

Candidates responses from those running for the Mayor of Midway:

- 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?**

Grayson Vandegrift- In serving as mayor these last 4 years, I have demonstrated my ability to work with anyone, to build consensus through discussion, and to effectively and efficiently run our city to a point where it is in the best financial position in its history. I worked diligently with other local and state resources to help bring American Howa Kentucky and Lakeshore Learning Materials to Midway Station, which has greatly expanded our revenue stream. We are now budgeting for 100% more revenue from occupational taxes than when I assumed the office of Mayor in January of 2015. I am the best candidate because I have done the job, and I've proven that I can do it well, and that I can accomplish the many different tasks a mayor must accomplish in order to improve a community for everyone. I have yet to hear anyone disagree with this statement: Things are going very, very well in Midway, and I am best poised to carry out the work we've started and continue to make Midway the model for 21st century small towns.

Ambrose Wilson- I am running for Mayor of Midway because I have the proven experience, public service and passion to be successful. I will treat our citizens with dignity and respect and ensure those who often lack a voice at the table will be at the table. I promise to make decisions for the best long-term benefits to our city.

I have 30 years of employment experience in conflict resolution, employee relations and management consultation. I retired from Kentucky State Government where I served as the Secretary of the Public Protection Cabinet. In this position I managed a staff of over 700 employees and oversaw a budget of \$98 million. Additionally, I was responsible for 13 departments and agencies that provided public safety, consumer protection and financial integrity through enforcement and administration of laws and regulations.

I have also represented Midway as a member of the Woodford County Board of Education for 26 years. I am currently Chair of the Board, as I have been for 12 of my 26 years of service. During my terms, we have replaced our aging elementary school that did not offer the same educational opportunities for our children that others in the county were receiving. There was agreement among board members that our school needed replacement, but a profound disagreement if a new school should continue to remain in the city of Midway, which we ultimately accomplished. I am very proud of this accomplishment and our school will serve our children and city for generations.

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

Grayson Vandegrift- The biggest challenge we face is replacing our aging water and sewer lines, but the enormous amount of new revenue we've created is our biggest opportunity, and has put us in a great position to tackle the problem of aging infrastructure. This summer we paid off the debt on our old sewer plant as scheduled, and then paid off the debt on our new sewer plant early. Now that we are debt free in our sewer fund, we are able to begin taking on big projects, and we've already begun to plan for that with work currently being done by city engineers to put together a proposal for the City Council to do camera and cleaning work in most of the city, with the special focus on those sewer lines that we know are in the most need of repair or replacement.

Ambrose Wilson- Based on results of a survey I conducted of Midway citizens, the biggest challenge currently facing Midway remains to be our aging infrastructure, especially sewer and water line rehabilitation and replacement. Other needs are in the areas of road paving, sidewalk repairs and storm water management. The biggest opportunity is the location of Midway for private sector business relocation resulting in increased revenue from payroll taxes. This additional revenue will be a vital component in finding solutions to meet our infrastructure needs. To best address both our challenges and opportunities we need a strategic plan to achieve our specific goals. This will allow a process of defining our strategy and direction and make decisions on allocating resources without the need to raise taxes or increase current costs of services. To pursue this strategy, I will work closely with our city council to provide needed innovative planning and solutions. This will allow us to delineate a clear direction for addressing our infrastructure needs.

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.

Grayson Vandegrift- Last year, I told the Midway City Council that no new commercial or industrial development should occur south of Leestown Road. I see no reason to open any kind of development of that kind at any time in the future, especially when Midway Station is not yet fully developed. Furthermore, before we proceed with any plans for possible future residential development, I plan to hold a town hall meeting where residents can share their views on housing in Midway, and where we can provide information for our citizens so that we can develop a cohesive strategy moving forward.

Ambrose Wilson- One of the most difficult challenges of infill and redevelopment is protecting the living conditions in adjacent neighborhoods, especially preserving the privacy and character of adjacent residences. Infill usually is placed in vacant land, but it could result from tear downs

or redevelopment. Sometimes infills refer to the reconfiguration of property from commercial or industrial to townhouse, condo or mixed use. Some areas of adjacent neighborhoods are protected by planning for alternate redevelopment by leaving most of the land in single family neighborhoods at the prevailing zoned density. Reuse and redevelopment of existing parcels and structures should be encouraged. Infill development projects should be considered for Midway because it admits growth within the USB, uses current infrastructure, avoids public costs and adds value to existing neighborhoods. Infill sites are the best choice we have now, and we need to be flexible and patient for the right opportunity. We must work with the private sector to promote infill projects such as the Midway School apartments.

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

Grayson Vandegrift- As I previously referred to, I will begin by holding a town hall meeting, perhaps even a series of meetings, to gage the public's feelings about residential development in the future. I also want to hear from citizens on what they think affordable housing means, and how they think we as a united city should proceed. To date, it has become clear that affordable housing means different things to different people, and we need to come to a general consensus for how we think about it in terms of our community and our specific needs.

Ambrose Wilson- Since April, 2016, there has been one new residential construction completion in our city. Therefore, we must explore infill opportunities or redevelopment of underutilized properties within the current USB. This construction would meet the needs of all our current and future residents including our millennial and rising senior populations. I was the Chair of the WCBE when we vacated the old Midway elementary school. We partnered with Mayor Carl Rollins to ensure the property was retained by the city of Midway for redevelopment and it currently is being used for apartment housing. The WCBE accomplished the same outcome recently in Versailles and another vacant school property was redeveloped for apartment housing. The subject of affordable should be addressed in 2019 and I pledge to work with the city council to study and examine our housing needs.

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?

Grayson Vandegrift- Our downtown is booming, and is at nearly full occupancy, as recently reported by the Midway Messenger. I will continue to help in fostering an environment where our small businesses can thrive, and we will continue to keep our entire city, including downtown, beautiful and attractive for residents and visitors alike. I will also continue to support summer events that attract not only residents and visitors in a family friendly environment, but also attracts potential new business owners to downtown by showcasing our downtown business district. I also want to explore, in conjunction with the Midway Business Association, the Woodford County Chamber of Commerce, and other interested civic groups to consider a committee that is given the task of finding potential new businesses that could benefit our downtown and our residents.

Ambrose Wilson- We must enhance previous investments in our downtown business district. Previous developments have produced an area that is thriving, vibrant, attractive and a destination city for many. After speaking with some current downtown occupants, I believe possible areas of enhancement would be in the areas of signage and parking. Signage would be used to communicate information designed to assist visitors with knowledge of existing products located in our business areas. Parking spaces are very important to cities. There must be enough parking spaces to provide our residents and visitors a place to park. We should promote the development of off-site parking areas within walking distance of our downtown area. Adequate parking would enhance visits to this area.

Private sector growth in Midway Station, the Freely property and other appropriate areas will produce jobs for our residents and additional tax revenue to address our challenges. I will work closely with our EDA in attracting businesses to locate here. While employed by the Commonwealth I gained experience and partnered with our Cabinet for Economic Development, in the recruitment of international and domestic businesses to locate to our State. Working to attract businesses to Midway will be a priority in my duties and responsibilities.

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?

Grayson Vandegrift- I am not in favor of expanding the urban service boundary anywhere in the city with the one possible exception of the land just north of Lakeshore Learning Materials. That land, often referred to as the Freeny Property, is sandwiched between two industrial users, and the Comprehensive Plan has designated that land for future workplace development. I believe that securing more occupational tax revenue in the future is vital to the interests of the people of Midway because it will greatly enhance our opportunities to make the necessary replacements and upgrades to water and sewer lines as well as storm sewers, roads, and sidewalks.

Ambrose Wilson- The current planning process has determined the area within the existing USB should accommodate projected growth. The USB was designed to provide sufficient land areas for urban development where public services such as water and sewer are available. At this time, I would not support annexation of surrounding land outside the existing Midway urban services area. However, we must remain flexible regarding future city needs. I would recommend before any expansion of the Midway USB there should be additional plan review and utilize feedback from the public stakeholders, advisory and decision making bodies.

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

Grayson Vandegrift- I do not support the merger of Midway city government with any other governmental body, and therefore, as far as I'm concerned, if Woodford County government and Versailles government want to discuss it for themselves, they are more than welcome to. But I see no reason why Midway needs to participate in that study, as there is no practical reason why we would merge with either entity, especially given the fact that we are doing so well as a city. I

am always open to the possibility of merging services together where it benefits our citizens, but I am absolutely against any merger involving Midway.

Ambrose Wilson- I do not believe it to be in the best interests of the citizens of Midway to merge with our county government. A merger would undoubtedly lead to a governing body less responsive to our citizen and neighborhood needs. Conversely, I would be in favor of current city and county leaders examining a shared services plan which could accomplish both the control of costs and enhancement of functionality through shared services among our governing bodies. Bringing Midway, Versailles and county governments together to review efficiencies could be a very productive endeavor and possibly lead to new cooperative arrangements that would make operations more efficient, less costly and more reliable.

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?

Grayson Vandegrift- I’m proud of the improvements we’ve made over the last four years, but our infrastructure is not where it needs to be, and now that we’ve accomplished the feat of paying off all our sewer debt, I’m dedicated to investing more in infrastructure if I am fortunate enough to earn a second term. We have paved some of the worst roads in town already, and are planning even more in this fiscal year. We’ve also begun a Comprehensive Traffic Plan that includes more striping, as well as adding edge lines, with plans to build concrete sidewalk “bulb-outs,” which have shown to be very useful around the country in shortening pedestrian crossings, slowing traffic speeds, and beautifying the city, as these can easily be landscaped. I would like to see more transportation options available for our seniors and anyone who doesn’t have the means or ability to travel outside of the city, and I plan on working with local and state agencies to see that we can improve those options as well. And as I’ve mentioned before, one of my biggest goals if re-elected to is to make significant progress in replacing our worst sewer and water lines in the next four years, using our significant surpluses that we have built as well as the projected income that continues to expand with the growth of Lakeshore Learning Materials and potential new clients at Midway Station.

Ambrose Wilson- Our current existing vehicular transportation infrastructure is adequate for our current population. The citizens of Midway should have a well-planned and coordinated system of major thoroughfares and neighborhood streets that are safe, cost effective and adequate for our surroundings. A traffic flow study may be in order from comments I have received from citizens. This study would review the interactions between travelers and infrastructure with the aim of understanding and developing a transportation network with efficient movement of traffic, including pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers. This plan would recommend improvements to existing thoroughfares that produce better flow and safety. We should also examine methods to provide our citizens with non-motorized trails, such as pedestrian and bicycle, to address mobility issues and needs within the city limits of Midway. We should have sidewalks that adequately protect us from automobile traffic. These efforts will provide an emphasis on our city becoming more walkable.

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

Grayson Vandegrift- We recently became only the third city in Kentucky (Lexington and Louisville being the other two) to install an electric charging station for vehicles, located in the parking lot behind city hall. That was a project paid for by Kentucky Utilities, and I want to continue to seek partnerships that are economically viable and which enhance environmental sustainability. I am also very interested in pursuing the concept of adding solar panels to city hall, so long as it makes sense to our taxpayers. We're already in the process of working to bring permanent recycling cans to downtown, perhaps starting with a few at first, and possibly expanding that if needed.

Ambrose Wilson- Environmental sustainability should be the responsible action of any government to avoid depletion of natural resources and allow for long term environmental quality. The Mayor and city council can influence sustainable directions by setting examples in its own behavior.

The city should provide community education programs to explain methods to reduce energy consumption in homes and offices. This would be a profitable investment to embrace every opportunity we have to replace inefficient energy systems.

Our city could duplicate some of the efforts the Woodford County Board of Education has initiated. During the recent remodels of Northside and Southside schools we replaced inefficient HVAC mechanical components and the energy reduction resulted in statewide awards for both schools. We have also replaced fluorescent lighting systems with LEDs and installed centralized digital thermostats resulting in less energy consumption and increased savings.

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?

Grayson Vandegrift- My policy has always been, and will continue to be if re-elected, that we must never, with any city endeavor, endanger the agricultural farmland that truly makes Midway and Woodford County unique. One of the main reasons people live here is because they can have the comforts of modern urban life, but still know they are in the presence of beautiful and pristine farmland. That is as much a part of our identity as being the first railroad town in Kentucky, and both are integral to our historical and cultural identity. I would like to work with entities such as the Woodford County Farmers Market to help them to expand their ability to sell their products in our city, and I would consider tax credits for restaurants who buy product from Woodford County farmers, pending a thorough and agreed-upon plan, and acceptance by the Midway City Council.

Ambrose Wilson- The City of Midway has been closely linked to our surrounding farm land and agriculture community since our inception of becoming a city. Many residents work on local and surrounding farms, as their families have for generations. We are fortunate this land remains for agriculture purposes and we enjoy working with the our agriculture industry to promote their endeavors.

Our city currently provides a weekly market for local agricultural products. This creates a city and agricultural connection that supports the rural landscape and benefits our city by providing a market for our residents. We can do more in this area. We should have a larger weekend Farmers Market located in a permanent area with additional hours of operation. This would lead to more sellers and buyers and provide an ideal way to celebrate our local agribusiness community. In concert to benefitting our agriculture community, it will also bring new visitors to Midway and benefit our local business community.