

Overland Park City Council 2021

Response ID:20 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Chris Newlin

2. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 16836 Melrose St.

City/State/Zip : Overland Park, KS, 66221

3. Phone Number

9137357434

4. Email Address

chris@chris-newlin.com

5. Campaign Website

chris-newlin.com

2. Candidate Background

6. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

Neutrality Data Centers - Dir, Strategic Accounts

Spectrum Enterprise - Major AE

Cornerstone Communications - Senior AE

7. Please list political, community and business organizations with whom you have been affiliated and any leadership positions you have held.

OP City Councilmember - Ward 6 Elected 2017

Kansas City Tech Council - Policy Committee

BVSW Lacrosse Club Board Member

BV Youth Soccer Coach - Recently Retired

BV Youth Baseball Coach - Recently Retired

Former HOA President Coffee Creek Crossing

Former Alumni Board President Sigma Phi Epsilon - Baker University

3. Issues and Policy

8. List your top three policy issues? (100 words or less)

- Implementation of Crisis Intervention Team within the Police Department. This will ensure better outcomes with mental health calls for service.
- Improving our infrastructure for our aging streets and improving streets that are older county roads in the south with subpar stormwater infrastructure.
- Maintain the service level for the extraordinary value our residents receive based on our low tax levy.

9. What are your views on the services and value the City's citizens receive for their local tax dollars? (100 words or less)

With a mill levy being 80% lower than any other first-class city I believe the residents receive high value for all the services we offer in Overland Park. What other cities can say their residents get police, fire, excellent road network, snow removal, parks, etc. for an average property tax rate under \$400/year.

10. Regarding the City's budget, a 1-mill property tax increase to fund the recommendations of the Mental Health Task Force has been proposed for 2022. Do you support the task for recommendations? Do you support increasing the mill levy for this purpose? Discuss why/why not and how you would fund the recommendations if you support them but not the mill levy increase. (100 words or less)

I am the Chairman of the Mental Health Task Force and led the group to these recommendations. Yes, I fully support them and support the mill increase that it will take to implement them.

The police and fire department gets called to thousands of mental health-related calls per year. We need to have a dedicated team of highly trained officers in Crisis Intervention and Co-Responder experts to go on those calls 24 hours a day to achieve better and more desirable outcomes. This will relieve the pressure day to day patrol officers to focus on criminal activities.

11. What changes, if any, would you like to see in the City's proposed budget for 2022?

The Overland Park budget provides great value to its residents by having a low mill levy. Every dollar is carefully accounted for and used wisely. Without cutting services to public works and parks, which I know residents will not appreciate, I cannot see how we can make any changes to the budget without significant impact on daily service the residents of Overland Park expect.

12. What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to the community? (100 words or less)

The city plays a vital role in economic development and capital investment in our community. A thriving business community is one of the pillars of success for Overland Park and without it, our residents would suffer a heavier tax burden.

The business landscape is very competitive and other cities are trying to match the success we have today. It is the job of Overland Park to make sure we keep a proper balance of growth and maintain high-quality jobs in our city to attract new residents to our city.

13. As the City considers future development and redevelopment projects, describe your views on how the City should best manage and balance growth? (100 words or less)

We need to have a more clear comprehensive plan which has the input of the residents so they understand what the future holds.

We need to stay as close as possible to that plan but also understand as needs change in the coming years we are able to be flexible to changing landscape.

14. What do you believe are the greatest challenges the City faces over the next ten years and how would you address them? (100 words or less)

1) Aging streets - We have streets that are 60 years old in the north and old county roads in the south that lack upgraded stormwater facilities. We need to have a comprehensive strategy and cost structure for sustainably improving this infrastructure.

2) Attainable housing - If we are going to continue to attract young people into OP they need a place to live. We need to come up with a housing strategy that ensures people can live within their means and be part of our great community.

15. Do you believe the current city manager form of government we have is appropriate for Overland Park or would you favor a "strong mayor" form of government? (100 words or less)

The Mayor and City Council should not be in the position to manage the staff. Our city manager form of government keeps politics out of management and ensures the city runs steadily. It ensures that the Council sticks to policy and the day-to-day operation of implementing those policies is led by a professional city manager and his or her hired staff.

16. It is estimated that replacing chip seal road resurfacing with a method similar to surrounding cities will cost more than

\$20 million per year. Do you favor eliminating the chip seal process, and if so, how would you pay for the increased cost? (100 words or less)

I am not a fan of chip seal and want to find a proper solution to not use it as much. Increasing taxes for businesses and residents by over 40% each year or letting our streets deteriorate is not the right solution in my mind.

I support the formation of the Infrastructure Advisory Board that will bring back fact-based solutions that we can look to implement. We have seen this work with the OP Mental Health Task Force and I know we will see the IAB bring back great recommendations we can implement.

17. What specific proposals do you have to support the goal of providing access to affordable housing throughout the City? (100 words or less)

The comprehensive plan will provide us with some direction and changes in zoning that can help us get more affordable and attainable housing. There needs to be a proper mix of rental units that include apartments, duplex, or triplex units.

It also includes thinking about cottage homes and pocket neighborhoods that are a little denser and increasing our housing stock.

We need to understand not one idea is going to fix this issue. We are going to need to come together as a community to have an open mind to new ideas that can make our housing more affordable.

18. Since its founding in 1960, Overland Park leaders have had a long history of visionary planning. What do you believe the City should do today to ensure the City's prosperity for the next 60-years? (100 words or less)

This envisioning started in 2018 with the publically approved plan of ForwardOP.

We need to incorporate ForwardOP's vision with a more comprehensive zoning plan that involves both the residential and the business stakeholders.

I know the start of this process is happening this fall and will consist of a lot of public input. If we can get the community at large involved in this process and have a big conversation I believe we will ensure a proper vision for the next 60 years.

19. Do you believe the City of Overland Park is headed in the right direction?

Yes, Overland Park is headed in the right direction. Surveys and Awards have shown that we continue to be the Best Place to Raise a Family and the Best Place to Live in the country. These accolades do not go to communities that are headed in the wrong direction.

Are we perfect? Absolutely not and we do need to continue to make progress on important issues like expanded transparency and diversity.

20. Do you believe the City of Overland Park City Council is responsive to the needs of the community? What is your approach to governance?

Yes, I do believe we are very responsive. I have held many Coffee and Community town hall events and will meet or talk with any constitute when they need help.

I respond to emails from my constituents in a timely manner and usually when they leave their number I pick up the phone and call.

My approach to governance is being balanced and pragmatic in my decision-making. I always look to see what impact will this have on our residents and what is the long-term effects on the overall community.

21. Why are you seeking this public office?

I am running for reelection to continue the success our city has seen for 60 years. I will

continue to think of the future of Overland Park to ensure it stays a first-class welcoming city.

We will need to work together to move our city forward and continue to build upon the foundation that has made Overland Park great.

22. What do you believe makes you uniquely qualified to serve in this position and most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race?

I have been a proven leader not only in my Ward but in the city overall. Whether it has been my role as the Chairman of the OPMHTF or being the only council member to serve on 3 committees at one time, I have shown that I am willing to step up in this community and do what it takes to keep us moving forward.