

## Candidates responses for the Midway City Council:

- 1. What are some specific skills you can bring to improve the City of Midway as a City Council member? Please share a personal accomplishment to date. Why are you the best candidate for the position you seek?**

John Holloway- I became interested in a Midway City Council seat because of my work as Walter Bradley Park Manager. The Park Board and myself have put a great deal of effort into developing the park from a weed-infested flood plain into a place where Midwayans can enjoy exercise and nature. Most of the work has been done by volunteers who were encouraged by Mayor Vandegrift. The mayor has very graciously supported the park financially in his budget requests for the past two years, and I would like to see that continue into the future. The park is really blossoming into something special and should be financially supported as a recreational resource for the entire city.

While it might be tempting to say why one would be the “best” candidate for City Council, I prefer to concentrate on enhancing collaboration among all the members as a whole. I think my years as a professor taught me to be thoughtful about working with others in decision making. I’m also good at “homework” and putting in the effort to study the facts of issues. How can you make good decisions about the future if you don’t understand the details of issues facing the city? I’ve been to hundreds of faculty meetings over the years, and more recently have been attending city council meetings. It is amazing how similar they are. Also, for six years I was the president of a labor union and have a good working knowledge of the rules that apply to public and private meetings.

- 2. What is the biggest challenge, and biggest opportunity you see facing the City of Midway?**

John Holloway- My wife Patty and I have been living in Midway since we married seven years ago; and we just love it here. Although we have both since retired, she worked for the State Police in Frankfort and I taught at UK in Lexington. We scouted for a home in Versailles, but we fell in love with the general ambiance of Midway. I’ve had dear friends here since the 1980s and was graciously invited to their parties and holidays. So I felt I knew something about the place, and a few of the people here. We were lucky enough to find a reasonably priced fixer upper and jumped on it.

Midway Renaissance funded a study that found the word “quaint” was most often used to describe our town. I would interpret it as meaning that Midway embodies the best of small town America. When I mention living here to people from Lexington or Frankfort they always bring up: 1, restaurants and 2, shopping downtown. Of course the best thing about Midway is the people who live here, something that likely escapes the restaurant diners. I think the most important challenge facing the city is how to preserve our quality of life as the city grows and evolves.

- 3. The updated 2018 Comprehensive Plan [Goals & Objectives](#) prioritize infill/redevelopment as a primary strategy to accommodate urban growth needs. What specific recommendations do you have to protect the character and context of existing neighborhoods while pursuing an infill/redevelopment strategy? Please share your ideas for infill and re-development within the Midway Urban Service Boundary.**

**[John Holloway](#)**- Towns tend to grow over time if they are economically healthy. For Midway, a large part of our recent growth has been in Midway Station. The influx of jobs there has been outstanding and a great boon for our tax base. It’s not clear if that will result in a greater demand for housing in the city proper, especially now that the residential section of Midway Station has been put on hold. It seems like there would be more folks wanting to move here, but the reality is that Midway is so centrally located many workers will probably commute from other nearby towns. Even so there is a need to add affordable housing in the city. Is that something government can help with? The city can’t build the houses themselves, but perhaps we could make construction on vacant lots more attractive with a temporary tax reduction or some other inducement. I would be in favor of that, but not of extending the city boundary to include a new subdivision on land currently used for agricultural purposes. A few small parcels of land adjacent to the city are not agricultural and might be considered. Right now Midway is a town you can walk across in fifteen or twenty minutes and I think it would be best if it stayed that way.

- 4. How would you address affordable housing needs in Midway and Woodford County?**

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**5. Please share some of the ideas you have about enhancing Midway's downtown business district. How will you help attract businesses to re-locate to Midway?**

**John Holloway-** Keeping Midway's downtown business district strong is crucial for both the cultural and economic health of the city, which in large part is governed by tourism and hospitality. Virtually all the businesses on Main are in that category, and it seems like restaurants are doing well. Some of the stores seem to struggle a bit. Gift, boutique clothing, and antique stores do much better when they are banded together in groups; and it would be good to have even more of them. Visitors can browse through a series of shops, which makes the trip here more attractive than when visiting just one store for a few minutes. Visitors can shop and then have lunch or dinner. But you can't have a business district with just that. I've been happy to see a few of the buildings occupied with medical offices, which has done a lot to stabilize the area with a mix of mainstream businesses and specialty shops. Also, it is wonderful to have some healthcare options right here at home.

**6. Are you in favor of further annexation of surrounding land outside the Midway urban services boundary (USB)? If so, where and how would you change the boundary?**

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**7. Do you support the study of a merger of Woodford county government with Versailles, and/or with Midway city governments?**

**John Holloway-** I think Midway should keep its current system of government rather than merging with either the county or Versailles. Our needs are specific to our city, and would become secondary to others in a combined government. One exception to that is the Versailles Police Department which provides policing for the entire county, and is very effective. I attended the Citizens Police Academy and came away with the opinion that the VPD is an excellent organization.

**8. In your opinion, is Midway's transportation and infrastructure adequate to support our community? If not, where would you like to see improvements made?**

**John Holloway-** I endorse the council's decision to re-stripe Winter Street with narrower lanes. I read a scholarly article that verified narrowing the lanes slows traffic in an urban setting. Drivers see narrow lanes and are more concerned about staying between the lines so they automatically slow down. When lane markings are also painted on Stephens they will have the same effect. The portable flashing radar sign helps too, because many people don't realize exactly how fast they are going. I did my own traffic study on Winter Street in 2015 and found that 5,025 vehicles passed through town on an average work day. That was before Midway University grew, and I think that number could only have gone up. We certainly have more traffic on Stephens. Five thousand is a large number and points out that many people use Midway Road to get to places other than Midway. Anecdotal evidence indicates that many drivers cut through our town instead of using US 60 to get to the interstate because GPS indicates the route is about 7 or 8 miles shorter. Of course 60 is a four-lane road and much better equipped to handle a large traffic volume and it would be better if most vehicles went that way.

So the question is "How can we prevent drivers speeding through Midway on Winter Street en route to somewhere else?" Narrowing the lanes on 62 is making most drivers slow down a bit, but more is needed. Lawrenceburg has a very similar situation where 62

runs across railroad tracks and through a congested downtown area. In that town the speed limit on 62 is 25mph. We should put up a harder fight with state transportation officials to do the same in Midway. I would also like to see other improvements such as a four way stop sign at Winter and Stephens. Turning left from Stephens onto Winter is a death-defying experience. I know because my house is very near by, within earshot of accidents. A stop sign (not signal) would make all drivers slow down and stop when entering town and be less likely to breeze on through at high speed. The recent rise in vehicle travel to and from MU has only made the problem worse.

There should also be a large fine (and a better sign warning drivers like the one on Yarnallton) for low slung trailers that get stuck on the railroad tracks. One of these would cause a catastrophe if a train hit it and scattered the wreckage throughout the downtown area.

I would be very interested in creating a utilities map for Midway that shows the location of gas, water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer lines. It was revealed at a council meeting this year that no detailed map exists and that this has been a problem when considering infrastructure improvements.

**9. What are your plans for improving the environmental sustainability of our county? How would you support investments in more renewable alternative energy development?**

**John Holloway**- Renewable energy is a tough challenge for central Kentucky. We don't have a good environment for wind, geothermal, or hydroelectric. Of course we should encourage residents to install solar panels wherever possible, but it is difficult in an environment with so many trees and so many cloudy days. I installed solar lights in Walter Bradley Park so that residents in Northridge can see to get home if they stay downtown past dark, and think perhaps we could use solar for things like streetlights where it is easier to segregate the devices from the electric grid. Advances in LED lighting, which uses very little current, have made the prospect of solar lighting much more appealing.

**10. Agriculture is an annual \$565 million-dollar industry that supports 1 in 3 jobs (specifically 2,783 jobs) in Woodford County. Woodford County farmland also anchors a burgeoning travel and agri-tourism industry. What are some ideas and specific policies that you have to strengthen the agriculture industry sector within Midway's city limits?**

**John Holloway**- I can't imagine what Woodford County would be like without it's agricultural base. We must make sure that all types of farming continue, whether it be horses, corn, or hemp. Of course horse farms are the reason most long distance tourists come to Woodford County. So it only makes sense that we should promote them as part of the tourist industry. Perhaps a small distillery would be willing to locate here as another tourist attraction? Right now the growing of industrial hemp is on the cusp of becoming the next big thing and we should be more vocal about supporting a new cash crop to replace tobacco, which I think most people concede will eventually fade away. Perhaps we could host some sort of "Hemp Festival" or help to advertise this new crop in some other way.