the district thrive because they have seen investment beyond capital projects and into community building that attracts small independent businesses and young professionals. We need to develop that social infrastructure here or we seriously risk creating a space unable to sustain growth.



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What steps do you think Metro Council should take to address homelessness and housing in Louisville?

Because of budget cuts last year, many of the programs that were addressing issues exacerbating Louisville's growing unhoused population were substantially cut. As a result we have seen a rise in the number of unhoused individuals within our community. Moreover, constraints on numbers within shelters due to Covid-19 has only compounded these problems. We can anticipate the problem only getting worse with the rise in unemployment, evictions, and foreclosures. We must recognize the interconnected way funding services affects business, safety, and economic development.

What policies would you support to reduce violent crime and make Louisville a safer city?

Louisville should move to implementing proactive policing policies rather than reactive solutions that are more costly and are not as effective in reducing crime. Short-term investment in proactive solutions creates long-term saving. Public safety is no different. Community-oriented policing strategies have delivered better results in our peer cities where these policies have been actively implemented and supported. At the same time, we are investing heavily in the ShotSpotter technology, which has led to an increase in service calls but has not led to an increase in arrests or investigations. This program has not been an efficient or effective use of funds to date.

Proactive strategies should include problem-oriented policing that looks at the underlying factors to criminal activity such as the very environment crime thrives in. It employs a range of tactics such as cleaning parks, fixing lighting, and offering after school programming for youth. Studies have shown that not only does this reduce crime in the area in which it is implemented, there does not appear to be a rise in crime in areas outside either.