

Jan Marcason
Fourth District City Council Candidate
Citizens Association
Mayoral/Council Questionnaire
2006/2007

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

The City's budget process is dictated by the City Charter, Article VIII, Division 1. The new Charter allows the Council to change the fiscal year, which currently begins May 1 and runs through April 30 of the following year. The process is as follows:

September: The City Manager issues budget instructions to departments under his direction and departments, boards, commissions, and offices not under his direction.

September-October: Departments prepare budget submittals based on estimates of work to be done and costs to be incurred. *The City Charter requires that budget requests be submitted to the City Manager on or before November 15.*

September-January 15: City Manager meets with department directors to formulate a budget. *The recommended budget must be sent to the Mayor by January 15.*

January 15-February 9: The Mayor transmits the Recommended Budget with comments to the City Council by the *second regular meeting in February*, as required by Charter.

February-March: Public hearings on the City Manager's Submitted Budget. City Charter requires that public hearings on the budget take place no later than the second regular meeting of the City Council in March.

March: The City Council, meeting as a Committee of the Whole, reports the entire budget to the City Council for approval. The City Council reviews and considers the City Manager's Recommended Budget and may make modifications to appropriations.

March: The City Council, by ordinance, adopts the annual budget. The budget ordinance requires a majority of affirmative votes to pass. The City Charter requires the City Council to adopt the annual budget by the fourth regular meeting of the City Council in March, unless the process is revised through the passage of a special ordinance.

My years on staff in the United States Senate and House of Representatives gave me inside experience in the budget process. While the Congressional budget process is more complex than the City's, there are similarities in the fact the process is mandated by law, there are opportunities for input from experts and interested parties, and the responsibility is ultimately that of elected officials.

As the Executive Director of Mid America Assistance Coalition, I had the responsibility for working with the Chief Financial Officer and the Board of Directors Treasurer in preparing an annual operating budget of more than \$700,000 per year (plus an additional \$1 million in assistance funds). I have more than a decade of experience preparing organizational budgets.

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2. *Budget Priorities. Where do you feel more funds in the City's budget should be allocated? (three highest priorities). Where do you feel fewer funds in the City's budget should be allocated? (three lowest priorities).*

- The top priority must be (and is) **public safety**. The police and fire departments comprise nearly 30% of the City's general fund budget. This is the primary function of City government.
- **Maintenance** of existing capital projects and set-aside for future capital improvements needs.
- **Basic neighborhood services** such as streets, sidewalks, trash pick-up, codes enforcement, etc.

Lower priority programs include programs that

- Do not fit within the priorities set by the Council,
- Have a limited benefit, or
- Can be more appropriately funded by other sources (county, state, federal governments, grants).

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? Cite Auditor's review of City debt.*

Fortunately, the City's bond rating is AA, according to the three top independent financial ranking entities: Moodys, Standard and Poors, and Fitch. The City Manager is responsible for developing a debt policy to present to the City Council. I would encourage the City Manager to review debt policies and the implications of adopting these policies undertaken by other comparable cities. Goals and risks can be developed by considering the priorities adopted by the City Council in coordination with the budget process, monitoring the performance of existing projects, and revising projections when necessary based on an independent accounting of the financials of on-going projects. Opportunities for economic development projects must be considered based on the existing debt obligations and a formal assessment of the risks and benefits of the projects. Most of the debt the City incurs has a dedicated revenue source associated with the project, such as the Airport's landing and user fees and the Sprint Arena's hotel and car rental fees.

I agree with the City Auditor's assessment that "...decisions about using and structuring debt need to be part of a broad policy framework rather than driven by support for individual projects...the City's high level of tax-supported debt and tight budget make it vulnerable to adverse economic trends. However, the city's financial position could be hurt even without an economic downturn. Lower than expected growth, difficulty in managing the departmental reorganization or continued late release of the city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report could hurt the city's credibility with bond rating agencies. We recommend that the City Manager adopt debt capacity and debt

management policies to strengthen monitoring and oversight of tax supported debt and bolster the city's long-term financial position." This concept was included in the revised City Charter.

I believe that we need a debt policy that provides adequate safeguards for long-term financial security while still enabling the city to take advantage of opportunities for economic growth.

4. *Taxation level. Provide your opinion of the current level of city taxes and whether you would recommend that any taxes be reduced or increased.*

The level of taxation is not going to change significantly in the near future, given the city's obligations that are funded by the current tax base. There are several taxes that are scheduled to expire over the next few years and it is important that these taxes are extended. These include the 3/8-cent tax for the ATA that expires in two years and the PIAC 1-cent sales tax that expires in 2008. Longer-term the 1/4-cent tax for fire and 1/4-cent tax for the police expire in 2011 and 2016. I support the extension of the current taxes that provide a revenue stream for important transportation, capital improvement, and public safety measures. The 2% restaurant tax and 7 1/2% hotel tax are important for funding convention and tourism needs.

The Hancock Amendment prohibits the City to increase the current levy of any tax, license or fee above its mandated level without a vote of the City. The voters will decide if they want an increase to support expenditures such as the Health levy to cover some of the costs of providing healthcare to indigent residents.

5. *Employee wages. Provide your opinion of the current pay levels of city workers, specifically police, fire and others.*

Often entry-level employees are the primary contact for residents. It is important that front-line staff are paid and trained adequately to ensure quality customer service. We must attract and maintain quality customer service and front-line staff to improve citizen satisfaction. Personnel costs are usually the highest line item in any budget. It is important to look at the entire benefit package when determining whether or not wages are adequate. The challenge of providing health and retirement benefits and maintaining qualified personnel is widespread.

I understand that the compensation of the police, fire and other mid-level and upper-level employees is at an acceptable level and that any pay adjustments that are necessary are for employees at the lower end of the pay scale.

6. *Reserves. What is your opinion of the 8% goal for a reserve balance and how do we reach this goal?*

I fully support the goal of an 8% reserve balance. The city has made some progress over the past few years and I believe that the current balance is close to 5%. It will require

discipline to reach the 8% goal and a commitment to include the reserve as a part of the normal budget process. Given the dedicated revenue streams and the financial obligations, there is little room for increasing the reserve. It is critical that the economic performance of the investments we have made in downtown and other economic development projects be monitored so that increased benefits from these investments can be put into the reserve. The city cannot respond to emergency situations or opportunities without an adequate reserve.

7. Basic Services. What should be included in the term? How well is the City providing them? What changes are needed to improve the level and delivery? Comment on the Citizens' Satisfaction Survey and give examples of improvements.

Basic services include public safety (police, fire and ambulance service), infrastructure maintenance (streets, sidewalks, sewer system), and livability services (parks, codes enforcement, city customer services). According to the Auditor's report, the city is doing a good job in the public safety area and in the maintenance of most of its parks. The areas of basic maintenance, code enforcement, and city communications have a higher level of dissatisfaction than residents of other comparable cities.

Satisfaction levels for basic services vary according to the geographic area of the residents. I believe that addressing consistently unsatisfactory services will give residents the assurance that the City is responding to their needs – whatever region they live in. The areas that should be addressed first include maintenance of city streets, sidewalks buildings, and facilities; effective communication between the city and the public, and aesthetics such as removing abandoned cars, litter, and lighting. The maintenance issues have a potentially significant cost associated with them. The communication issue can be solved with a commitment to quality public service by City staff and elected officials. I often hear the comments at neighborhood meetings that they would like more attention from city staff and their elected representatives. The neighborhood associations can take an active role in reporting and clean-up and sponsoring efforts to improve the cleanliness and minor maintenance issues.

The issues of the combined sewers in the Fourth District will require a commitment of resources and citizen interaction during the replacement of pipes and disruption of the affected neighborhoods. (question 14)

8. *Indigent Care. What is the City's role in providing health care services to indigent people? Should the City change its current selection or support of agencies providing these services? Do you support the Margaret Kemp project?*

Unfortunately, with the State cutting back on medical services to low-income and indigent persons, the City and private social service agencies are having to take up this responsibility. Private social service agencies reporting on to Mid America Assistance Coalition documented more than \$305,000 in medical services to low-income and homeless clients last year.

Kansas City is fortunate to have a safety net that provides high quality health care to the city's uninsured and underinsured. The safety net of Truman Medical Center, Cabot Westside Health Center, Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City Free Health Clinic, MAST, Northland Health Care Access, Samuel U. Rodgers Community Health Center, and Swope Health Services has a tremendous record of efficiently using the city's scarce health care dollars.

The city's voters validated this support of the existing safety net when they approved an increase in the health levy. The needs at Truman Medical Center and the other safety net agencies are tremendous and are growing. We should respect the vote of the people and support these necessary facilities.

The Margaret Kemp project centralizes services to homeless individuals and families and provides a safety net of services for their well-being – including physical and mental health services, job training, basic needs assistance, and counseling. This project could help reduce costs incurred by individual agencies and provide streamlined services for those in desperate need.

9. Responsiveness. The responsiveness of City Hall to valid requests for service. How can this be improved?

The establishment of the 3-1-1 telephone service for City information is a good step toward making the residents feel that the city is being responsive to their needs. This line needs to be monitored for quality assurance and successful referrals to make sure that the customers' experiences are favorable. A coordinated system with an easy to remember phone line is a very good first step.

The City's responsiveness to providing licenses and codes inspections has been mentioned in many of the neighborhood meetings I have attended. Residents still feel that the process for licensing and codes inspections is too cumbersome and actually a detriment to economic growth. Small businesses and entrepreneurs are the backbone of economic vitality. We need to make the licensing and codes processes responsive to their needs – while maintaining the public safety standards that are governed by codes and licensing requirements.

10. Planning. What priority do you give to rewriting of the zoning/subdivision ordinances?

The new zoning ordinances are being written now. They are scheduled to be presented to the current City Council. These revised ordinances are long over-due. The proposed ordinances will allow successful models like the Brookside area with its mixed use categories to be developed in other areas of the city.

Future city councils will be able to build on the revised zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure that they are fulfilling the expectations of those that proposed and drafted these provisions.

11. Parks and Recreation. How important is the 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?

Kansas City's park system and boulevards are treasures for residents and visitors. The Parks Commission has protected these important resources and should remain independent. A long-range plan for the use of the park assets can help ensure that there is an appropriate maintenance schedule, a plan for placing any potential sales of park land on the ballot if there is property that could be more effectively used, and budgeting the potential revenue from parks.

The decision to eliminate many of the parks' swimming pools and replace them with splash pools saves money by eliminating the need for lifeguards and reduces the potential liability of traditional swimming pools.

The Auditor's Citizen Satisfaction Survey points out the disparity in use of the city's recreational programs according to geographic area. Promoting the recreational programs and facilities to areas that are underutilizing the services might provide additional revenue.

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

There are many opportunities for consolidated services, given the unwieldy political boundaries in our metropolitan area. An immediate opportunity for City/County consolidation is for a necessary jail facility. The overcrowded conditions at the jail require additional space and a combined facility would be more cost effective. Other consolidation that could result in cost savings could be considered for information technology, metro-wide customer service expanding the 3-1-1 concept, employee health care purchasing, emergency and disaster response programs, etc.

Mid America Regional Council plays a significant role in ensuring cooperation among cities and counties in the area on issues of overlapping concern such as transportation, air quality, and water management.

13. Public Transit. What is your opinion of public mass transit? What changes would you make? Do you favor a light rail system?

I think that our public mass transit system is underutilized but the MAX bus system and the Smart Moves Regional Transit Plan will help encourage ridership. I hope that the Kansas legislature will favorably consider the Smart Moves Plan during the next

legislative session. Kansas City has several challenges for developing an effective public mass transportation system: the size of the metropolitan area, the number of political boundaries that would be involved in a coordinated system, the traditional reliance on the automobile of area residents, and the lack of financing for an effective system.

The MAX is a very good first step in encouraging the use of public transportation in the city. I hope that the downtown revitalization takes advantage of the opportunity to promote public transportation throughout the entertainment district and surrounding areas. When I travel to other cities, I am encouraged that public transportation is working and thriving. Downtown Denver and Portland provide free transportation in the business district. St. Louis, Washington, and Chicago have a light rail system widely used by locals and visitors. Unfortunately, Kansas City did not take advantage of federal funding for light rail several years ago and it has become prohibitively expensive without the necessary federal funding.

Voter approval of Clay Chastain's light rail proposal is evidence that a majority of people in Kansas City want to see this type of mass transit developed. Although federal and state funding remains a huge question in terms of the viability of this proposal, I believe the City should look at it as an opportunity rather than a problem.

Unfortunately, capturing the temporary 3/8 cent sales tax for this purpose totally throws a monkey wrench into the Smart Moves program developed by the ATA and MARC for a regional transit system because that plan also relies on that particular tax. This will have to be sorted out by the current Mayor and City Council over the next few months.

14. Flood and Wastewater Control. Outline your general thoughts on the City's plans to improve flood and wastewater control.

The Federal requirement to address the combined sewers in the 52-square mile area of the original Kansas City sewer system (primarily in the Fourth District) is one of the biggest issues that will face the City Council and Mayor. This unfunded federal mandate has a price tag of \$1.5-\$3 billion. Kansas City is not alone in this dilemma. 277 cities in the United States are facing a similar situation. Indianapolis recently approved a sewer plan that will cost between \$1.6-\$1.8 billion.

The city has been studying and planning for this project for nearly 10 years. It requires a holistic approach to minimize the impact of sewer replacement for existing and new development projects, neighborhood services, and planning efforts. Engineers know the extent of the problem and the areas that are impacted by the combined sewers and drainage problems. I have attended many of the Wet Weather meetings and have been impressed by the interest and creative suggestions of area residents.

A combination of efforts that include sewer line replacement, ponding of storm water and rain gardens where appropriate, emerging technology and processes for water quality management, and other innovation to successfully eliminate the problem in as cost effective manner as possible is required.

Since this is a federal mandate, we have an obligation to remedy the situation. The newer and older parts of the city have different public service needs – some areas need new infrastructure to begin development, others need financing for repair and replacement. The reality is that the City must address the combined sewer problem and storm drainage issues. The Wet Weather panel has been working on this issue for several years. The Council will use their final report for addressing this complex situation.

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 achieve this? Place this in a timetable.

Much of the deferred maintenance was addressed through the CIMO program. Unfortunately, by the time the backlog was addressed, the cost of many of the projects had increased beyond the additional funding available. I think that CIMO was an important emergency initiative to jump start the projects that had been languishing. The CIMO concept is being copied by other cities. With \$180 million in funded projects waiting to be built, the existing public works personnel could not undertake this massive project management. The term of CIMO is concluding and it will be up to the Public Works Department to maintain an effective project management schedule to eliminate any future backlogs and to ensure that the projects' funding is adequate to meet current needs.

16. PIAC. Do you support? What changes would you make?

I am very supportive of the PIAC program. It is an opportunity for citizen involvement in the decision making and financial priority setting by the City. The PIAC representatives appointed by Council members dedicate a significant time commitment to this process. The extension of the 1-cent sales tax for capital improvements is essential and the PIAC process is the key to voter approval.

I think that PIAC proposals should fit into a long-term plan for capital improvements, that the process should be as transparent as possible to promote citizen involvement, and that the final decisions must be the responsibility of the Council members.

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?

The quality of the police services ranked favorably in the Auditor's citizens survey. Residents of the East side ranked the police the least favorably and the North had the most favorable impression of the police. I think the community policing has been a significant factor in the favorable rating of the police department. Police officers regularly attend neighborhood meetings and report on issues of concern and listen to the

residents' concerns. Most neighborhood leaders have an excellent working relationship with the local officers and communicate with them regularly.

To make the Police Department a part of City government would require a change in State law. While Kansas City is only one of two cities whose police board is appointed by the Governor, the process is working well. The Police Board includes the Mayor so that the interests of elected officials are represented.

18. Priorities. Three geographic areas which offer the best opportunity for focused development and growth and three which require focused remediation.

The close-in Northland is an obvious area for development and growth – which is already happening. The area around the airport is another example of an opportunity that is beginning to develop, and the far southeast area close to Unity Village has potential for development.

Areas of remediation include the West Bottoms, the Swope Parkway corridor (which is in progress), the Bannister Mall area, and Harlem, just east of the Wheeler Airport.

19. Privatization. Outside Consultants

Government should be cost effective in providing services and should avoid contracting out its obligation to provide services to private sector companies that must make a profit. There are a few specialized situations where privatization has worked advantageously for the City. These special areas should be the exception, however.

The Auditor has recommended the privatization of the Water Department but this has not been widely supported at this point. Starlight Theater has a private management model that seems to be working well. I think that privatization should be a last management resort. It is the obligation of the city to manage its resources effectively.

CIMO was brought in to address a crisis situation with the backlog of public improvement projects. It had a specific responsibility, budget, and timetable. Once it met its objectives the work will return to the Public Works Department. It is now up to the Public Works Department to evaluate their staffing needs in order to prevent another backlog and to manage the workload effectively.

Outside contractors can play a valuable, short-term role in providing independent thought, targeted expertise, and manageable costs. The City Manager should evaluate all requests for outside consultants and be responsible for managing their performance, along with the appropriate department directors.

20. Downtown. What will make it successful?

I am very excited by the long-overdue revitalization of the downtown. Its success must be a priority to make sure that our investment pays off and benefits the well-being of the

entire City. Economic incentives were essential to jump start construction and renovation in downtown. It truly was a blighted area. The City must diligently monitor the performance of the projects downtown to make sure they are meeting their projections. This has to be an immediate and on-going requirement. In order for downtown to thrive there needs to be adequate housing (which there is), groceries and other basic needs businesses (which are planned), entertainment opportunities (in progress), easy access by public transportation or adequate commuter parking, commercial businesses that bring in people during the day, a safe and friendly atmosphere (which needs to be monitored), green spaces, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and linkages with the other neighborhoods. I am very optimistic about the downtown's success.

Neighborhood organizations have been very jealous about the attention that the downtown has received over the past few years. I think a concerted effort needs to be made to engage the neighborhood leaders in the downtown redevelopment efforts and to explain the benefits of a vibrant downtown to the vitality of our neighborhoods.

21. TIF. What changes would you make?

With the widespread use of TIF and other economic incentives during the past few years of spurring growth in the Northland and downtown, there is a growing sentiment that the "but for" provision needs to be more clearly defined. There are currently 54 TIF projects in our city. Most are performing as expected and will provide an economic payoff for the city's investment.

There are benefits to using TIF if the project is strategically important to a long-range development plan, it creates significant jobs and brings in new revenue to the area – not displacing revenue from another location. The TIF that provided an extra lane of parkway for Shoal Creek helped create the opportunity for significant revenue in a high end retail area in Kansas City near Liberty.

Before any new TIF projects are approved, a review of existing "but for" requirements should be conducted. If the project meets the stringent criteria, it should go forward. Because of the liberal use of TIFs many developers have become reliant on economic incentives for a project that could be privately financed.

22. Other Economic Development. Any changes?

The same type of criteria should be used for any economic development incentives – with more stringent criteria for those incentives that eliminate all taxes for the project.

23. Metropolitan competition/cooperation.

Kansas City has tremendous attractiveness in retaining and growing population, employment, and investment. With the revitalization of the downtown, the City is able to attract residents to the area, new businesses, and more entertainment opportunities.

Kansas City must maintain its leadership role in the growth and development of the entire region.

The One KC project of the Area Development Council provides branding and marketing programs to bring new jobs, capital investment, tax base, wealth creating and a quality workforce to our area. Working together, business and government leaders can make it easier for companies to relocate to our community.

24. Ethics. Would you participate in an annual ethics seminar?

Of course. As in most business schools and MBA programs, business ethics has become a required course. Unfortunately, the public perception and the reality are there are far too many ethical lapses in positions of public trust. As a business leader for the past 17 years, I understand the importance of the example that must be set by those in positions of trust.

25. City Manager/Council-Manager form of government.

The Council-Manager form of government was adopted by Kansas City in 1925. There has not been a successful effort to replace this form of government in more than 80 years. The City Manager serves as the Chief Operating Officer for the City – making sure that the will of the Council and Mayor are carried out. The original current City Manager’s contract addressed the needs of the City at the time he was hired and should be revised to coincide with the changing expectations of the position. One of the key performance measures in Mr. Cauthen’s original contract was an emphasis on diversity in the management positions at City Hall. He has successfully carried out this performance measure and while diversity should remain an on-going indicator of success, other factors should be addressed in a new contract. Requiring strict financial oversight and reporting from department heads must be a priority.

The City Manager’s performance according to the terms of his contract should be evaluated by the members of the Council that approved the contract. It is difficult for a new Council to evaluate the performance of an employee without a significant time to experience his performance.

Because of my experience, I equate the City Council to a Board of Directors, the Mayor to the Board Chair, and the City Manager to the Executive Director. The Council, with the leadership of the Mayor, is responsible for strategic direction, vision, and setting big picture goals. The City Manager is responsible for carrying out the strategic plan, managing the leadership (Department Heads), and reporting back to the City Council/Mayor on performance toward goals. This form of government works well when the parties have good communication, mutual respect, and a shared vision.

26. Why do you want to serve as Councilperson? What abilities do you have to apply to leading a \$1 billion corporation?

I want to serve as a Councilperson because I love Kansas City and I want to be a part of making sure that it achieves its potential to be a thriving, world class city. I have three critical abilities that apply to leading a major corporation:

(1) **Strict Accountability for Financial Resources:** As Executive Director of Mid America Assistance Coalition, I was responsible for a \$1.7 million budget. (\$700,000 in general operating and \$1 million in assistance funds) and developed a software system for accounting for the distribution of more than \$20 million annually in emergency assistance by more than 200 social service agencies in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Every penny of assistance is accounted for, giving funders the assurance they need that their investment is being spent appropriately and wisely.

(2) **Stretching Limited Resources:** Mid America Assistance Coalition manages utility assistance funds for low-income utility customers. There are limited resources available to assist eligible households who need utility assistance. I developed eligibility criteria and a process for stretching the assistance resources to meet the greatest possible needs. This is similar to the limited resources available to provide City services.

(3) **Working in Collaboration:** Mid America Assistance Coalition coordinates the work of more than 200 emergency assistance and homeless service agencies in the 7-county Kansas City metropolitan area. Working together, the agencies provide a safety net of services that cross organizational, political, and geographic boundaries. I have played a key role in developing and maintaining cooperation and collaboration.

27. Campaign Tactics/Key endorsements.

I will actively seek the endorsement of political organizations representing various public interest groups. In the Fourth District, the two key endorsements that I hope to receive are the Citizens' Association and the Kansas City Star. As Past President of the Greater Kansas City Women's Political Caucus I hope to receive the endorsement of this highly regarded organization. I am also actively seeking the endorsement of the Four Freedoms Democratic Club and KC Pride, political activists representing the LGBT community.

During the process for appointing Councilman Rowland's replacement, I received the endorsement of the AFL-CIO, Building and Trades Unions, Carpenters' Union, and the Firefighters. I also was endorsed by the Hispanic Organization for Racial Equality (HOJE). These groups continue to support my candidacy for the Fourth District. I have made no commitments to any of these organizations, nor have they asked me to make any commitments. I was endorsed by these organizations because my work on behalf of low-income families supports many of the same constituencies of these groups.

I have a long history of community service and a reputation for personal and professional integrity. I will not compromise my reputation in exchange for a political endorsement. My campaign will promote my qualifications to serve on the City Council and my years of community leadership.

28. Diversity. What ability do you have to reconcile differences and be sensitive to racial divisions in this community?

Throughout my professional career, I have worked with and on behalf of a very diverse constituency. I am committed to a hiring and promotion policy that encourages racial diversity at all levels. As President of the Greater Kansas City Women's Political Caucus, I insisted on outreach to expand diversity of the membership, include women of color on the Board of Directors, endorse women of all racial, ethnic, and religious categories, and to honor women of color for their accomplishments.

I am a founding Board member of the Front Porch Alliance – a partnership with the Village Presbyterian Church, Community Christian Church and the Ivanhoe neighborhood. The Front Porch Alliance is committed to increasing understanding and friendship among the races, supporting each other in achieving our goals, and valuing the assets people of all races and faiths bring to reviving a neighborhood that had been languishing for too many years.

I have been involved in the Metropolitan Organization for Racial and Economic Equity (More2) since its inception. I participated in the listening campaigns and public forums to promote racial and economic equity in our community.

Being in government and social service for more than 25 years, I have had the opportunity to work with men and women of all races, religions, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. I value this working environment.

29. Personal time commitment.

I am retiring as Executive Director of Mid America Assistance Coalition at the end of December 2006 to campaign full time for the City Council. I began my campaign more than a year ago and have attended nearly 100 neighborhood and community meetings during non-working hours. It has been difficult to maintain a responsible full-time position and devote the required time to running a successful campaign. I thoroughly enjoy the campaign process and look forward to spending more time talking one on one with residents of the Fourth District and others so that I can “hit the ground running” when I am elected to the City Council.

30. Personal Financial Support

Fortunately, I have the personal financial resources to manage on the salary of a City Council member. Over the years, I have developed a financial plan that will allow me to meet my obligations on a part-time salary. Between my husband's income and my part-time salary we will manage very well.