

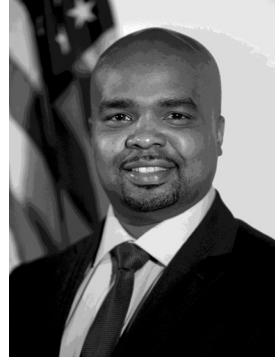
# WARD F Council Candidate Survey Q&A



Anthony Blake



Yolanda Dortch Amiker



Jermaine Robinson



Michael Griffin

Ward F Council Candidates Tyrone Ballon and Dennis Burgess did not respond to our survey.

## QUESTION #1

In 2016, JC Open Data shows that there were 585 pedestrians struck by vehicles, a 3% increase over 2015 and a 12% increase over 2014, and the problem is equally chronic in every part of the city. Traffic safety enforcement has long been inconsistent at best and not a true priority, and our roads have become dangerous speedways. What will you do, if elected, to make this public health crisis a top priority for improvement for the next administration? (Source: JC Open Data, [tinyurl.com/peddashboard](http://tinyurl.com/peddashboard) )

## ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - One of the 1st things i would want to do is insure those newly added bike lanes are citywide. If that is the case i would begin a 30 media blitz targeting bikers and drivers advising them of the dangers of bike travel and the need for them to utilize our newly added bike lanes. The drivers would be reminded of the importance of sharing the road with cyclist and the penalties associated with not adhering to said rules. At the conclusion of the blitz, I would begin issuing mock tickets to all bikers and drivers in violation of the rules for 1 week. After that week I would begin full implementation of the program. I would utilize officers working street and traffic detail well as ticket writers associated with street sweepers to assist.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - We will use city resources to make public awareness amongst drivers a priority. We need to work with the JCPD to patrol roadways where speeding and fatal accidents are a problem, like JFK, 440 and Grand Street. We should reestablish the motor cycle unit, which Mayor Fulop abolished and that police believe was a cause in the increase in fatalities.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I will make sure we continue to train our law enforcement agents on spotting drunk and distracted drivers. I will also work with the community on bike lanes, visible crosswalks and speed deterrents throughout the city.

**Michael Griffin** - The first step would be to educate both pedestrians and drivers on the importance of traffic safety. Working with Bike JC & Safe Streets JC to create a traffic safety literacy campaign would be at the top of my list. Solidifying a partnership that would take aim at reducing traffic and pedestrian injury and death would be the smart thing to do. We would take the data and translate it in a way that all residents can grasp the importance of pedestrian and motorist safety and awareness.

### QUESTION #2

In 2011, the Council adopted a “Complete Streets” policy, which calls for design improvements on our streets to more fully accommodate road users of all ages and abilities more safely and allow access by all modes of transport (including bicycles and pedestrians). Complete Streets policies reduce speeds to within safe, existing limits and can improve traffic flow. However, this policy has yet to be enacted, citizens continue to get hurt or killed, and our auto insurance rates keep rising. Will you commit to making the application of Complete Streets policy a priority during your term, if elected? How?

### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - I have been a proponent of safe streets, in fact I've been an outspoken critic of the lack of safety surrounding the Berry Lane Park project. Given the fact that I intend to service Ward F, I'm sure you know there are a number of pressing issues that face the ward with your concerns also being important. However I cannot go on record to say that I will make the “Complete Streets” policy a top priority. I am in favor locating hot spots throughout the city and implementing measures that in some aspects may mirror your program leading to greater pedestrian safety.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - Team Matsikoudis FULLY supports the Complete Streets policy. Again, educating the public through meetings, social media and other media about the benefits of traffic calming measures and alternative means of egress like median crossing islands; audible cues for people with low vision, curb cuts; curb extensions, center medians, planter strips and protected bike lanes, greenways, and possibly bicycle lanes, neighborhood greenways, wide paved shoulders, and possibly Bus Rapid Transit.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - During the last few years I have noticed an increased amount of bike lanes throughout the city. I have been engaged in community meetings trying to find solutions to the over congestion of our streets. As a person who was hit on my bicycle I will continue to fight for the safety of all of our residents.

**Michael Griffin** - Yes I would. I understand the importance of implementing traffic and pedestrian safety measures. I would use my experience to initiate community driven traffic studies. I would look to host walking audits to guide our communities in the right path by identifying the challenges we face when it comes to improving traffic flow and safety. We would compile our findings and create a JC Complete Streets policy that would benefit motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians. Once this is in place, enforcement will be key in order to have a successful Complete Streets Policy. Creating a Complete Streets Board would not be a bad idea. This board would be able to oversee the successes and pitfalls of the policy and make changes where needed.

### QUESTION #3

The streets in Jersey City are generally not bike friendly and are dangerous to ride on. The bike lanes we do have are not connected in a network, nor are they enforced (often blocked by double parking, etc.). We have no protected bike lanes and lack sufficient racks at key transit and shopping hubs. What would you do to improve safety and access for bicycle riders throughout the entire city?

### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - The safety issue I addressed in question one with the enactment and enforcement of the “CYCLIST ARE PEOPLE TOO” campaign. In terms of access, adding bike racks throughout the city at or near designated high traffic and congestion areas at first. Then expand that to parks, recreation centers, schools and other places large numbers frequent. With the initial implementation adding 100 new racks over a year one, then adding 100 per year in phase two over the next three years.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - We need more bike parking at transit hubs and we need a bike network of connected PROTECTED LANES and we need greenways to connect our two waterfronts.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I have have been in multiple meetings addressing the welfare of all of our residents including ones directed to road diets and protected bike lanes on Grand street from Bramhall to the waterfront. I believe the bike lanes that we have in place is a start but much more work is needed.

**Michael Griffin** - I would work with Bike JC, Safe Streets JC, and residents to identify safe and accessible paths that we can use to create bike lanes and ensure that they are connected to a network that doesn't require riding on the sidewalk or in traffic on narrow and unlit streets. It is important to map out bike lane paths that are easy on the rider as well as car and bus traffic. We must also enforce laws that are already on the books and start ticketing double parked cars; especially double parking in bike lanes. More areas around transit and shopping hubs would be identified so that racks can be put in place without taking up parking or open air spaces.

#### QUESTION #4

“The truth about a city’s aspirations isn’t found in its vision. It’s found in its budget” – Brent Toderian. As a councilperson, what would you do to fund an expansion of Complete Street improvements to make our roads safer for all users?

#### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - I wouldn’t be able to spearhead the charge on this issue, but as said previously I am a big proponent of many of the virtues of the program and as a result would support legislation aimed at enacting such.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - Cut patronage, come up cost to implement top measures at needed street and timeline to implement it.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I would crack down on motorist who disobey the law, levy summonses and see to it that some or all of the monies collected go to making our streets safer for all.

**Michael Griffin** - We would have to apply for grants to get a lot of the work done. I know there are grants out there because we (Bergen Communities United) received a grant for traffic and pedestrian safety. We also have multi-million dollar companies in Jersey City that can contribute to this mission. Other ways would be to raise money through our autonomous agencies like JCRA. JCRA can also create language within redevelopment agreements that would obligate a developer building a project to finance bike racks as well as initial bike lane creation if the project falls within the path of a bike lane.

#### QUESTION #5

“If you plan cities for cars & traffic, you get cars & traffic. If you plan for people & places, you get people & places.” – Fred Kent. Reducing dependency on cars is important for the environment, for safer and more pleasant neighborhoods, and for residents who cannot or who choose not to have a car. As density continues to increase, how will you ensure that new development promotes multiple modes of transportation with better connectivity between neighborhoods and to the region?

#### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - I believe by utilizing impact studies going forward on most, all major projects. Those studies would look at the impact of such projects on housing, schools, employment, traffic congestion and other relevant issues. Additionally they would provide alternatives and solutions to some of your density concerns as well as other factors that should be considered long before the ground breaking of any project.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - All buildings should have parking for bikes. Our focus should not be parking garages, but complete streets.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I will continue to expand the already popular bike share program. I will also continue to monitor the “parking” and/or “no parking in developments close to transportation.

**Michael Griffin** - Many people in the downtown Bergen Lafayette section of Ward F can not depend on public transportation. We would have to sit with NJ TRANSIT, A&C Bus Corp. and other public transportation companies to figure out a measurable way to improve public transportation. New routes and more buses are needed throughout the city. Routes need to be created to better connect the east and west sides of Jersey city as well. Our public transportation system has to be a planning priority so we can improve it and make it the center piece of our community. In Maplewood, New Jersey, the local Chamber of Commerce partnered with NJ TRANSIT to establish a concierge service at their local train station. We need to consider partnerships as well.

#### QUESTION #6

Illegal, dangerous parking is not adequately enforced and often contributes to crashes and injuries to pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike. Parking Enforcement does not have sufficient staffing, training, or technology to adequately address violations, including dangerous illegal parking (blocked crosswalks, double parking, blocked bus stops, impaired sight lines with cars parked too close to corners, etc.). If elected, what will you do to increase capacity within the Parking Enforcement Division?

#### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - I think given the budget constraints increasing capacity through increased spending may not be feasible. However with more effective use of current resources and strategic implementation in trouble areas we could have an impact.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - Illegal parking causes accidents. We need more parking enforcement on this violation and greater fines.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I do believe staffing is part of the problem but it is not the only solution. I think it we should also look at other cities around the states that have a better track record of safety and implement some of the ideas they are using. I also believe we should look to penalize those parking illegally as a way to increase funds for the budget to hire more individuals.

**Michael Griffin** - Their would have to be a team effort. As we properly train our staff to be a sufficient staff, we would also have to depend on our police officers to assist with enforcement. JCPD has the power to ticket motorists who violate the law. Police officers pass more double parked cars in a day than any employee in the Parking Enforcement Division. With a flash of a siren, the police can make anyone move. If no one is in the car, they can ticket them.

#### QUESTION #7

Grand St. is one of the most dangerous streets in the city, and it is also a key artery filled with dense residential developments, shopping, schools, and other community facilities. Do you support the Grand Street Vision proposal to redesign dangerous Grand Street, including elements such as a road diet, pedestrian safety improvements, and protected/separated bike lanes? What will you do to ensure that the city's eventual plan for Grand St. is swift, bold, and comprehensive—not a watered-down patchwork compromised by its loudest opponents?

#### ANSWERS

**Mr. Anthony Blake** - I'd have to study the proposal in greater detail to understand the pro's and con's of such.

**Yolanda Dortch Amiker** - YES! Again, educate, come up with plan, put it out to bid and get it done. Simple.

**Jermaine D Robinson** - I believe in safety for all of the users of Grand street, pedestrians, cyclist, as well as motorist should all be able to use the street safely. I've seen road diets work throughout the country and see no reason it wouldn't give us the best opportunity of sharing the road as one.

**Michael Griffin** - A close family friend was killed in a hit and run accident as she exited the Medical Center a few years back. The car was speeding and apparently didn't see her crossing the street. There needs to be a comprehensive plan that would reduce the risks of injury and death. I am in favor of implementing a road diet and pedestrian safety improvements. I would have to know more about the bike lane plan to see how that would work with emergency vehicles coming out of and going into the medical center's parking lot. If the bike lane doesn't effect emergency services, I am all for it as long as it is efficient for all users.