

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.

Logan Nance- I believe I am the best candidate for Midway City Council because of my history of service and leadership. I served my country honorably in Afghanistan and my service did not stop when I took off the uniform. I search out opportunities to do my part to make our community a better place. I am not the kind of person to wait for permission to try and make an impact, instead I work hard to create those opportunities.

I believe that those who can serve, must. It is so important that we take an active role in making our community as great as it can be, for our children and future generations. I want to set a great example for my daughters to show them how important it is to do our part.

I have a history of leadership, in and out of uniform. I am decisive and not afraid to make tough decisions. Also I believe that a very important part of leadership is listening. One

of my favorite parts of this campaign has been listening to my neighbors, and small business owners, to hear their thoughts on what we can do to improve our community.

I do not do anything passively. If I am elected to the Midway City Council I will take that responsibility seriously and actively work to advocate for what I believe to be the core values of our town.

Stacy Thurman- I have worked with the Midway community for nearly 10 years. As a librarian at the Midway Branch Library I have helped plan, promote, and implement programs and services that have engaged this community and provided opportunities for growth. As the Branch Manager for the past three years, I am proud to have collaborated with many individuals and organizations in Midway to provide services to a greater population of our residents. It is this genuine desire to serve and my experience in working with the people of Midway that I will bring to the table if elected to serve on City Council.

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.

Logan Nance- The biggest challenge facing Midway is deciding how we will address maintaining the small town aesthetic we know and love while also encouraging businesses to set up shop in the area. It is important that we protect the farmland and natural beauty of Midway.

I want to make sure that we create a long-term plan for Midway Station that takes into account future growth and discourages reactionary zoning and rezoning in the area.

The biggest opportunity for Midway is being able to utilize the new tax revenue from businesses setting up in Midway Station to help revitalize our town. We have sidewalks in need of repair, roads that need repaving, an aging sewer system, and many other projects that would help improve the quality of our town. I believe it is important that the next city council focuses on using those tax dollars to make these improvements. We need to be proactive in our approach and take care of these issues before they become bigger problems.

The economy is strong right now and Midway currently has more employees working in the area than ever before. It is important that we take advantage of this and make our town as recession proof as possible. The last thing we want is for a future City Council to have to re raise property taxes to make up for any deficits. If we can make a plan for the future right now, we can make sure that doesn't happen.

Stacy Thurman- The biggest challenge for Midway is maintaining our identity as we face progress. Change is inevitable, but the qualities that make Midway special should not be compromised as a result. A big part of this challenge is how we address housing. More affordable housing, or a wider range of housing options, will help keep our community diverse and keep young families in Midway; however we have to figure out what we mean by "affordable" and come up with options that stay true to Midway's character and charm.

As more young families move to Midway we have an opportunity to invest in our future. We must consider that this next generation will contribute to our town, both personally and financially, and help us thrive. As a council member, I will work to keep these families in Midway by actively supporting affordable housing, quality childcare, continued development of our park, as well as initiating the creation of a youth sports league. Working together, using an intergenerational approach, will ensure that Midway's rich history is honored as we plan for the future.

- 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.

Logan Nance- I am a proponent of the infill and re-development strategy. It is important that we protect the natural beauty of our region and practice responsible stewardship of our farm lands. The best way to do this is to be intentional in how we utilize the land we already have developed. Doing this does come with its own challenges because we want to make sure that the character of our neighborhoods and especially our downtown is protected. For this reason it is important for the city council to create clear and concise language for what is proper and accepted for the exteriors of the buildings downtown.

Recently a few non-retail businesses have been attracted to downtown Midway. The new dentist office is a great example of how the downtown buildings can be used. They were able to completely update the inside of the building to fit their needs, while maintaining the beautiful exterior facade.

There are also several buildings around Midway which have been allowed to fall into disrepair, despite numerous complaints from citizens about the hazards these building pose. The city council needs to develop of process for how to handle these types of situations, such as many notices are to be served or fines are to be levied against the property owner before the city takes further action to ensure our neighbors are kept clean and safe.

Stacy Thurman- I am in favor of infill and redevelopment in Midway. The dilemma, of course, is finding viable lots within the urban service boundary and convincing landowners that this is a good option. There is only so much the city council can do as far as this is concerned, but the current council is making progress with cracking down on blighted property. In addition, I am an advocate for the development of neighborhood

associations in Midway and think that working with these groups, individually, would help the city preserve the character of the neighborhood, or street, while considering redevelopment projects. This strategy also means that individual residents, who might not normally speak up, will have the opportunity to advocate for their neighborhood. Examining our city one street at a time and addressing redevelopment as a neighborhood issue is tedious, I admit; but it will preserve the characteristics we love about Midway while providing a wider range of housing options.

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

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.

Logan Nance- There is definitely a need for more affordable housing in Midway. The city needs to look at the land available within the city limits and take adequate steps to encourage housing development in those areas. Midway is so centrally located to everything it's an ideal spot for young families and retirees alike. There are several locations on both sides of the interstate suitable for townhome development.

I know that there are some people who do not want to add additional housing in Midway, but it wasn't long ago that people were unhappy with the development of the Northridge neighborhood. Now, Northridge is home to many wonderful families who are integral parts of our community.

With the recent rezonings Midway Station has become less desirable for future housing development, although I do believe it could still be suitable for townhomes. For this reason I believe that it is important that we look at land on the Midway side of the Interstate.

Any time that a new family moves into our town, as inclusive as Midway is, we benefit from their talents and experience.

Stacy Thurman- People have different ideas about what “affordable” means. I believe that there is certainly a deficit in the range of housing offered in Midway. There is no easy solution to providing housing options to all socioeconomic levels, but I think continuing to pursue infill development will keep Midway from growing at an undesirable rate. I would work with individuals and neighborhood associations to find viable infill lots and develop housing that is affordable, not cheap, and that fit with the existing infrastructure and landscape. At this time, I am not in favor of expanding our urban service boundary and developing a new neighborhood in Midway.

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.

Logan Nance- It has been my experience that the best thing that a city government can do to attract business is to get out of the way. Consumers will drive the market, so what the city needs to do is attract those consumers. We need to find more ways to increase foot traffic in our downtown during non-peak seasons. We are so ideally located that I believe we would have no problem attracting more events to this region, which would help drive traffic to our businesses. Doing more to promote agritourism in the area is a no brainer.

Additional consumers visiting our community would make it more appealing for our shop owners to keep more consistent hours, and more consistent hours from some of the businesses would go along way in attracting consumers as well.

Stacy Thurman- I think when people care about their town and feel invested in its success, they are likely, as a community, to promote and support local businesses. A big step toward a thriving downtown is community engagement. I support the efforts of the Midway Renaissance and the Business Association to plan events that not only draw in tourists, but give all of us a chance to participate and work together. Businesses want to be located in a town with enthusiastic community involvement. This being said, it is still important to actively court businesses that fit the identity of Midway. I think, in going forward, it is important for the City and the Business Association to strengthen their relationship and keep open and effective communication.

Additionally, when businesses on Main Street remain vacant for extended periods of time it hurts all the businesses. I am in favor of a vacancy tax, or at least a fine, for landlords that sit on vacant property. Even a modest penalty would help encourage building owners to pursue leasing options, including pop-up stores that have become popular during peak tourist seasons.

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?

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.

Logan Nance- At this time I am not in favor of further annexing land outside of the Midway Urban Services Boundary. I Believe we should focus on creating a long-term plan for the utilization of the land currently within the USB.

Stacy Thurman- I am not in favor of further annexation at this time, but I certainly understand that circumstances can change. As that happens, I will make informed decisions regarding what is best for Midway and the people that live here.

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.

Logan Nance- I do not support the study of a merger of Versailles and Midway. As there is no pressing financial need for such a merger I believe that it is imperative that the two communities maintain their own autonomy with their own elected leaders representing them.

Stacy Thurman- As a librarian, I certainly appreciate research and think, if we wanted to pursue a merger, a study would be absolutely necessary; however I don't believe that merging with the county government would be a good option for Midway. I know that combining governments is supposed to increase efficiency, but that depends on how you characterize efficiency. A larger government unit would mean that the people of Midway would have less access to elected officials and, therefore, less influence on their community. There would be a greater potential for issues in Midway to get overlooked.

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.

Logan Nance- I believe there are several opportunities to improve Midway’s infrastructure. The trails through Walter Bradley Park have gone along way in connecting Nortridge with downtown, but there is still much to be done to make Midway more walkable. We have numerous sidewalks in desperate need of repair and/or replacement. There are several sidewalks that are dangerous for pedestrians to walk on, much less try and run or push a stroller along. This is a liability for our city, especially when we host so many out of towners, particularly during the Fall Festival. We pride ourselves on the beauty of our town, we need to take action on some of these issues immediately.

On top of that there are several areas of our town that do not have sidewalks and citizens who might want to walk to shop or eat downtown or at the corner store are forced to brave traffic to do so. There are also several streets in need of widening and striping to make them safer for our drivers.

I would also like to see the the bridge at Weisenberger Mill repaired and opened as soon as possible. Having it closed for so long is creating a transportation nightmare for many people living in the area who now have to drive so far out of the way.

Stacy Thurman- Anyone who keeps up with news in Midway knows that our aging sewer lines are in need of repair. The city is currently working on this issue but it will likely be inherited by the next elected council. The improvement of our sidewalks is another ongoing project which will improve our infrastructure. In addition to working with homeowners to repair old sidewalks, I would like to see new sidewalks placed in certain parts of town to make foot travel easier and safer for more people in Midway. Many of the residents here live without reliable transportation and being able to safely walk around the city is extremely important.

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.

Logan Nance- It is very important that we do our part of make Woodford County more sustainable. I am in favor of exploring options for providing tax benefits for businesses and homeowners who implement energy saving practices. The city should explore the use of solar panels to provide supplemental energy where possible.

Adding bike paths along our roads would go along way in making Midway a more active community and reducing some of our emissions.

Stacy Thurman- Honestly, it is overwhelming to think about all the practices we need to change in order to become more environmentally friendly in our county. The city of Midway could start by simply identifying opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint and then develop a timeline of short, medium and long-term goals. Simpler solutions, such as reducing paper waste and purchasing supplies from eco-friendly companies can be implemented quickly, while others like alternative energy sources could be budgeted and planned for over the course of time. I do think that the governing body of Midway bears responsibility in leading the community toward environmentally responsible practices.

Midway Christian Church has been working on reducing their carbon footprint for a long time. They just installed solar panels and have been recognized statewide for their environmental stewardship. They are a great example and could be an important resource to other organizations in our community as well as our city government.

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.

Logan Nance- Our farmland is so important to the very identity of Midway. People move to our town and love to visit our town in no small part because of the natural beauty of the region. If elected to the Midway city council I will do everything I can to make sure that land is protected.

I will be against any development that encroaches on farmland on the Midway side of the Interstate. I will push for all new industrial development to be within Midway Station.

I will encourage the promotion of agri-tourism in Midway as a great way to increase foot traffic in our downtown. I believe that 2019 will be the best year ever for agri-tourism in Woodford County as people flock to see not 1, but 2 Triple Crown winners.

Stacy Thurman - We are fortunate in Midway to be surrounded by beautiful farmland and I think that many people already have a healthy appreciation for our local agricultural. I see restaurants in the area make an effort to buy and serve locally sourced food. Businesses enjoy the influx of tourism that is generated by horse farms. And I believe, for the most part, the people of Midway support the protection of agricultural land.

As I consider how to strengthen the agricultural industry within our city limits, I think of the importance of getting the produce directly into the hands and mouths of the people who live here. We have a small farmer's market that many appreciate, but it is underutilized, and for many, not worth the time it takes to transport produce and set up the stand. I would love to see a permanent indoor market in Midway with regular hours, open multiple times a week. The Farmer's Market is great because it cuts out the middleman, so money goes directly to the people who grow or make the product. Having a market that is more accessible would benefit the people of Midway as well as our local farmers.