

Greetings to my neighbors and citizens of Columbia's 2nd Ward!

I am officially announcing my candidacy to be your 2nd Ward city council representative.

One of the most pressing factors in my decision to run was when Lisa Meyer, our recently resigned 2nd Ward representative, asked me personally to run to fill her spot. She knows we reflect similar values. Lisa was a very capable and caring public servant for the 2nd Ward and I am beyond honored and humbled by her endorsement!

In our city's council-manager form of government, leadership is about collaboration, accountability, and long-term thinking. The city manager runs the day-to-day operations—but it's the council that sets the direction, the values, and the policies that shape how our city grows, serves, and thrives. I'm running because I want to be your voice in that process.

I'm running because I believe in the power of public service, and I believe in *us*—the people who make up this city, from every neighborhood and every walk of life.

Our city has a special kind of government. We have a city council and a city manager. It's not about people just trying to make a big show of themselves. It's about leaders who really listen to you. It's about making rules that have a good reason. And it's about working together. The council members need to work together. They also need to work with the city manager, the city staff, and most importantly, everyone who lives here! We need to make sure that what we want for our city is done right, quickly, and that we are responsible for how things are done.

Our city is at a crossroads. We face challenges—affordable housing, infrastructure needs, public safety needs, and more—but we also have extraordinary opportunities. We have a community that people are drawn to. We were just listed in Forbes magazine as one of the Top 25 cities to retire in.

I'm not running to be a politician—I'm running to be a public servant. Someone who listens first, acts with integrity, and leads with transparency and accountability.

My commitment is simple: I will show up, I will listen, and I will advocate for thoughtful, equitable, and forward-looking decisions—all the while being unafraid to make prompt and tough decisions.

As your council member, I will continue to focus on what matters: safe streets and parks (including procedures for appropriately supporting citizens with mental health and addiction challenges), responsible growth, affordable housing, strong infrastructure, and

economic opportunity for all. These aren't just buzzwords—they're building blocks for a thriving community.

I will work to ensure that the decisions we make at City Hall reflect your voice. That our budgeting is transparent. That every dollar spent has a return not just in numbers—but in quality of life.

And I promise you this: I will remain accessible, I will be accountable, and I will never stop fighting for a city government that is both efficient and equitable.

I want to be a steward of public trust. To set the direction. To hear the people. To represent the people. And to make sure that our professional city manager and their team are empowered to execute the council's direction of policies with clarity, consistency, and competence.

Ken Rice

Columbia City Council 2nd Ward Candidate