

Good morning, my name is Kiara Daniels. I am a Tacoma native and I am running for Tacoma City Council Position six. That is an at-large position in Tacoma. Today I am here with Downtown On The Go, and I, I am learning more about what it is going to take to increase our transportation, what it's going to do to increase the three things that are most important to me in my campaign, and that is healthy neighborhoods, healthy economy and healthy families. So, yeah, let's get to it. Oh, riding bus 28 today.

What do you think is the most pressing mobility concern in your Tacoma?

I think there are several barriers to. Mobility. And it kind of depends on what demographic you are, right? I'm a woman, so any time I think about being mobile, anytime I think about riding public transportation or getting around town, I'm always thinking about safety, safety, safety. That's first and foremost for me. I think about the safety for myself. I think about the safety for drivers. And I know that we've had some incidences as we have divested from health care and things like that that are our drivers are dealing with now. So that's number one.

I also think about we live in a rainy city. I think about the luxury of not having to get wet and rainy every day, going to work. I think about the time that it takes to catch the bus and to wait for one going to work or school and then waiting after and then thinking about routes. Right.

You know, a lot of our we know a lot of our underserved folks live out in rural county and kind of further out as home prices in Tacoma have and rent have gone have skyrocketed. So our and our bus routes have not been able to catch up with that. So it's important that we think about that as those are the folks that are going to be coming into the city to work, and they've got to get here on time. And a lot of times that means they've got to leave a few hours earlier.

Other things, I think about our sidewalks, you know, that's really important for our seniors. You know, that's really important really for anybody. Folks that are biking, folks that are walking. And we've got to invest more in that.

And let's see, I mean, there are several things that I think about that are our challenges. But really, we've got to we've got to really just upgrade our city to be to being in the 21st century. Right. We were a city that was built around cars. And now we're trying to transition into a bikeable, walkable mobile city. And it's going to take dollars and it's going to take time and it's going to take a passion and urgency to do that.

What do you think is the most important transportation project in Tacoma currently?

I'm really excited about a bunch of different things. Transportation has been really big. Really with the work of Downtown On The Go in recent years. And some things that I've been hearing about, actually, things that I've been excited about for the last probably about five years, is the idea that not the idea, but it looks like it might be coming true is the hope that at some point I will be able to go from my house, walk a couple blocks up and take one link from my house all the way to Seattle. And that's exciting for me for a number of reasons, not because I travel to Seattle every day. But I know that over half of our community is traveling to Seattle every single day for work. And if we have a system that can quickly get them there outside of the train, I know that we will spend less time in the car. That's more that's a better

Tacoma City Council Interviews – Kiara Daniels, District 6

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quality of life for our Tacomans. And really, more importantly, that's better for our climate and it's overall better for our community.

So that's the main thing, thinking about Sound Transit 2 and hopefully Sound Transit 3 that I think will go all the way to TCC if it's passed and if we can afford it. Other things I'm thinking about are Pierce Transit, getting electric busses. That's just really cool. Good for the environment. But I also have heard that we are expanding our Pierce Transit to rural county. And I've heard that we are going to be increasing our number of busses, maybe not a number of busses, but increasing our time for some of the heavier areas. So I think about maybe the two, probably the one. I'm not sure which other ones will be affected, but that means that people will be able to rely more on our busses and our transportation system and hopefully start to get in the culture of using that as our main form of transportation.

Pierce Transit is considering going to the ballot to ask voters for a 0.3% sales tax increase for public transportation funding. If Pierce Transit were to go to the ballot in 2022, would you support the measure?

So here's what I think is really, really cool beyond cool, what I think is important and what I think is kind of radical. Right. It's bringing us to this idea that transportation should be free, especially for those who can't afford it, our young folks and our seniors. I think about how we just talked about how important it was to be able to expand our service in areas that are underserved so that they could get to work and school on time. Right. And I think the unfortunate part is that we are also dealing with a sales tax that is higher than any other place in the country. And so I feel like oftentimes we have to choose between what we know is important and what we know we need in our city. And raising sales tax one more time, which we know also affects those that are least served. So to answer your question, yes, I would support that measure, but I would I definitely and I want to emphasize how definite I am about this. I am committed to finding alternative ways to fund our city's most important things without increasing our sales tax. And that's just that.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about your goals around transportation?

I talked in the beginning about my three cornerstones of my campaign. Again, those are healthy families, healthy neighborhoods and healthy economy. We absolutely cannot do that without a robust transportation system and a robust, robust housing stock. I think that those are inextricably connected. And I think that when we solve those two things, we will begin to solve many other things in our community. I am not an expert on transportation, but I know which council members have been working diligently day and night to do this work. And I'm committed to working with folks like Council Member Walker to continue to expand our mobility and to continue to invest in some of these projects that we've been waiting for. We don't have any more time. We are behind the times. We know that. And so that the time is now to really be bold and really act on some of these things. Our pandemic has really kind of forced us back a little bit in terms of some of the issues that we do care about, because we have to make sure that people are safe or healthy and alive. But as we kind of as we begin to exit out of the pandemic, we've got to refocus back again on our transportation and our housing.

Thank you. My name is Kiara Daniels. Please vote for me for position number six, Tacoma City Council.