



2017 City Council Candidate Questionnaire

1). As a member of the Lincoln City Council it will be your responsibility to prioritize spending tax dollars between departments, programs, and services.

➤ **What is your top priority for Lincoln?**

My top priority is making sure public safety and infrastructure keep pace with our our city's growth. We must ensure that our emergency responders have the resources they need to keep us safe no matter where we live in Lincoln, and we must repair and build out our infrastructure (such as roads, water mains, sewer, and fiber) to meet the needs of a growing Lincoln.

2.) Residential property owners in the City of Lincoln are faced this year with a total re-valuation of property by the Lancaster County Assessor's office. Early indications point to a potential double-digit increase in overall property values and subsequently, higher property tax revenue for all taxing authorities.

➤ **Should the City of Lincoln adjust its levy to match previously budgeted revenues?**

Yes. With this early and unexpected revaluation, Lincoln homeowners are, in essence, seeing a tax increase - one that was not intended and is likely not needed to meet our upcoming budget requirements. In light of this, I was the first city official to state publicly

that I would lead the effort to cut the current tax rate to help shield homeowners from the full impact of this unanticipated revaluation. I then supported the resolution passed by the Council for the same reason.

- **If the City of Lincoln were to leave the current levy rate in place, what should it do with the excess dollars?**

N/A

3.) Road, water, storm water, waste water, and technological infrastructure are the building blocks for business and residential growth in Lincoln. The State of Nebraska allows cities the authority to expand their local option sales tax by an additional one-half-percent – so long as the dollars are earmarked for “infrastructure projects”

- **What is your position regarding expanding the local option sales tax rate in an effort to fund infrastructure projects?**

Lincoln recently utilized this tool to fund public safety infrastructure - the new 911 emergency radio communication system, three new fire stations, and one joint police/fire station - that will improve emergency response times by bringing over six thousand homes into the four minute emergency response time standard. I supported this effort, but the decision to take advantage of the local option sales tax is ultimately in the hands of voters. The sales tax approach utilizes dollars that come into Lincoln from outside our community, lessening the financial impact on citizens to pay for projects that support the growth of our city.

4). The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development operates as a public/private partnership between the City of Lincoln and the business community. The Partnership has been directly responsible for the growing national attention regarding the positive business climate in Lincoln.

- **Do you support the continuation of the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development and its public/private efforts to grow Lincoln’s economy?**

Yes, public/private partnerships are the driving force behind the recent and unprecedented growth of our city. The contributions of the Angelou report have been significant in developing the vision of how we achieve and build on this growth, and LPED’s lead role in facilitating and implementing its recommendations is particularly

valuable as we look to the future.

5.) Talent attraction and retention are a key component in determining Lincoln's success over the next decade as employers look to fill positions in a rapidly expanding workforce.

➤ **How can the City of Lincoln help attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?**

Lincoln must continue to be a fantastic place to live, work, and raise a family - attracting employers and employees alike with a vibrant community. A successful strategy to attract and retain a talented workforce involves everything from keeping our cost of living low, offering enticing parks and trails, ensuring plentiful arts and entertainment opportunities that attract millennials, supporting our local entrepreneurs and innovators by linking them with access to capital and mentorship from successful business owners, to continuing to have a low crime rate, sound infrastructure, and strong public schools with a focused Career Academy that partners with the private sector to produce graduates whose skills meet the needs of local employers. The Chamber's work to market our city, recruit businesses, and secure events to host is vital to the growing recognition Lincoln receives and our ability to compete for the country's top employers and employees.

6.) Why should Lincoln Chamber of Commerce members support your bid for elected office?

Over the past four years, I have consistently cast my vote for projects that support the growth of Lincoln. Our city is funding streets at historic levels, having improved nearly 18 miles of arterials and 80 blocks of residential streets in 2016 alone. We are repairing sidewalks and more miles of water mains each year. We partnered with the private sector to bring fiber to the home throughout Lincoln, making high speed internet more affordable and accessible to all.

To get private projects done that build and redevelop downtown, I've similarly supported the use of tax-increment financing, our city's primary economic development tool. Projects such as the recently approved 9th and "O" Street landmark hotel and condominiums will position Lincoln to offer the minimum number of beds necessary to support the hosting of NCAA tournaments. (You're welcome, Jeff Maul! :)

My legislative accomplishments speak to my commitment to innovation, transparency, problem-solving, and the well-being of our community. I'm particularly proud of the bipartisan Open Data Initiative that Councilman Trent Fellers and I co-authored and

co-sponsored. That initiative passed unanimously at Council, will offer greater transparency with city data, and will provide unique opportunities for innovators to pursue creative uses of our data. Following last year's budget challenges, I worked with all of my colleagues to develop and bring forward legislation that addressed problems cited they brought forward and should enhance Council communications with the administration regarding the budget and desired city performance outcomes. In both biennial budgets of which I've been a part, I've successfully identified funding for parks, playgrounds, and trails that enhance quality of life for our children and families, making Lincoln an even more attractive place to call home.

Finally, I am foremost a mother who wants a bright future for our children and families, so I take a long-term view of how we ensure our community's safety, strength, and well-being. I'm hard working. I listen to people. I am willing to compromise. I take the work seriously, and I have tried my best to be a good steward of our city these past four years.