Urban farming is a critical piece of our local food system, particularly for many residents of south and west Louisville, where there are fewer grocery stores and less availability of fresh, healthy food. Currently, at least three of the largest urban farms and community gardens in south Louisville are being displaced. What commitments can you make if you are elected to support land access and promote food sovereignty among neighbors desiring to feed their families and each other?

My administration will work hand in hand with the community to ensure that we have an equitable food system moving forward. This includes supporting the community organizations working to improve our city’s food system, like New Roots & Food in Neighborhoods Community Coalition. I also believe that some of these surface parking lots that the city currently owns could be made into green spaces for food growth. Lastly, I have personally supported & donated to the Louisville Community Grocery & worked with Cassia Herron on trying to get a nonprofit grocery store set up in the West End.

What is your plan of action to reduce overdose deaths, reduce transmission of infectious diseases, and eliminate the barrier to access to all recovery and mental health care systems for the communities most affected by substance use disorder?

Metro Government should play a leading role in supporting mental health and addiction treatment services in our community. We need to support non-profit organizations, like Seven County Services and Wellspring, and also ensure there are enough licensed professionals providing mental health services. Ideally, these services assist residents in need so they can lead productive, healthy lives and are part of the public safety solution.

Child abuse/youth and family violence- how does the candidate envision working with existing service providers to ensure we address this public safety issue?

Kentucky has had the most child abuse cases per capita nationwide for the past three years, with the state reporting over 20,000 cases in 2019 alone - that is a travesty. My administration will work tirelessly to ensure every child in this city grows up safe. This includes supporting the work done by our nonprofit community, such as Family & Children’s Place.

With a few examples, how would you address the growing homeless population including homeless placement, substance use disorder treatment, and employment services?

While there are many factors behind the growth of Louisville’s homeless population, ultimately, the best solution remains safe housing and support services, including mental health and addiction treatment. My administration will work closely with existing local service providers to ensure these services are available for our homeless population with transitional housing and wraparound services. We will also create 15,000 new affordable housing in my first term to ensure more affordable housing is available across our entire city, near good-paying jobs, and an improved public transportation system.
What strategies would you implement to ensure that renters are not displaced from their homes as new investments come to neighborhoods that have experienced historic disinvestment?

My administration will crack down on out-of-town landlords who fail to properly care for their properties & charge exorbitant market rents to low-income households. Moreover, neighborhoods having input on development decisions in their areas will help ensure renters aren’t priced out of their homes.

Prior to the pandemic, Louisville’s eviction rate was twice the national average. Since then, Louisville organizations have worked together to bring our rates down significantly, thanks to COVID relief funds and changes to the eviction processes locally. How do you plan on maintaining lower levels of eviction rates to keep Louisville families—disproportionately Black—in their homes?

Ensuring Metro Government continues to support the local organizations that have made this happen will be a priority of my administration. The Metropolitan Housing Report laid out several recommendations aimed at limiting evictions in the city, such as enacting just cause eviction policies & supporting community land trusts, recommendations that I will support as Mayor.

In March 2021, our Metro Council added new protected classes to the Fair Housing ordinance including source of income but people receiving federal housing choice vouchers report that they are still experiencing discrimination when applying for housing. How will you work with the Metro Council to strengthen the enforcement of policies like this?

I will come into office with a strong relationship with several Metro Councilmembers, including several who have already endorsed me: President David James, Councilwomen Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Keisha Dorsey, Donna Purvis, and Councilman Markus Winkler. These relationships will prove invaluable in addressing every issue where the Mayor’s office and Metro Council must work together, ranging from strengthening the enforcement of policies such as these, loosening restrictions in other cases, or completely removing statutes.

How intentional will your administration be on improving equity and inclusion in city procurement to increase contract access and awards to Black, women, minority and small contractors/vendors? Will the efforts include supporting local non-profits working specifically in this realm?

In short, yes. Not only do I believe that the city must provide ample opportunity for each of these groups to flourish by tweaking guidelines that will allow for more contractor/vendors to be eligible, but also strongly support local companies who use local employees and think that we as a city must do more to support them in any way we can.

Will you continue the practice of keeping LMPD separated from ICE to avoid profiling, injustices, and discrimination?

Absolutely. LMPD is already stretched thin, with a shortage of nearly 300 officers. We need them in the community, building relationships & stopping/solving crimes. What we don’t need is our police force rounding up ordinary folks.

Will you ensure that immigrant voices are included in the city planning, not as an afterthought or a diversity check box, but in making decisions that are inclusive, meaningful, and culturally relevant in issues that affect all the families in our community?

I’ve pledged to have an extremely diverse administration, not just by ethnicity, race, and gender but also diverse in professional experience, life experience, where you live in the city, where you’ve grown up,
and so on. These vast experiences will ensure we not only have a strong administration, but that it will also reflect the city that it serves.

**Will you maintain the Office for Globalization? How do you imagine it may continue with a more community-oriented lens?**

Yes. The Office of Globalization should be focused on helping immigrants & refugees learn the ropes of our community, find jobs, and guide them if they need additional education. Whatever they need to flourish in their new community should be there to support them & organizations dedicated to our immigrant community.

**Would you consider refugees a competition to our current homeless?**

Not at all. A strong & vibrant Louisville must have a strong & vibrant immigrant community. They bring a unique culture, help ensure we have a thriving economy & strengthen our city - they are a critical part of our future. I’m the Grandson of immigrants fleeing hate & seeking opportunity, while my wife Rachel has been involved in various initiatives with immigrants / New Americans, including being an ESL teacher at Wheatley Elementary in the California Neighborhood, Former Chair of the Mosaic Rewards that honors New Americans & 1st Gen. Americans for their contributions. I say all this to drive home that the immigrant community holds a strong place in my heart.

**Louisville’s system of parks and natural areas is a source of great civic pride, but unfortunately by many measures our investment in this system lags significantly behind our peer cities. As Mayor, what would be your vision for how our city can equitably increase funding in support of our public parks and what role do you see for the non-profit sector?**

The city should strive for all of its parks to measure up to the Parklands & Waterfront Park, neither of which are managed by Louisville Metro Parks. This will require extensive resources and may not be possible by the government alone, so support from the non-profit sector would be welcome to reach this goal.

**Nonprofits typically face funding restrictions that prevent us from advocating or lobbying for policy changes. And, given the nature of our work, we see the needs for it from the ground-level. Many nonprofits are constantly overwhelmed trying to offer greatly needed relief services in our community. What are the top 3 policy or systems changes you would prioritize that would minimize the need for relief services in our community? How would you involve the nonprofit community in seeking those solutions?**

Build 15,000 new, high quality, and affordable housing units across the entire city in my first term, creating a Universal Pre-K program so that every three and four-year-old child in Louisville starts with the same educational opportunities, and fully staff & fund our police department. These three policies will have wide-ranging benefits for our city that will minimize the need for relief services in our community.

**What is government’s role in solving the social and economic challenges our community faces? To what extent are nonprofits responsible for solving these problems?**

There are clear areas where government can play a central role in addressing these issues. A few examples that my Administration would deal with those issues include supporting policies that protect homeowners from being priced out of their homes by enacting anti-displacement measures like property tax
freezes & improving public transportation to cut down on barriers to employment. That said, government doesn’t always need to tackle these issues alone. There are times when nonprofits can do the work better and more efficiently, and we should lean on them when that is the case.

**What do you see as the most pressing issue for newer nonprofits?**
Funding.

*Each year, the current administration has engaged local volunteers and nonprofits in significant community service through the "Give-A-Day" initiative. As a mayoral candidate, would you continue the Mayor’s Give-A-Day program or make something similar a priority?*

I will continue the Mayor’s Give-A-Day program.

**Tell us what you know about the role of the 13 Community Ministries in Metro Louisville.**
In addition to being an advocate for families in need, the 13 Community Ministries in Metro Louisville provide emergency housing, food assistance, job readiness training, and more.

**What will your administration do to provide support to families who need childcare?**
In addition to implementing a universal Pre-K program, my administration will work tirelessly to improve the standard of childcare in our community. That includes enforcing childcare licensing regulations, ensuring adequate care for children who have been in traumatic environments, and rigid oversight of those receiving public money.