



Rob Barron – Ward 1 City Council Candidate Survey Responses

4. Transit Funding & DART

DART is redesigning its system for the first time in nearly 20 years. The City Council recently increased the franchise fee on utility bills to 7.5%, generating approximately \$6.2 million annually for transit.

- **Beyond the franchise fee, what additional strategies should the City consider to secure long-term transit funding?**
- **If some suburbs scale back their participation, should Des Moines continue pursuing a regional funding model, or focus more on building a city-centered transit system?**
- **How would you balance those priorities?**

(This answer was written to address all three questions)

Unfortunately the immediate priority appears to be making sure that the current council honors the commitment of their action and commits the revenue generated by the franchise fee increase to meeting our DART commitment. Once that is secured I believe the next council can turn the page and work more collaboratively with our suburban neighbors. A public transit system that only serves Des Moines would be a losing proposition. The number of service workers who live in Des Moines, but work in the suburbs and rely on DART is significant. One of the reasons I ran again for this council seat was to move the council past what I viewed as a staring contest between the DSM City Council and its suburban counterparts. In the past two years we have seen two communities signal their intent to leave DART. We need to bring stability back to DART and win back the community's trust in the system. The right leadership can provide that.