

**Overland Mountain Bike Association -
2021 City of Fort Collins Mayoral & City Council Candidate Questions
Regarding Parks/Open Spaces & Non-Motorized Singletrack Trails**

1. *Do you ever ride a mountain bike on our local trails?*

I frequently ride around town and truly enjoy our City's paved trail system. While I typically walk the mountain trails, the rest of my family mountain bikes. My husband is an avid mountain biker and has shared that passion with each of our three children. Five of the eleven bikes in our garage are mountain bikes.

2. *How often do you recreate in any way on our local trails and which trail is your favorite?*

I try to get out and hike on our local trails at least several times a month. Fort Collins' Open Spaces and trail systems were a big draw for us when we were considering a move back to Colorado. As far as favorites, it's hard to pick just one but I'll say Coyote Ridge for its easy access, prairie dogs who greet me near the trailhead, the spectacular views from the summit.

3. *Singletrack trails and outdoor recreation in general are a major economic component of northern Colorado. OMBA envisions trail expansion as a substantial economic driver in Fort Collins, similar to the Bentonville and northwest Arkansas area. A study completed by the Walton Family Foundation & People for Bikes demonstrated that recreational trails provide an **annual** economic benefit of \$137M to that area. How do you see recreational trails impacting our local economy & what could you do to increase this value?*

I support an expansion of the Fort Collins trail system and promoting it as a key feature of our community. I believe investment in our trails can bring added enjoyment to our local riders and would attract visitors who would come to ride but would ultimately also spend their money on food, entertainment and lodging in Fort Collins.

4. *Youth mountain biking is exploding in popularity around the state of Colorado and across the nation, but access to mountain biking trails in Fort Collins is extremely limited for non-driving youth. Current options are limited to the more advanced Foothills Trail or riding along busy roadways, such as Taft Hill towards Loveland or CR 38E around the south end of Horsetooth, thus creating significant safety concerns for younger riders. What would you do to improve the safe access to singletrack trails for youth riders & non-driving individuals from our urban areas?*

Currently it would take a non-driving individual close to two hours to reach Horsetooth Reservoir from the corner of Harmony and Timberline by public transit. Essentially that makes mountain biking trails inaccessible to those individuals. I would support additional MAX lines running east and west to make public transit a better option. On Council I will prioritize

expanding our system of paved bike trails, improving the safety of bike lanes and increasing connectivity throughout our city.

- 5. Bike parks have become active community hubs in many cities & towns across the US & the world. The City of Boulder opened Valmont Bike Park in 2011 to rave reviews, and it is now the Gold Standard for all community bike parks. With no local options, many Fort Collins residents drive themselves and their kids to Boulder and beyond nearly every weekend for this activity. Do you see this as a local need and would you support developing a large-scale municipal bike park in Fort Collins?*

I love the Bike Park concept and believe such a park would be a great addition to our community. I look forward to contributing to the conversation that will outline and detail a future project. Prior to offering unqualified support, I will need to understand specifics, including cost to construct, operate and maintain, multi-use potential, competing projects, environment impact and other factors. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposed project with your organization.

- 6. Expanding on the last question...as a complement to the new Poudre Whitewater Park, a downtown area bike park designed & built to fit into the natural environment along the Poudre corridor could create an "outdoor recreation hub" to go along with all the other downtown area amenities, thus providing new opportunities for many residents & families and much improved access for several underserved audiences. Do you see this as a positive or a negative for the City of Fort Collins and why?*

I absolutely view this as a positive. I would support additional recreational sites in this area of the City that has traditionally been underserved. Moreover, I believe this could be an economic boon to the downtown area that will bring more families and visitors to the area to dine at local restaurants, frequent our breweries and shop in local stores.

- 7. Singletrack trail systems in Fort Collins are seeing more use than ever, with demand growing rapidly every year. The past year's response to the Covid pandemic has given us a window into what our trails & trailheads will look like as our population growth continues, and without appropriate planning, it doesn't look good. It has also shown how critical trails and outdoor recreation are to the health & well-being of our residents. What will you do as a Fort Collins Mayor/City Council member to address these overcrowding issues and expand access on City singletrack trails such as Maxwell/Foothills, Coyote Ridge & Bobcat Ridge? How should the City responsibly expand access to City trails for all residents?*

With the COVID crisis Fort Collins and Northern Colorado we have seen an explosion in the use of trails and trailheads. More than ever residents are enjoying outside recreation and I don't think we are going to see a significant drop once life returns to normal. This increased use is a great thing, but it also stresses the trail system and can lead to crowding. Fort Collins needs to

meet this demand by expanding existing and creating new trails. I fully support that effort. In light of Covid and the tax revenue shortfalls Fort Collins is experiencing I would look to create partnerships with OMBA and other community organizations to supplement City financing through volunteer efforts. OMBA's collective expertise and field support could be utilized in the design, build out and maintenance of new trails.

8. *Fort Collins has been a leader in developing a robust, interconnected paved trail system throughout our urban areas. One glaring gap, however, is the lack of connectivity to open space trails on the west side of town such as Lory State Park, Horsetooth Mountain and Coyote Ridge, where the vast majority of trail users are forced to drive to already overcrowded parking areas. OMBA's Trails Vision Plan supports the development of new multi-use singletrack trails around the south side of Horsetooth, the north side of Horsetooth, and between Cathy Fromme & Coyote Ridge to create a fully connected trail system encircling the reservoir. What benefits do you see with this interconnected system, and would you support collaborating with Larimer County and other agencies on this project? Why or why not?*

I would support this project and partnering with all stakeholders involved. An interconnected trail system would provide many benefits to local residents, including access to our trail system from many more points. Its enhancement would encourage all-bike trips (as opposed to mixed car and bike outings) and facilitate longer rides. It would also be a draw for out-of-town visitors and could be economically beneficial to our City. Interconnecting the trail system would also create favorable conditions for cycling events in our city.

9. *"People don't need trails, the land does." Conservationists and Recreationists agree that thoughtfully planned, constructed and maintained trails better conserve the land and environment while providing a better experience for users. Mountain bikers tend to be the most engaged of all trail users when it comes to the quality of trails meeting expectations. Mountain bikers also tend to show up in large numbers to provide input for management plans/decisions as well as on-the-ground work. With tens of thousands of mountain bikers residing in Fort Collins and the real potential of significant budget issues over the next several years, what role do you see volunteers playing in regard to trail building, maintenance & patrol assistance on City of Fort Collins singletrack trails?*

Fort Collins has an extensive trail and park system that requires (and warrants!) a substantial investment for creation maintenance and renewal. I believe the City can and should partner with the passion, expertise, and willingness of volunteers to help maintain and expand our parks, open spaces and trail systems. I would like to see "Friends of" groups help in different aspects - for example, helping to maintain alleyways in Old Town, planting flowers in parks, and doing weekend cleanups in open spaces. In particular I think Fort Collins should look to partner with mountain biking organizations like OMBA to help construct and maintain trails that will be a benefit to our community at large. By drawing on community-minded volunteers and

organizations the City can leverage the funds that are available for parks, rec, and trails to go even further.