

## COGS Candidate Questionnaire

Instructions: Please fill out the information requested and return it by **3/23/24 via email to: copperphillips@cox.net**

Upon receipt of your completed questionnaire, you will be contacted to schedule an appointment for an interview with the COGS Board of Directors.

Your complete and unedited responses will be posted on the informational COGS website for public review, along with those of the other candidates. **Please keep your answers brief.** However, if you need more space the box will expand to accommodate you. If needed, please continue on an additional page.

No.	Question	Response
1.	<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	
1.a.	Name	<b>Mason Gates</b>
1.b.	Home Address	<b>6599 E Thomas Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251</b>
1.c.	Phone	<b>(602) 855-3866</b>
1.d.	Years living in Scottsdale	<b>1 year</b>
1.e.	When did you register to vote in Scottsdale? Have you failed to vote in any Scottsdale or General Election since you registered?	<b>I registered to vote in Scottsdale within a month of moving here. I have voted in every single election since turning 18.</b>
1.f.	Have you been elected or appointed to City positions including City Task Forces, Boards, Committees or Commissions? If so, please list.	<b>N/A</b>
1.g.	Please list any Civic Activities or organizations you belong to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>President – Young Entrepreneurs Society of Kansas City</b></li> <li>- <b>Director of Development &amp; Public Relations - Forty Love Organization</b></li> </ul>
1.h.	Education/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Edson Entrepreneurship &amp; Innovation Institute</b></li> <li>- <b>Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC)</b></li> <li>- <b>Arizona State University (<i>attained 100 credit hours applicable to degree by the end of first two semesters</i>)</b></li> <li>- <b>Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)</b></li> <li>- <b>Arizona Real Estate License (License No. SA704393000)</b></li> <li>- <b>Wyoming Real Estate License (License No. RE-16855)</b></li> <li>- <b>Nebraska Real Estate License (License No.</b></li> </ul>
1.i.	Current Occupation or Pre-Retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Commercial Real Estate Broker</b></li> </ul> <p><b><i>I have not represented a seller nor a buyer in any real estate transaction in the State of Arizona. Additionally, the company that I am contracted through (not a direct employee) neither acquires, nor develops property.</i></b></p>

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1.j.	Other personal information that you would like to share:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Started three (3) businesses before the age of 18.</b></li> <li>- <b>Attained an 80% market share in the state of NE for all self-storage transactions within first calendar year of brokerage.</b></li> <li>- <b>Current age: 21 Years Old (I moved to Arizona immediately following high school graduation, and moved from Tempe in 2022)</b></li> </ul>
2.	<b>CAMPAIGN INFORMATION</b>	
2.a.	Address	1776 N Scottsdale Rd, PO Box 2163, Scottsdale, AZ 85257
2.b.	Phone	(602) 855-3866
2.c.	Fax	N/A
2.d.	<b>Web-site address**<i>important</i>**</b>	VoteGates.com   GatesForScottsdale.com
2.e.	E-Mail address	VoteGates@gmail.com
2.f.	Endorsements	<p>Nick Miles – Delaware GOP Exec. Director</p> <p>Cyrus Western – Wyoming State House Majority Whip</p> <p>Braxton Mitchell – Montana State Representative</p> <p>Nathan Willett – Kansas City Councilman</p> <p>Heather Hall – Frmr. Kansas City Councilwoman</p>
3.	Why have you decided to become a candidate for City Council?	<p>I decided to run for Scottsdale City Council because I felt as though the incumbent councilmembers seeking re-election don't seem to care as much about the concerns of citizens as they did the demands of developers.</p> <p>I moved to Scottsdale because I believe it is the best place in the world to live. My focus is aimed towards the preservation of this great city. I feel as though I have the energy, passion, and obligation to lead the constituency, while also representing the heavily underrepresented South Scottsdale.</p>
4.a.	Identify 3 major issues facing the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Conflicts of interest</b></li> <li>- <b>Lack of transparency</b></li> <li>- <b>Little to no regard for the needs &amp; desires of residents</b></li> </ul>
4.b.	Identify 3 major issues facing the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Overdevelopment</b></li> <li>- <b>Congestion</b></li> <li>- <b>Homelessness</b></li> </ul>

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5.	If elected, what would you like to accomplish?	<p><b>PRESERVATION.</b></p> <p>My first objective would be stopping overdevelopment. It's time Scottsdale reminded the special interests &amp; zoning attorneys that Scottsdale City Council is for the people, by the people.</p> <p>This city will no longer be sold to the highest bidder.</p> <p>Scottsdale desperately needs to change its approach to homelessness. This is not a housing issue; it is an addiction &amp; mental health crisis. Many Scottsdale residents I spoke with were not even familiar with the "Housing-First Policy" that they are paying for.</p> <p>I also intend to focus on the regulation &amp; restriction of short-term rentals and halting all road-diet propositions- both current &amp; future.</p>
6.	<p>Are there matters that may come before the City Council in which you would have a Conflict of Interest?</p> <p>If yes, what would the conflicting issues be?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><b>I do not conduct any real estate transactions within the State of Arizona; therefore, I will have no conflicts.</b></p>
7.	<b>Identify citizen/city processes that you believe need to be:</b>	
7.a.	Created	<p>I'd like to see the creation of an "E-mail" field requirement for all Scottsdale voters when they register a vehicle, register to vote, etc. and have an "Stay Up to Date" box that would be pre-checked as "opt-in".</p> <p>While I am by no means a proponent of "state media," I think there is value in mass distributing the already existing (and undermarketed) "Scottsdale Update" newsletter to all Scottsdale residents who do not check the opt-out box.</p> <p>This would significantly increase input from the constituency, while also providing transparency of the city council's activities.</p> <p>I often have difficulties locating a printed copy of the Scottsdale Progress, and I think as the world continues to shift more online it is a much cheaper and more efficient means of spreading the word.</p> <p>Furthermore, this will resonate significantly more with the younger demographic of Scottsdale. Many of my peers are exclusively attentive to current events that are shown on a national scale because they do not have to actively seek it out, and thus often neglect to realize that city government has the largest effect on their daily lives.</p>

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	Improved	<p>The facilitation of council meetings should be changed.</p> <p>First, residents wishing to speak during the public comment period should not be required to place a speaking request prior to the start of the meeting.</p> <p>Resident feedback should be welcomed anytime by any person.</p> <p>Additionally, the scheduling of meetings should be pushed back to 5:30pm at the absolute earliest. It is ridiculous to assume that the average working-class citizen in Scottsdale can arrive at a council meeting by 5pm on a consistent basis.</p> <p>If a standard workday is 9am-5pm, then a start time of 5pm would leave virtually zero travel time for a citizen looking to be informed on local issues and potentially providing their input.</p> <p>I think we need to have a better means of outreach so that we can adequately gather the opinions and input from members of the community and encourage more residents to get involved and be aware of the city council's activities.</p>
7.c.	Reduced	None
7.d.	Eliminated	None
8.	<b>Please state your position and/or action on the following zoning and land use issues:</b>	
8.a	What is your position on citywide rezoning requests, text amendments, and General Plan Amendments that significantly change land use or increase height and/or density, especially in proximity to single family residential neighborhoods?	<p>I'm a strong opponent of the aforementioned propositions. Scottsdale got to where it is today because, at least until recently, it followed a strict pattern of sustainable growth to ensure the preservation of Scottsdale's character and livability.</p> <p>Propositions such as these violate the inherent purpose of zoning and incentivize developers, many of whom don't care about the city, to further reduce the supply of single-family homes, particularly in small scale residential neighborhoods.</p> <p>As a resident of South Scottsdale, I only see this exacerbating the hostility between the South Scottsdale residents &amp; the overwhelmingly North Scottsdale Council.</p> <p>As a city councilman, I will see to it that the interests of ALL residents in Scottsdale are adequately represented.</p> <p>It's truly incredible to watch as the majority council continues to genuflect to the money &amp; demands of developers whilst claiming to represent the people who elected them into office.</p>

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8.b	<p>Conditional Zoning approvals currently do not have time limits for construction to begin and/or unless the project is amended. Should the approved conditional zoning revert back to the original zoning after a specified time period? Please provide the rationale for your position.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b></p> <p><b>In the unlikely circumstance that a conditional zoning (or up-zoning) approval were to be granted, it is my belief that the proposed project plan should be required to provide a construction start date.</b></p> <p><b>Any approved conditional zoning should automatically revert to the original zoning if the project has not begun construction in the accepted timeline considering the conditions were not met.</b></p> <p><b>Competence &amp; good faith is best displayed through the ability to execute on an agreed upon plan emphatically.</b></p>
8.c	<p>In "The Outpost" project rezoning case, Rural land was rezoned to commercial adjacent to residential large-lot Rural lands, against staff recommendations, breaking with a longstanding policy prohibiting such rezoning. Another project being proposed is to rezone Rural lands from R-190 (5 acre) to R1-43 (1 acre) for a gated development which prohibits horses, adjacent to rural horse operations and stables.</p> <p>What will be your position on these and similar future rezoning cases?</p>	<p><b>I am a vehement opponent of this rezoning.</b></p> <p><b>I would've voted against it then, I'd vote against it today, and I would undeniably vote against anything like it in the future.</b></p> <p><b>Due to my professional background and knowledge regarding the subject of real property, I feel as though I am adequately qualified to speak to these issues and provide the council with an alternative perspective and an opportunity to make an informed decision.</b></p>
8.d.	<p>If a Conditional Use Permit holder is not in compliance with ALL of the major CUP conditions and stipulations, how should the city respond?</p>	<p><b>A conditional use permit is granted in exchange for the agreement of the conditions and stipulations that come with it.</b></p> <p><b>Therefore, if the holder fails to stay in compliance, it is my opinion that the CUP should be revoked.</b></p>
8.e.	<p>Should the city government have any role in the unaffordable housing costs that are resulting in essential city workers and young families not being able to live within city limits?</p>	<p><b>The city government should not have a direct role in the regulation of housing costs. Policies such as rent control, Section 8 Housing, etc. are neither sensible for the city of Scottsdale, nor desired by the constituency.</b></p> <p><b>I think strong regulations on the over 8,000 Airbnb's in the city of Scottsdale would accurately correct the housing market back to a much more sustainable trend.</b></p> <p><b>A large issue with housing costs stems primarily from investors (many of whom don't live in the area) purchasing homes at outrageous prices in anticipation of high returns.</b></p> <p><b>It's important to focus on horizontal development pursuant to the existing zoning on available land, whilst also protecting standing HOAs and subdivisions.</b></p> <p><b>If residential areas continue to have their character warped and ultimately lost, then it won't be long before the entirety of the Scottsdale's goes with it.</b></p>

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8.f.	<p>How would you describe the effects upon the city with the addition of numerous multi-family apartment complexes citywide and the rezoning of any parcels into multi-use (apartments plus small business complex) parcels? Please discuss positive and negative impacts such as housing costs, tourism, traffic congestion, parking, Look and feel of the Scottsdale, etc.</p>	<p><b>The negative effects of additional housing units, particularly high-density housing, strongly outweigh the positive effects.</b></p> <p><b>Due to the inevitable and rapid increase in population that Scottsdale will incur if overdevelopment is not halted, it can be expected that public services, utilities, and all other infrastructure will be further strained. Additionally, high density development further dilutes the historic nature of Scottsdale.</b></p> <p><b>The only real positive benefit that I can see from rapid overdevelopment within Scottsdale is a short-term increase in property tax revenue. However, the question that needs to be posed is, should the short-term greed of the majority council &amp; their special interests outweigh the long-term sustainability of the City of Scottsdale?</b></p> <p><b>The answer is no.</b></p>
8.g.	<p>Would you support a designated Bar/Entertainment District with its own unique Noise and Event Ordinances? Please explain why or why not.</p>	<p><b>No.</b></p> <p><b>This is Scottsdale.</b></p> <p><b>You do not get special treatment.</b></p> <p><b>If we are to grant the Entertainment District its own “unique noise ordinance” it not only creates a precedent, but it also further intensifies an already existing annoyance to the residents in the area, many of whom have lived there before its fruition.</b></p> <p><b>As far as a “unique event ordinance” goes, I can only see the negative impact of an increased strain on an already overstressed police force, and other city services.</b></p>
8.h.	<p>Do you support complete control of short-term rentals reverting back to cities? The legislature has refused to hear any of the proposed bills to restrict STRs in this session.</p> <p>Do you have solutions to share regarding the neighborhood impact of some short-term rentals?</p>	<p><b>I strongly support the regulation and restriction of short-term rentals (STRs) in Scottsdale.</b></p> <p><b>As previously mentioned, with an estimated 8,000 Airbnb’s across the city, Scottsdale is beginning to experience many of the negative effects such as increased incident &amp; disturbance reports, frustrated neighbors, and soon many schools will be forced to close their doors due to the lack of a student population.</b></p> <p><b>Given that Scottsdale is a Charter City, realistically we should have more control over our governance than other municipalities across the state.</b></p> <p><b>I propose that if the legislature wants to attempt to trample on the rights of our great city, then we threaten suit in a similar fashion to the way Phoenix &amp; Tucson have done previously.</b></p>

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8.i.	<p>Should all new projects be required to meet Green Building standards? Should bonuses (increased height, density, etc.) be offered if Green Building standards are met?</p> <p>Should such bonuses be given as a matter of routine or to truly exceptional additions to projects that outweigh the value of the bonuses?</p>	<p><b>As a city councilman, I can assure you that I will neither compromise myself, nor the City of Scottsdale when keeping developers in compliance with the standards that are set forth.</b></p> <p><b>Per a December 2022 resolution adopted by Scottsdale City Council, developers have an obligation to follow IECC &amp; IgCC guidelines.</b></p> <p><b>Therefore, I will be making no concessions, nor granting bonuses to developers for being within the regulations set forth by the city.</b></p>
8.j.	<p>Up-zoning increases the intensity of land use and density. Under what conditions do you support Up-zoning?</p>	<p><b>Realistically, there is virtually no circumstance in which I could see myself approving any up-zonings considering the lack of regard that the majority council has shown for previous propositions.</b></p> <p><b>The pipeline is beyond saturated, and residents have had enough.</b></p>
9.	<p>There are not enough Preserve tax funds remaining to allow acquisition of all the remaining land within the voter approved McDowell Sonoran Preserve Boundary. Please state your position on ending the current sales tax or extending it at the same or a different rate and for what period of years. Why or why not?</p>	<p><b>The tax should be voted on by the constituency of Scottsdale.</b></p> <p><b>Additionally, I believe that all uses of the new tax should be thoroughly disclosed to voters for the sake of transparency.</b></p>
10.	<b>Please explain your position on these city issues:</b>	
10.a.	<p>What is your vision for the city?</p> <p>What should Scottsdale look like in 10, 20, or 30 years from now?</p>	<p><b>My vision for the city is that of long-term sustainable growth based on thoughtful planning. As previously stated, this is a campaign for preservation. I've said it many times; coming from urbanized areas like Kansas City &amp; Tempe, I couldn't help but notice the level of safety I felt when I first moved to Scottsdale. The people are nicer, the food tastes better, the air even feels cleaner.</b></p> <p><b>I enjoy the openness of Scottsdale and the ease of viewing the beautiful sunsets that often enhance the natural beauty of the mountains and desert scape that makes this city what it is.</b></p> <p><b>If Scottsdale were to lose this charm, I cannot see a future for it. This is why I choose to fight for the continuity of our fine community.</b></p>
10.b.	<p>What is your position on the location of the new bond-funded parking garage in the Downtown area? Please explain why you have chosen the location you chose.</p>	<p><b>The constituency of Scottsdale voted to approve the parking garage at the Farmer's Market located at Brown &amp; Stetson.</b></p> <p><b>Considering it was a decision that was approved by the voters, then I would also support it, considering my interests lie exclusively with the constituency.</b></p>



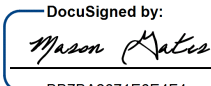
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11.a.	<p>1. The concept of Fiscal Sustainability involves managing the annual operating budget by balancing income with expenses.</p> <p>Do you identify any of the city decisions as creating a negative impact on long-term fiscal sustainability?</p> <p>2. Focus your opinions on the city infrastructure, such as roads, city owned facilities, water and sewer, and public services, i.e., public safety, emergency response, communications. Do you support using bond funds on any of the above expenses? Why or why not?</p> <p>3. There are thousands of approved apartments in the pipeline. Please describe how you think these developments will impact the city's operating budget. Please include facts to support your position.</p>	<p>1. <b>Overdevelopment would be the largest issue I could foresee as adversely effectual on long-term fiscal sustainability. As previously mentioned, the negatives far outweigh the positives.</b></p> <p>2. <b>I would support the use of bond funds for the public services &amp; utilities because I see them as necessary expenses that are both beneficial to the public and utilized for the long term.</b></p> <p>3. <b>The city's operating budget will see an immediate increase due to the reassessment of property values based on the returns being yielded from said properties, inevitably increasing property tax revenue. However, I would imagine that the strain on public services would result in an overall offset, if not a deficit.</b></p>
11.b.	Currently, the city allocates funds for events that are not within the City of Scottsdale, e.g., Final Four that is held in Glendale. What is your position on continuing such funding and why/why not?	<b>I would not oppose future funding for events held outside of the city limits, as long as it continues to promote the interests of the city of Scottsdale (ex. tourism) and is supported by the residents.</b>
12.	<b>Please state your position and/or action on the following transportation questions:</b>	
12.a.	The Transportation Master Plan was approved by city council at the April 2022 hearing. What decisions in that document would you encourage to change in the future?	<p><b>I would've never voted for it in the first place.</b></p> <p><b>Moving forward, I will halt any future road re-classifications, also known as "road-diets". And I will oppose Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail.</b></p> <p><b>As a resident located directly off 68th Street, I see the adverse effects that these road diets have inflicted upon residents, small business owners, and commuters alike. Road narrowing has increased congestion causing delays where there shouldn't be, and many drivers have altered their commute route subjecting small businesses to a decrease in organic exposure.</b></p> <p><b>There simply is not enough utility of the bike lanes for the end to justify the means: the means being increased congestions and upset residents.</b></p>



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12.b	<p>Within the Downtown area, the city has approved under-parked projects by charging in-lieu parking fees at the last rate approx. \$13,000/space which is under current value of \$50,000-\$60,000 to construct.</p> <p>This fund was to be used to build public parking facilities in the future. Staff reported that funds have been used for non-garage funding and is too small an amount for land purchase or garage construction.</p> <p><b>How do you propose dealing with Downtown parking issues and the use of in-lieu parking fees?</b></p>	<p>Considering the gross misuse of the in-lieu parking fee revenue, I would recommend we get rid of the in-lieu program altogether.</p> <p>Many merchants in the Old Town Scottsdale Area were seemingly neglected when they purchased these in-lieu spaces with the intent of providing them for customers, only to have developers occupy the spaces for their various projects and be lied to by the city about the use of the funds.</p> <p>Of the minimal new parking made available, the overwhelming majority of that parking was created without using said fees, and it's even been reported that the money collected from the in-lieu parking fees was used for alternative purposes.</p>
14. <b>Identify city services that you believe need to be:</b>		
14.a.	Created	None
14.b.	Improved	<p>Considering the Scottsdale Police Department is approximately 20% short-staffed, I would like to evaluate the budget and see where we can reallocate funds to support our police department.</p> <p>I'd also like to work with the police department to evaluate different approaches to future recruitment and potential incentives to offer.</p>
14.c.	Reduced	None
14.d.	Eliminated	None
15 <b>Identify city revenue sources that should be:</b>		
15.a	Created	None
15.b.	Increased	None
15.c.	Reduced	None
15.d.	Eliminated	In-lieu parking
16.	Other city issues/perspectives you would like to share a position on?	None
17.	Additional Comments:	<p>If I am elected, I can assure you that I will fight for the interests of residents and passionately serve our great city.</p> <p>I have no agenda, no special interests, and no big donors.</p> <p>I'm just a concerned citizen who cares deeply about the city and would like to see a future for it.</p> <p>My campaign is that-</p> <p><b>OF</b> the people,  <b>FOR</b> the people,  <b>BY</b> the people.</p>

Signature  BB7BA2671E6E4F4...

Date 3/23/2024

## COGS Candidate Questionnaire

Please type your name for your electronic signature. Thank you for your time and careful consideration of each response. **Please email your completed questionnaire by March 23, 2024, to: [copperphillips@cox.net](mailto:copperphillips@cox.net)**

**ALL completed candidate's questionnaires will be posted on the COGS website at**

**<https://coalitionofgreaterscottsdale.org>**

Thank you for taking your valuable time to complete this questionnaire.

The COGS-Coalition of Greater Scottsdale—Board of Directors

Andrew Scheck, Jim Davis, Howard Myers, Marilyn Atkinson, Chris  
Schaffner,

Stan Morganstern, Cathy McKeever, Copper Phillips, and Sonnie Kirtley