

General Election - City Council Candidate Questions

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How do you plan to promote a positive, growth-oriented narrative for the Hastings area that engages the community and attracts new investment?

One of the most important things a council person can do is to establish an open relationship with the Mayor and City Administrator he or she is working alongside of as well as the citizens that elected him or her. We have to be able to trust one another and communicate clearly with each other. The world outside of Hastings only knows what is reported in the media. When they see a disconnect between the management and the governing body it has a negative effect. A split vote on supporting projects, in which developers are willing to invest in your community, speaks volumes to other investors looking to do so. It makes them question if they want to invest their money in a place that isn't willing to work with them. To promote a "growth-oriented" narrative, it's imperative that the Council, Mayor and Administration are all on the same page and work cooperatively towards attracting development, expanding current industry and attracting new businesses and industry to Hastings. We have development partners in Hastings Economic Development Corporation, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, that are looking for ways help existing industry grow and find new industries that are a fit for Hastings. Keeping an open line of communication with these partners, will let people know that we are open to developers and that we have a developmental staff, administration and City Council that is willing to work with them.

How will you familiarize yourself with the functions of the entity you are aiming to represent or govern?

Having been an elected official serving two terms as a City Council person, in my previous community, I have a good understanding of the function of this position. That being said, first and foremost, I will meet with the City Administrator, the City Finance Director and the Utilities Manager to learn their thoughts and processes. We'll discuss the current needs of the city, their departments and how they intend to meet those needs. We'll discuss how the council can help them to accomplish meeting those needs in a reasonable and responsible way.



How do you work with and collaborate with others, specifically those who have different views than you do?

First of all, we have to respect for each other. We need to have an open and honest conversations and listen to each other. It's important that we get to know each other, share our backgrounds, and what has influenced us in our lives. Once we can do that, and know we can trust each other, Council, Mayor and Administration, then we can truly do the hard work that is needed to grow our city. We won't always agree on every aspect of every issue, but we can learn and grow from hearing different points of view. Once we have those conversations it will be easier to work through any differences and reach a place of agreement that is beneficial for the greater good of Hastings.

Budget cuts in government generally mean cuts in services. What services do you propose cutting in order to decrease spending?

Budget cuts are what everyone talks about. Our expenditure needs to be reasonable and responsible of course. While controlling spending is in the forefront, what isn't discussed is the other side of the equation of a budget and that's increasing revenue. When you look at the City of Hastings budget 52% of the revenue is from taxes. We need to identify where we can increase that other side beyond 48%. One area that I think we can focus on is interlocal agreements. Where can we achieve efficiencies and cost sharing with other governmental agencies? Once we exhausted the of trimming expenses, maximizing revenue, if we are still out of balance and need to cut services, then it comes down to what services are the citizens of Hastings willing to do without or to do with less of?