



Civic Tech Forum – KCMO City Council Candidates Questionnaire
Responses by Heather Hall, 2nd District / In-District (highlighted)

Digital Divide

Over the last few years, we have seen an increased focus on the digital divide--the lack of access to computers, Internet connectivity and other digital tools that are increasingly necessary for full participation in civic life and the modern economy.

What do you think the city's role is in bridging the digital divide? What goals do you believe Kansas City should set in bridging the digital divide, and what strategies should we adopt to achieve those goals?

Open Data

In the past couple years, Kansas City has established an open data policy and launched data.kcmo.org to make city data more accessible and usable. This is important because it enables citizens to do things like monitor 311 requests online, look up property records through GIS, and even create new applications to make the city work better, such as what the Code for America brigade does in its "civic hacking" meet-ups.

Have you ever used Kansas City's open data portal? Do you support an ongoing commitment to open access to city data? I think the city should provide any data that isn't restricted by current laws. As we become a more data driven society, this information can be used for the city and its inhabitants to make better and more informed choices. What are the biggest opportunities that a philosophy of open data offers, and what are some of the risks? I think the open data makes it possible for those who live here to know more about our city. It also allows others who study cities to make comparisons that may help us in the future. A potential risk can happen if we allow data that should be secure to be available - our city has some information particularly about employees that should not be shared. What approaches do you support to manage those opportunities and risks? Invest in good technology people and partners who share in our city's future and understand the consequences if we don't protect against risk.

Economic Development

Traditionally, economic development has been defined by real estate development and the ability to attract and retain large employers. Technology is changing the nature of work and jobs in some ways that we understand and others that we don't fully grasp yet. The ability to freelance and do "project work" is increasing, large employees don't offer the long-term stability they once did, machines are able to do more jobs once done by people, and the technology skills needed to find jobs change more quickly than the educational system can adapt.

How do you think the city's economic development toolkit needs to change in order to compete in the current economic environment? This is the harder problem to solve as change is occurring more rapidly and companies are evolving to not be the large job creators they once were. Now, entrepreneurs and small companies are creating more jobs with fewer than 50 employees. This leads me to support the development of more incubators and accelerators. Kansas City needs to develop some areas of expertise like Healthcare, bioscience, urban renewal, etc where technology plays a role but we focus on areas that



can improve lives in the city yet address needs that are broader so companies have a chance to grow from our city. We've lost a number of corporate headquarters over the last 20 years and we need to build companies that can grow from our city.

Smart City

The city announced a groundbreaking “smart city” partnership with Cisco early last year, but details are still being worked out and specific information has been scarce. The idea behind “Smart Cities” is that data collected from digital devices--whether electronic sensors and cameras managed by the cities or the mobile phones and wearable devices that citizens purchase--can benefit the entire community in areas like public safety, traffic management, health care, and energy efficiency. Specific examples may range from red light cameras to street lights that dim when they can sense that no one is around.

How proactive do you think the city should be in developing these sorts of solutions? How would you balance the priority of the city to support the common good with the preferences of individuals who may not want to participate or worry about their privacy? I think that we are already living in a time where privacy needs to be defined. What can our citizens expect? No doubt many companies will develop applications that access our information, take our pictures, etc. We need to understand the limits we can accept. Having said that, I believe the city can do more to provide information to our citizens and visitors that would make our city friendlier.

Sharing Economy

There is a phenomenon sometimes called the “sharing economy” or the “collaborative economy” that encompasses car services like Uber and Lyft (which recently caused some controversy in their entry into the KC market), lodging companies like Airbnb, coworking spaces, community gardens and other activities that blur the line between personal and commercial. Municipal regulations and tax codes often aren't set up to deal with these sorts of services.

How should the city treat deal with these emerging business models in a way that is friendly to innovation and also respects the need to protect the public and fund city services? Which collaborative economy activities, if any, do you participate in (e.g., do you use Airbnb when you travel?)?

The Playbook

KC Digital Drive's charter document is [the Playbook](#) that resulted from the Mayors' Bistate Innovations Team recommendations in 2012, which has been [updated and released in digital form](#).

Have you had a chance to review the Playbook? Where do you think we've seen the most progress and where do you see the greatest opportunities? Kansas City can work with cellular providers to offer access where Google fiber may not be offered. At some point in the future access via cellular will be sufficient for people to work at home and students to do their homework and other technology services.

Personal Tech Adoption



We all have to find balance in how much we choose to incorporate technology into our personal lives.

How do you decide when to absorb new technology tools into your life and work? What social media channels are you most active on? What are your favorite tech tools that you've recently started to use? The future is built around mobile as they will be devices that go with us as we move around. The days of devices that are too large will someday come to an end. I agree with Steve Jobs that we are entering the post pc era. Also, the increased development of the Internet of things will grow as Internet access becomes more pervasive. This will change what mobile is deployed and increase our dependence on being connected. Social media has grown significantly over the last few years and will be with us for a while. However, as the Internet of things becomes more pervasive our use of social media will change. Currently, I actively use Twitter, Facebook and a variety of Apps to keep current and connected.

When we built our home, we wired it for internet. As we do not have cable television, we run all our data through the internet on personal devices – from entertainment to finances to education to communication. Our family utilizes digital technology. When elected to City Council, it is my goal to empower this City Council to unleash the potential of our city. I will provide a digital conduit to my constituency to communicate on issues relevant to their needs.