

**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 have only been mountain biking a few times and appreciate our access and focus on local trails. Many people in my various social networks are avid bikers and also enjoy our open spaces and variety of trails. I am a bike commuter for work and I love seeing all of the people biking in our community whether it be in town on our paved trails or in the mountains on the single track trails.

2. How often do you recreate in any way on our local trails and which trail is your favorite?
I am an avid hiker and a Lory State Park annual membership holder so I love to explore our numerous trails that are in close proximity. One of my favorite trails is to hike to the A and I think it is wonderful to always see so many mountain bikers on the trails that I frequent. I also love taking visitors up the Arthur's Rock trail for hiking as it is an easy hike and rewarded with great views at the end. I thoroughly enjoy finding new trails as well, for example, just a few weeks ago I did the Westridge Trail as part of a bigger loop and that section was completely new to me.
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?

Recreational trails are a key component of our local economy and I will support the expansion of trails as a sustainable method of driving growth in Fort Collins. Just today I was speaking to a local resident in District 4 who had been to Bentonville just last week and we spoke of the trails there. It is great the Walton Family Foundation has been a financial contributor to an extensive network of trails in Arkansas and it would be great to have as wealthy as a contributor as them to help expand our regional trails. Northern Colorado is attractive to people in Colorado itself as well as from all over the US and even the world, and we can continue sharing our region as a tourist destination by staying up to speed with Visit Fort Collins and other visitor center's in the area.

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?

It is essential that everyone in our community, including the youth, have safe access to singletrack trails from our urban areas, and Council can ensure that riders have adequate lanes, spacing, and signage to ensure safe travel from urban areas. We luckily have a very extensive trail network that is connected throughout our community where youth and adult riders alike do not have to ride along busy roadways. For instance, if I leave my house to go towards Spring Canyon Park, I only ride two side streets before I get to Spring Creek Trail which can connect me to the foothills in a very quick manner. We also have to increase the number of alternative transportation options in the city for all of Fort Collins residents.

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?

Knowing that there is a great number of Fort Collins residents who would like to see a Bike Park in our community, I would support looking at the various options and see if the funding sources are available. If we have everything in place, having a Bike Park could be a big benefit, from reducing carbon emissions, encouraging more residents to become involved in the bike community, potential boost to the local economy, etc. During the Parks and Rec 10 year planning process, a bike park was one of the top desired amenities once you aggregated the data.

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?

This would definitely be a positive for the City of Fort Collins, and could serve as an important step towards a more walkable and bikeable city. In terms of access ,around the downtown area there are many underserved residents so if there is a viable option, I would love to explore the possibility. When we think about our vision for Parks and Rec, we must always make sure it includes a focus on equity and access.

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?

As mentioned, many factors have led to overcrowding on the aforementioned trails and on Council I would ensure we are planning our trails to accommodate our rapid growth. I myself like to frequent Maxwell and I have seen the number of bikers, hikers and runners there even on a weekday morning. As a councilmember, I would ensure we are working closely with City Staff in planning our vision for the future, such as the current Council adoption the Parks and Recreation Master Plan just over a month ago.

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?

Connecting our bike trails with open space is a key way to promote an active method of transportation, and I think it would benefit our residents to be able to access open spaces without driving. I would support any efforts to develop an interconnected system. Collaborating with Larimer County makes sense to ensure that we are developing this system in a sustainable and responsible way, and other agencies that may have a vested interest.

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?

Our community is lucky to have residents passionate enough to help with trail building, maintenance, and patrol assistance and I would welcome any support they can provide\ regarding the aforementioned topics, and ensuring that bikers feel valued and represented in our community. Access to trails and bike lanes are part of what make our city such a special place to live and play a critical role in ensuring Fort Collins growth long term.