

12. Have you ever run for public office? Yes

KCMO City Council, 6th District At-Large (first elected in 1999; re-elected in 2003)

13. Political Background: Elective and Appointed Offices Held:

Position:	Duties:	Years:	Elected:	Appointed by:
KCMO City Council	government service	1999-current	Yes (twice citywide)	
	Mayor Pro Tem during both terms (appointed by Mayor Kay Barnes)			
	Public Safety Committee chairman			
	Police Capital Improvements Oversight Committee chairman			
	Finance Committee vice chairman			
	Aviation Committee vice chairmen			
	Supreme Court of Missouri – advisory committee member			

14. Please indicate important legislation you have sponsored in the past or that you propose to sponsor in the future:

Alvin Brooks has sponsored and co-sponsored numerous pieces of legislation over the past seven and a half years. He sponsored the resolution to have the Kansas City Crime Commission prepare a comprehensive report on Violent Crime (submitted to the KCMO Council in June 2006).

15. Indicate Clubs, Lodges, Church or Civic Bodies, Trade or Professional Groups in which you have been active:

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) charter board member
Midwest Center for Holocaust Education, Inc. board member
National Conference for Community and Justice board member
National Youth Information Network board member
St. Monica's Catholic Church parish council member

16. List non-business Directorships and Trusteeships (Foundations, Hospital, Universities):

Avila University board of governors, board of counselors and trustee committee for student affairs
Central Missouri State University board of regents
Prime Health Foundation board member

17. If the Citizens Association endorses you, will you run? Yes

18. List anything else you feel important about yourself:

Previous Kansas City governmental and public safety experience:

KCMO City Manager's Office	Government Service	Assistant City Manager
KCMO Human Relations Dept. (first African-American to head a KCMO department)	Government Service	Department Head
KCMO Police Department	Public Safety	Police Officer/Detective

Additional Awards and Recognitions:

- American Public Works Association ~ Diversity Exemplary Practices award
- Boy Scouts of America ~ Whitney Young, Jr. service award
- Centurion Leadership award
- Crescent Peace Society ~ annual peace award
- Kansas City Press Club ~ Kansas Citian of the Year
- Kansas City Tomorrow ~ Distinguished Alumnus award
- Missouri Community Colleges ~ Distinguished Alumnus award
- National Conference of Christians and Jews ~ outstanding citizen award
- Rime Buddhist Center and Monastery ~ Bodhisattva award
- Salvation Army ~ William Booth award
- University Club ~ Cincinnatus award
- University of Missouri-Kansas City ~ Alumnus of the Year
- University of Missouri-Kansas City ~ Alumni Achievement award
- University of Missouri-Kansas City ~ African-American Student Union Peaceman award
- William Jewell College ~ William F. Yates medallion for distinguished service

Signature of Candidate

Date

Mail or hand-deliver to: Citizens Association
104 West Ninth Street
Kansas City, MO 64105

Alvin Brooks Completed Questionnaire for the Citizens Association (October 25, 2006)

1. Budget Process

Please outline your understanding the City's budgetary process and suggest any changes you would like to make.

The Manager submits a budget to the Mayor for review and the Mayor responds before the budget is submitted to the Council for amendments and final adoption.

I would recommend a change wherein city department heads appear before appropriate Council Committees prior to the Manager's submittal of a budget to the Mayor. I would also like to see public hearings held in each Council district, attended by the Mayor and Councilpersons in those districts, prior to the Manager submitting his budget to the Mayor.

The objective of this proposed change is to allow for more input into the budgetary process from the Council and the public. Under the current process, priorities for the City have already been decided, without regard for the public and for that matter, the Council.

2. Budget Priorities

Where do you feel more funds in the City's budget should be allocated? Include the three highest priority projects/items in the City budget. Where do you feel less funds in the City's budget should be allocated? Include the three lowest priority projects/items in the City budget.

The City has inherent priorities that must be funded first: public safety, infrastructure improvements and maintenance, water and sewers, aviation, parks and boulevards, among others. If the budget allows, I believe we should seek more funding for deferred maintenance, neighborhoods and crime fighting efforts.

3. Fiscal Strategy

The revised City Charter now calls for the City to develop formal policies for debt management and economic development incentives. In crafting and adhering to these policies, how would you identify goals and address risks, opportunities and tradeoffs. When would you advocate an exception to these policies? Please comment on Mark Funkhouser's audit of the city's debt. Give examples of where you agree, or disagree, with his conclusions.

I supported inclusion of the section in the new City Charter that mandates the Council to set and maintain a written fiscal policy for debt management and economic development incentives. By setting such a policy, it clearly benefits constituents, the taxpayers, and developers as to the policies they can expect their elected officials to follow.

I can foresee a time when rare exceptions to the fiscal policy would be appropriate. For example, if a major local or national developer approached the City with a comprehensive redevelopment proposal to redevelop a particularly

blighted area of the city, it would be irresponsible to ignore an opportunity to revitalize a run-down section of the City in order to adhere to a policy that did not anticipate this circumstance.

Regarding the City Auditor's review of incentives, I believe he is fulfilling his role as a cautious "watch dog" of our finances. However, he is not a policy maker. Like any advisor to the Council, we need to seriously consider his recommendations, but act for the greater good of the City.

Mr. Funkhouser has been very critical of the use of TIFs, but at the same time he is not responsible for economic development in our community. We heed his counsel, but are not bound by it. For example, had Mayor Barnes strictly followed the City Auditor's advice, we might not see the enormous economic development downtown we are now experiencing. By the same token, the City Auditor has not claimed the Mayor and Council have been irresponsible in their use of economic incentives, but he cautioned we do not go too far. I agree with that sentiment.

4. Taxation Level

Please provide your opinion of the current level of City taxes and whether you would recommend that any taxes be reduced or increased.

Over the past 7 years, Kansas City voters have approved many new taxes, most of which are dedicated to specific improvements, projects or services. Those include renewal of the one cent sales tax for capital improvements which will expire in a couple of years. During this period we also adopted a new ¼ cent sales tax that is dedicated to our Fire Department and a ¼ cent sales tax that is dedicated to our Police Department. These sales taxes have funded many improvements to, and expansion of, our police and fire stations, as well as providing for more firemen. These sales taxes will expire in 2016 and 2017.

Voters also approved a temporary 3/8 cent sales tax for transit in 2003, keeping our bus system fully operational until the metropolitan Smart Moves plan is presented for adoption. This sales tax expires at the end of 2008 and the new Mayor and Council will be responsible for deciding the future of that tax at that time. Extension of the underlying ½ cent sales tax for transit was also approved by the Missouri Legislature several years ago.

Voters approved car rental fees and hotel room fees for the construction of the new Sprint Center Arena. They also approved more than \$400 million dollars in revenue bonds for improvements to our airports, providing for upgrades to our terminals, remote parking, new terminal garages, a new runway and other improvements to the downtown airport.

During my time on the Council, voters also approved a \$35 million dollar general obligation bond issue, a significant portion of which was used to revitalize downtown. A separate \$250 million general obligation bond issue was approved for capital improvements throughout the city, in addition to \$30 million to upgrade the Zoo and \$20 million to add the World War I museum at the Liberty Memorial.

In addition to all these improvements, voters authorized an increase in the Health portion of the city property tax levy, helping our publicly-supported health care providers, such as Truman Medical Centers, Swope Health Services, Samuel Rodgers Clinic and other public health clinics, survive the massive cuts in Medicare and Medicaid that we have experienced over the past few years.

Voters have also approved hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue bonds for improvements to water and sewer services provided by our Water Department, as well as additional hotel room fees to fund expansion of the Bartle Convention Center.

I believe our current level of taxation is adequate to fund improvements and services and do not foresee the need to increase taxes. I would rather see the City focus on completing all the projects that are currently approved or underway – on time and under budget.

5. Employee Wages

Provide your opinion of the current pay levels of city workers. Be specific with respect to police, fire and other employees: are the allocations to Police and Fire sufficient? If not, what elements of the budget would you reduce to make those allocations larger?

I believe current levels of employee compensation are appropriate. The City Manager has consolidated several pay levels on the lower end of spectrum in terms of entry level positions and I believe this was a good approach to providing a better wage for those workers.

6. Reserves

The City has a “goal” of a reserve balance of 8%. What is your opinion of the 8% goal and how would you suggest the balance be restored to 8%? How long do you suggest it will take to restore the 8% balance?

Yes, 8% is appropriate and I believe it should be our goal to achieve that over the next term by economizing and creating better efficiencies in the way our City government operates. One suggestion is to require department heads to build a small percentage for reserves into their own budget requests. I believe everyone involved needs to participate in recognizing and achieving an overall goal of the City.

7. Basic Services

What should be included in the term “basic services”? How well is the City providing them? What changes are needed to improve the level and delivery of those basic services? Please comment on the Citizens’ Satisfaction Survey. Give examples of improvements you would make, and how you would accomplish them.

Regarding the Citizens Satisfaction Survey, please be advised that the City will be receiving a new survey in a matter of weeks. There was not much good news in last year’s findings. While I do believe we are addressing the most pressing needs, I also know that the City Manager is concerned about the City’s failure to

communicate with our citizens about the good work that is being done in many areas.

I like to think of the term “basic services” as meaning those services that directly impact the day to day quality of life for residents of Kansas City. There are many examples – public safety, street improvements, parks and boulevards, trash collection, water and sewers, neighborhoods, etc.

I support the City Manager’s numerous initiatives to improve delivery of basic services and believe we are seeing the results. The “We’re On It” list provided by the City Manager’s office articulates this very well. Many of the solutions to improving services are partially better management of the resources we have and acquiring new resources. I do believe that as the economy improves and we continue to see increases in tax collection, we can and should apply more of those funds to basic services over the next four years.

In the meantime, better alignment of departments, more accountability and possible merit pay policies should continue to be explored.

8. Indigent Care

What is Kansas City’s role in providing health care services to indigent people in Kansas City? Should the City change its current selection or support of agencies providing these services? Do you support the Margaret Kemp Center project?

I am proud to be a citizen of Kansas City in part because of our decades long commitment to public health for those most in need. It remains one of our City’s most important responsibilities. I do believe the physical and mental well-being of our citizens is a function of city government. Taxpayers re-affirmed this commitment when they approved an increase in the City’s Health Levy two years ago to increase funding for Truman Medical Centers and our community health centers and clinics.

At the same time, I believe we need to aggressively pursue additional funding from both the federal and state governments. With success in this effort, we may be able to reduce the City’s commitment to funding public health, but should not until alternative sources of revenue for those institutions are developed.

I support the Margaret Kemp Center at 9th & Harrison.

9. Responsiveness

Provide your thoughts as to the responsiveness of City Hall to valid requests for services? If, in your opinion, this could be improved, what steps would you take to do so?

Last month, the City government, under the leadership of the Mayor and the City Manager, introduced the new 3-1-1 Action Center number and the 2-1-1 “Where To Turn” number. As has been the case in other cities, these resource numbers will more efficiently and effectively handle requests for basic services from the City. With easy to remember numbers, the public will be able to access

the City more conveniently.

These systems will take time to grow – currently available during the evenings and on Saturdays. The next Mayor and Council will oversee expansion of the systems to include all City departments, and will be able to judge effectiveness.

10. Planning

What priority do you give to rewriting the zoning/subdivision ordinances?

The City needs to periodically revise and modernize our city codes and zoning/subdivision ordinances. I pledge to appoint a Chair to the Planning and Zoning Committee on the City Council who will carry out that mandate. Part of his or her responsibility will be to include public input.

11. Parks and Recreation

How important is Kansas City's system of parks and boulevards? Should the Parks Commission remain independent? What services should be reduced or eliminated? How would you provide better funding and quality of services for these activities?

Our system of parks and boulevards are a signature feature of Kansas City, Missouri. The Parks Commission should remain independent and I supported Mayor Barnes' decision to expand the Park Board from 3 to 5 members. However, I do believe the Park Department should always remain integrated into the City Administration. Allowing Parks to become a separate department would not make any more sense than allowing Public Works to be an independent agency.

We should be cautious not to over expand our park system, beyond our fiscal ability to maintain such additions. It is better to have well maintained and managed parks than to have too many parks. The Park Department, like any other City department, must live within its means.

I am impressed with some of the innovations within the Parks Department to improve its infrastructure without incurring additional public funds, such as the recent voter approved sale of an unneeded piece of property, the proceeds from which are being used to restore one of Kansas City's oldest fountain. These types of opportunities should continue to be explored.

12. Consolidation with Counties

What opportunities exist to consolidate services provided by the City with those of Jackson, Clay and/or Platte Counties?

The number one opportunity for consolidation would be our municipal correctional facility. Regional jails have been talked about for decades and it is time to do something about it. As Mayor, I will work with the surrounding counties to seek a regional solution to our respective correctional needs. I have already spoken to the incoming Jackson County Executive about this and he is very interested in this issue. I see this as a critical public safety issue facing the next

Mayor and Council.

13. Public Transit

What is your opinion of public mass transit? What changes would you make? Do you favor a light rail system? Would you support a ballot measure (including dedicated tax) for public transit? Do you support MARC; regional Smart Moves regional initiative?

I support the concept of Smart Moves, however, I want to see details. There really is no other solution to our regional transit needs than a metropolitan wide system that includes funding from a regional tax.

I also believe Kansas City, Missouri, should have more representation on the board of the ATA.

14. Flood and Wastewater Control

Outline your general thoughts on the City's plans to improve flood and wastewater control. What would you do to address the combined sewer problem: what funding mechanisms would you use and how would you be fair to the rest of the city in funding/fixing this problem?

The combined sewer system in Kansas City covers more than 50 square miles and the federal mandate to convert this system is huge and unfunded. Estimates range as high as \$3 billion. As Mayor, my first priority would be to join with other cities faced with this issue in lobbying Congress for federal funding. I would also explore possible legal action to delay this mandate until adequate funding is developed. This unfunded mandate could literally bankrupt some of the cities impacted by it.

Local sources of revenue to deal with this problem are limited to sewer fees (which would be outrageous) and a designated park/sewer sales tax that has not been implemented in Kansas City, but has been authorized.

15. Deferred Maintenance

How do you plan to address the City's backlog of deferred maintenance? How should this be funded? How much should be allocated to capital maintenance and how would you suggest the capital maintenance funding be increased to achieve this? Place this in a timetable.

Our tax revenues are increasing, allowing the current and next Council to reverse many of the budget cuts in recent years. We should increase our annual expenditure for deferred maintenance, but I believe we should be judicious in determining the appropriate amount of funding. As I mentioned earlier in this survey, voters recently approved bond issues for both infrastructure and water and sewers. These monies are being used to accelerate major construction thereby reducing some of the pressure on the deferred maintenance budget. I believe we must establish a deferred maintenance policy with time tables before we ask voters to renew the one cent sales tax for infrastructure.

16. PIAC

What are your thoughts on the current Public Improvements Advisory Council process? Specifically: do you support an independent citizen review/recommendation process? What changes would you suggest?

I fully support the PIAC process and we should maintain the program as is. The only possible exception would be to address the problem of vacancies on PIAC. If a Council member does not fill a position on PIAC for a period of 60 days, I believe the Mayor should then be allowed to fill the vacancy on behalf of the citizens of a particular District who deserve representation on this critical body at all times.

As you may know, I was one of a handful of Council members who just recently voted against the “raid” on PIAC funds that circumvented the traditional PIAC process.

17. Police

What is your opinion of the current level of services provided by the police? Do you favor placing control of the Police Department within the City, and if so, how would this be governed?

First, I do not favor removing control of KCPD from the State of Missouri. I believe the police department is doing a good job for its level of funding. I would like to see more police officers on the streets, and shift coverage to include more police protection in growth areas. However, I recognize the need to deploy officers where the most calls come from, areas of the City with high crime rates.

18. Priorities

Give examples of three geographic areas in Kansas City which in your opinion offer the best opportunity for focused development and growth and likewise three areas which most require focused remediation.

North of the River, Richards-Gebaur, and the Urban Core; Southeast Kansas City (including Bannister Mall), the I-435 corridor (north and south of 63rd Street), and the Northeast.

19. Privatization

Provide your opinion of “privatization?” What agencies or departments do you feel are candidates for privatization? What is your opinion of CIMO, especially related to cost effectiveness and productivity? When should outside consultants be used? How important is it to rebuild the Public Works Department, and would you make this a priority? Are there other City Departments which should be contracted out?

There are certainly opportunities to privatize some services in city government, although cities that rely heavily on these opportunities are typically much smaller than Kansas City. I believe the Parks Department has done an excellent job in identifying certain areas for privatization, for example, but I do not believe the answer to all problems in city government is privatization.

CIMO has served a purpose, to expedite the backlog of projects, but I see it phasing out. I would favor developing a CIMO-like process within the Public Works Department. I don't see other departments at this time that need an "overhall," but there is a need to pool resources within city government, utilizing more economies of scale, both with direct and indirect costs.

A potential for privatization would be the City's correctional facility.

20. Downtown

What, if any, priority should be given to Downtown by the City? What is your opinion of the major City sponsored initiatives? What is your opinion of the major City sponsored initiatives? What are the key requirements from the City to make these successful?

Downtown revitalization has been given the highest priority because of the sheer magnitude of the overall project. Making it work should also be given the highest priority. If you mean the City-sponsored initiatives downtown, I believe the City has done what it has had to bring back downtown.

As priorities to insure downtown is a success, I believe we need to secure a permanent tenant in the Sprint Center, focus on conventions and tourism, continue development and redevelopment of living space and attract more businesses to the area.

21. TIF

Provide your own opinion on Tax Increment Financing and the current City process? What changes, if any, would you suggest making?

The City should only guarantee bonds related to TIF projects in exceptional situations, such as Downtown revitalization. The new charter requires the development of a tax incentive policy and I look forward to working on it. Philosophically, I believe there should be more scrutiny of all TIF projects.

22. Other Economic Development

Provide your opinion of the other economic development tools (such as 353, LCRA, etc.) What changes, if any, would you suggest making?

All tax incentives should be utilized in economic development, however the City must be careful not to over extend itself, and should require an ultimate payoff for the taxpayers, especially as it relates to property tax abatement.

23. Metropolitan Competition/Cooperation

What is your evaluation of the City's relative attractiveness in retaining and growing population, employment and investment? How can Kansas City be a responsible leader in metropolitan cooperation/competition?

Kansas City is the CORE of our metropolitan community and it is important for us to cooperate with our neighbors, while engaging in healthy competition. We need to lead with the support of our business, arts and cultural communities. Our share of regional growth will happen naturally only if we recognize and address

the impact of education, crime and neighborhoods. By addressing these needs, and with active leadership, sustained and responsible growth will happen.

24. Ethics

Would you participate with other City Council members in an annual ethics seminar?

Yes – good idea.

25. City Manager

Is the Council-Manager form of government the best for Kansas City? What is your opinion of the listed responsibilities/goals contained in the current City Manager's contract and if you feel they should be changed or different, what items would you change? For how long should the Manager's contract be? What changes, if any, do you suggest making in the current distribution of responsibilities between the City Manager, Mayor and Council?

I believe in this form of government for Kansas City. The current term of the contract for City Manager is appropriate. The current distribution of responsibilities is satisfactory.

26. Your Goals

Why do you want to serve as Mayor? What abilities do you have to apply to leading a \$1 billion municipal corporation?

I want to serve as Mayor because I have a deep passion for this city. I have already participated in the progress of this city for decades, both within and outside of City Hall and I believe I am the best qualified person to serve in this position.

I have been the Mayor Pro Tem for the past 7 ½ years, elected twice to the City Council (1999 and 2003). I am a former police officer (Detective); the first African-American to serve as Human Relations Director; and, a former Assistant City Manager. I do not believe any other candidate has this kind of experience, both as an elected official and in the professional management of the city.

27. Campaign Tactics

What key endorsements will you be seeking? What specific commitments have you made, or will need to make to receive these? Will your campaign include negative tactics?

I will seek the endorsement of every legitimate group or organization in the city that endorses candidates for Mayor. I will make no commitments to any of them beyond my stated intent to serve as Mayor as described herein.

I will not conduct a negative campaign and in fact, I encourage everyone running for Mayor to adhere to the League of Women Voters "Clean Campaign Pledge." Were the Citizens Association to develop such a pledge, I would sign it.

28. Diversity

What ability do you have to reconcile differences and be sensitive to racial divisions in this community? Please give examples of situations in which you have successfully displayed this ability.

I was the first Human Relations Director in Kansas City, heading a department. I have worked my entire adult life to make the Kansas City area open and inclusive. I am a member of Interfaith, Holocaust Education, CCO and the NCCJ.

29. Personal Time Commitment

How much time do you have (and propose to spend) on City (Mayoral/Council) matters?

Full time, plus.

30. Personal Financial Support

(for Council candidates only)