



Josh Mandelbaum (Ward 3) running unopposed for re-election
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?

We need to lead the metro in advocating for alternative funding mechanisms for transit. I think that we should be agnostic about what the alternative revenue is (i.e. could be an additional local option sales tax, hotel-motel, expanding the franchise fee option to suburbs) in order to be more nimble in the political process. The most important piece is that alternative transit funding be a priority for the metro and that folks are willing to expend political capital lobbying at the legislature to make it happen.

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?

Des Moines should continue to pursue a regional transit system. If we lose suburban partners and build a Des Moines centric system, the reality of the funding is that it will be a much smaller and less frequent system than what we have today and what is proposed in reimagine DART. We can provide better transit service with the suburbs as partners.

How would you balance those priorities?

Reimagine DART provides a good road map for how to balance priorities. Creating frequent quality service on a handful of key corridors can make transit more useful and effective for the entire region.