



These 2024 mobility questionnaire responses are not endorsements by the collaborating organizations. Rather, the questionnaire prompts candidates with issues that are significant to our members and clients and meant to educate the community on how candidates may address the issues if elected.

Candidate Name:

Molly Dennis

Candidacy:

Ward 6 - City Councilor

Note:

Response did not meet the deadline however was still published to inform constituents.

Questions & Responses:

1. What mode(s) of transportation do you most often use within Rochester and why?

As a mother of children with special needs (three kids who attend three different public schools) it has been difficult to coordinate bus schedules and bike routes over great distances. MN weather and a varied school/work schedules (different times and places every day for work) has made it difficult for myself and many working parents to find reliable and consistent bike/bus routes. Due to the need to transport kids, friends, and materials daily, our family has primarily utilized our old minivan for transportation. On weekends and for personal activities, around the neighborhood and community, my children and I will routinely walk or ride our bikes.

2. Do you feel safe walking, using a motorized wheelchair or other mobility device (such as a scooter), or even bicycling to make short and medium-length trips within the community? Why or why not?

I am privileged and thus have luckily always have felt safe when I walk around town and throughout our neighborhood. As the current Council member, I have been a huge supporter for the Active Transportation Plan and city measures/incentives, like increase trails and sidewalk

improvements, to create a more walkable, bike-able and sustainable future. My work and voting record on city council has focused on creating improvements to city infrastructure to provide more equitable modes of transportation that are safe, economic, reliable, and convenient for all residents in Rochester. Safe biking, walking and accessible modes of transportation have been and will continue to be my priority

3. **How could the city better promote and incentivize alternatives to driving, thereby increasing accessibility for people of all ages and abilities? This encompasses walking, bicycling, public transportation options, scooters, etc.**

There are many current city programs and incentives that I support, everything from neighborhood traffic management programs, benefits to the bicycle/commuter audits, to the installations of bike racks and repair stations. As well as the shared bike and scooter programs and donations options. I would like to see these programs continue and be supported. I would also like to have the City implement more community outreach to listen to the barriers/challenges and potential safety hazards the city can help address to make our community more bike and pedestrian friendly

4. **About 30% of the US population cannot or do not drive motor vehicles for a number of reasons. How could the city make it safer and more accessible for individuals to utilize alternative modes of transportation throughout Rochester and downtown?**

The city is already working on many programs, mentioned above. People around Rochester are struggling with economic and accessibility challenges. Rochester needs to make transportation more consistent, easy, and reliable. When buses are late, people can literally lose their job. I personally had to rush and take a resident to the emergency room when the Zips was not able to pick them up, otherwise they would have died. Died. Transportation needs are serious. There needs to be guaranteed that transportation and backup to ensure transportation is trusted. To know there are barriers that need to be address, the City Council needs to have stakeholders at the decision table to be listened to and believed.

5. **What do you think the city's policy should be on shared micromobility devices such as electric scooters and bicycle fleets, including e-bikes?**

In concept, shared micromobility devices are wonderful. I have been a proven supporter and believe this program should be continued and also improved. Not everyone has access to credit (credit cards) or are able to use technology. I believe to make shared micromobility truly equitable, it needs to be easy and truly accessible with cash, without forms and hoops

to jump through. The City of Rochester also needs to ensure reliability, how can someone rely on a Lime scooter to get to work if they are not sure where to find one every morning

6. **We often hear that neighbors feel unsafe walking, rolling and riding through their own neighborhoods. What can the City do to make streets safer?**

Public safety partnerships are essential and the enforcement of laws is a priority (speed enforcement, regulations that reflect needs, and policies that are clear and easy to follow). The City of Rochester also need adequate lighting, safe bike lanes, accessible curb cuts, and increased crosswalks. Moving forward, our community needs to have safety, equity, and sustainability lens as their guiding decision-making process. I am proud to have a voting record that has proved my commitment to creating a safer community, city streets and transportation for everyone.

7. **What could the city of Rochester do to increase the number of parents who feel safe letting their children walk, bike or roll to school?**

Investment in local organizations, community groups (like RNeighbors), and neighborhood connection groups/community watches are always important. Serving on the Agency Oversight Committee, I have advocated for more funding for neighborhoods and connecting people in places of belonging. Grassroot public engagement is also essential, residents need a seat at the table. Our City needs to hear from people directly on why they do not feel safe, believe them, and address their concerns. Not only as a former teacher, I am a current member of PTA, having hosted National Night Outs, and involved in many volunteer and neighborhood groups who help foster a safe place for children, families and neighborhoods. As a parent myself, children's safety is of the utmost importance. An investment in the future of children is an investment in the future of our City.

8. **How could the city improve access throughout the community year-round and especially during the winter months for people with disabilities who require the use of wheelchairs or other mobility devices, as well as for those who walk, bike or roll?**

Weather is a huge barrier and a hazard of living in MN. I have taken time to test wheelchair accessible tables, question safety of downtown sidewalks, and promote accessibility measures. I have also taken time to talk with residents and patients who utilize wheelchairs for their main source of mobility. The number one complaint is the lack of adequate shoveling and plowing of sidewalks. Also having live people in parking

ramps who honor the handicap discounts and enforcement of digital meters. The city also needs to be sure that bike lanes do not take up handy-cap spots, which are essential for many residents to have access to services. I have heard of both youth being late for school and adults late for meetings/work because the City buses were late and their connecting route missed. These issues all need to be address to improved access year round for all residents of all abilities

9. **What are your thoughts on creating a pedestrian (walk/roll) access bridge and multi-use trail connections under the bridge at Broadway near Silver Lake? See links for more information:**

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/61ce2d6bcd2442c1a3960b060695f98d&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1719358516520934&usg=AOvVaw2cgGfCjJ8kBZeenoZ0rChx>,
<https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/administratio n/city-projects/-item-11639/-seltag-20>

There needs to be a safer access for residents in ward 6 to cross Broadway to Silver Lake. The proposed trail connection is something I have strongly supported on City Council. The city needs to increase trails, prevent unnecessary travel over roads, and be sure to listen to the needs of the greater community over the loudest voices. As a teacher, I trust science and believe our city needs to come up with innovated solutions to promote safety and access for all residents in Rochester.

10. **What are your thoughts on the 6th Street Bridge options and their impact to improve human-scale connectivity while providing safe routes to travel? See link for more information:**

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/398253201757432cacb97a22893fb8bc>

Especially with an elementary school on this street, which I worked in with Special education, I am committed to safety is a priority. I have been actively attending public engagement meetings, researching options, and listening to resident concerns to ensure voices are heard. City Council needs to keep safe routes, equity, and sustainability at the highest priority when voting for this important project. I have always been an advocated of pedestrian and bike safety and will continue to be in years to come. My proven voting record and lived experiences guarantee I will be an advocate for increasing connectivity for bikers, pedestrians and residents of all abilities into the future of a more just, equitable and safe community for all.