

# Overland Park City Council 2021

Response ID:12 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

### 1. Candidate Name

Sam Passer

### 2. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 5820 W 147 PL

City/State/Zip : OVERLAND PARK

### 3. Phone Number

9135233156

### 4. Email Address

sam@samforop.com

### 5. Campaign Website

<https://www.samforop.com/>

## 2. Candidate Background

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

Technology and Operations Exec:

-Vice President of Client Experience at TouchNet - 6/2021 to present

-Associate Vice President of Operations at Cox Automotive / VinSolutions

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

-State of Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review

-LionsGate HOA Events Committee

-Leadership Overland Park

-Volunteer at Habitat for Humanity, Harvesters and other civic organizations

## 3. Issues and Policy

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

1. Public Safety - One of the most important elements of any community is living in a safe environment. Our first responders have been a tremendous asset for Overland Park, and I'll ensure it stays that way.

2. Quality of Life - Continue to make a high quality of life for our residents a top priority with transparency, inclusion, and community assets

3. Infrastructure - Invest in infrastructure projects and ongoing maintenance which keep the city moving forward.

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

Overland Park has the lowest mill levy and best amenities in the area - OP citizens receive an exceptional value for their local tax dollars. I also think it's important for the city to drive a strong partnership with business and residents to attract and keep jobs and economic investment to provide a tax base to support a high quality of life.

**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)**

In general, I do not like tax increases. Between Federal, State, and local taxes - our residents pay too much. That said, OP has the lowest mill levy in the area. We can do ANYTHING - but we can't do everything. I agree the Mental Health Task Force is a good add. If we can't find ways to fund with existing revenue, then increasing the mill levy is a prudent step.

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

I've reviewed the 2022 budget proposal that was submitted by Bill Ebel and am supportive of what was submitted. As we plan ahead for the future, I would like to examine options to reduce our dependency on chip seal - but a change like that takes some planning.

**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)**

As the city stands to gain from economic development through increased property and sales taxes, I believe the City should play a large role in economic development. This can come in the form of assisting to market and recruit new opportunities to providing well thought out and deliberate incentives which will produce a solid return on investment to drive growth to the 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)**

With our limited ability to annex additional land, our green space is one of OP's greatest resources. To this end, we need to continue to plan ahead with future development and make sure a priority is placed on redevelopment to keep the entire city moving forward.

**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)**

One of the greatest challenges that I see is maintaining cooperation and communication between the residents and the city. Having involvement is key to making sure priorities are heard and citizens are brought into the loop of the challenges with delivering everything that's requested so trade-offs can be better understood.

The second greatest challenge is the previously mentioned need to balance redevelopment and adding new developments. As the city ages, we need to be careful to make sure redevelopment remains a priority to keep the city in good shape.

**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)**

Yes, I do believe in the current city manager form of government.

**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 do not like chip seal - but I do believe the city's budget does not have wiggle room to find \$20 million per year. I think there are two options to consider with how to pay for this additional expense:

1. Home values are sky rocketing right now - if this leads to additional revenue for the city, which could fund an alternate paving method, we have our answer
2. If additional funds are needed, this needs to be put on a ballot so residents can determine if they would pay increased property tax to fund this measure.

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

I know a certain segment of this community is very anti-apartment, but I believe that apartments can be one form of affordable

housing (and the % of apartments to single family homes is the same today as it has been historically since OP was founded). As residents want to own their homes, I do believe that zoning is an effective tool that can be used to help drive more affordable housing options.

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**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)**

I think there are two key areas:

1. The amount of green space for development is dwindling - we need to treat these opportunities as a scarce natural resource and make sure we're making the best choices on how that land is used.
2. Vision Metcalf is a great example of planning redevelopment - we need to keep looking at the city and addressing opportunities when they arise.

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

Yes, I do.

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**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?**

I do believe the city is responsive to the needs of the community, but over the years too many citizens have developed a distrust for government in general. I'm in favor of a collaborative approach for governance and we can improve communications to increase understanding on what the city is doing and help drive a greater partnership to move the city forward.

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**21. Why are you seeking this public office?**

Two reasons really:

1. The value of public service was demonstrated to me early on in my life. One of my neighbors growing up was in the US House and a classmate of mine in high school's uncle was the governor and then went on to be a US Senators. I've helped candidates by canvassing and was always interested in the process
2. After I did Leadership Overland Park, I was so impressed with our city that I knew when an opportunity to serve made sense, I'd want to become more involved.

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**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 an appreciation for the amenities that make Overland Park a great place to live. I will keep this respect for our city front and center as decisions are made. Secondly, in my professional life, I've led teams that have over 200 people and several million dollar budgets. I can drive efficiencies in our government and know how to quickly drive decisions. Lastly, I pride myself on being a strong communicator and as a city council member - that's a key part of the job.