

CITY COUNCIL INITIATIVE: TRANSPARENT & OPEN GOVERNMENT



Open transparency is essential for democracy. City government must be transparent about all processes. Government agencies are using taxpayer dollars and make decisions that impact all citizens. Decisions must be done in the open so citizens have input and elected officials are held accountable. The public has a right to know how and why decisions are made.

As a City Council Member, I will fight to keep City Government open and transparent. Those initiatives include:

Transparency A Priority: City agencies must engage citizens in transparency efforts. This means asking what government data they want available and surveying people in formats easy to use. A citizen-focused effort shrinks the gulf between info government discloses and what constituents actually want.

Economic Development/Budget Education: Regular opportunities must be provided to communicate with citizens about economic development spending and the budget so there is no confusion as to where tax dollars are spent.

Transparency Training: The City must work with groups, such as the Kansas Press Association, to develop online transparency training for public officials so they better understand their responsibilities and open records laws.

Electronic Disclosure: Electronic records should be the default option for public documents. We must create a system in which any public document is available electronically, at no cost, with as many documents as possible online.

Open Door Policy: A City Council Member must regularly meet with citizens, groups, organizations, neighborhood associations and all engaged Topekans. I will be available and out in the community.

Monthly Forum: I will hold a monthly public forum for Topekans to discuss issues and ask questions.

Educational Media: I will regularly be available to high school and collegiate media, ensuring they stay engaged and issues important to them are addressed.

Advisory Board Streaming: With technologies such as Facebook Live and Periscope, each Advisory Board should provide streaming of meetings, when possible.

Limited Executive Session: Executive Session is essential for certain discussions, especially personnel issues. However, executive sessions must be limited. The City Council should only go into Executive Session when absolutely warranted and nearly all work must be done in open meetings.

Ordinance Vote Moratorium: A proposed ordinance should have a minimum 2-weeks from proposal to discussion/vote by the City Council. Citizens need

ample opportunity to review and communicate with public officials on ordinances. I propose the City Council pass a rule making this 2-week decision-moratorium mandatory.

Social Media: Your elected officials should use Social Media to communicate directly with citizens, disseminate information and let Topekans know positions on issues. I will use social media so you can communicate directly with me.

Reduce Costs: Cost is an obstacle preventing citizens from obtaining public records. It must be a priority to reduce the cost the City charges the public if there is a legitimate interest in the information.

Media Meetings: On an annual basis, as a City Council member, I would meet with members of local media to review open record policies, transparency and ways City Hall is providing an open government.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer".

@SpencerLDuncan

facebook.com/duncanfortopeka

duncanfortopeka.com
duncanfortopeka@yahoo.com