



City Council Candidate Questionnaire

(Please feel free to attach your answers on a separate piece of paper)

1). Road and Infrastructure funding is the top priority for the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce. Our Board of Directors made it their top priority because the construction of new roads is a critical component to our community's health and long-term prosperity. Today, minimal property or sales tax revenue is used to fund infrastructure in Lincoln. This lack of support results in large, multi-million dollar gaps in funding and seriously constricts our ability to grow our economy.

How do you plan to address the need for stable general fund funding for road construction during your term?

It appears the Federal stimulus program will address many older infrastructure needs and may relieve some of the city street money for new infrastructure. The council can seek money from the state legislature for completing additional shortfall.

2). Lancaster County property owners currently face a tax levy of \$2.01-per-\$100 of valuation. Of that, approx. 28-cents or 14% goes into the city.

Do you believe the current overall levy is too high, too low, or where it should be?

[AND]

Do you believe the City's current levy rate is adequate to support Lincoln's future?

I want to see if the city budget can be balanced before I address the tax levy. I am opposed to increasing the city tax rate. We must find other solutions to our financial needs other than raising taxes. One creative way is to negotiate with the schools for altering their tax rate in some way so we have more city income. This would be difficult, but we must try.

3). What is your personal view on the use of TIF as an economic development tool?

The TIF is overused and will only cause us more financial problems. I would vote against using it any more until the City has a balanced budget.

4). The City of Lincoln partners with the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce to operate the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development. As of today, the City's contribution for marketing Lincoln, retaining and expanding our current businesses and actively recruiting new businesses to our area is \$500,000. This money leverages a matching contribution of \$500,000 from private businesses and individuals.

Do you believe this is an appropriate level of economic development effort for the city of Lincoln?

In these economic times, we must live with what we have and make the best use of it that is possible.

5). Impact Fees were put in place to provide part of the solution to our growing infrastructure gap. Recently, the Mayor formed an Impact Fee task force to study their effect and to explore how Lincoln can better fund infrastructure.

Do you support Impact Fees?

[AND]

If you do support the use of Impact Fees, is the current system adequate, appropriate, and efficient?

Yes, I support impact fees and the present efforts to study their effect. I believe in these difficult economic times we must all hold the line on all expenses.

6). A legal opinion from the City Attorney's office has allowed the Lincoln City Council to declare excess monies in the City's Special Assessment Revolving Fund as surplus. These surplus funds can then be used for other means. At current levels, the ruling produced an \$8 million windfall.

How should the Special Assessment Revolving Fund money be allocated?

It should be used to balance the budget and if any is left over, for special projects that need funding.

7). The City of Lincoln is exploring building a new arena in the West Haymarket. As the organization contracted to run the Lincoln/Lancaster County Convention and Visitors Bureau and the organization tasked with growing our city, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce firmly supports the arena concept.

Do you support building a new arena in Lincoln?

[AND]

How should it be financed?

I do not support a new arena at this time. I question building one in a flood plain in these bad economic times. After the recession is over, and if a developer can be found I would study the issue for an opinion at that time.

8). The Lincoln Chamber of Commerce is committed to helping businesses expand their footprint and retain their presence in Lincoln. Part of that commitment is our efforts to streamline the development process at city hall. The mayor's office has offered a Development Service Center concept as a solution. The DSC would co-locate all of the needed departments in one office at city hall with the goal of better customer interaction and tracking.

Do you support this concept and support creating a Development Services Center?

[AND]

What other ideas do you have for improving the development process?

It sounds like a positive approach to solve a bad problem. The Mayor and City Council should be alert to suggestions from builders as to what improvements are most realistic and implement them.

9). There are several boards and committees that make recommendations to the city. Last year, the City's Charter Revision Committee recommended amending Lincoln's Charter so that it would ban City Council members who are business owners from holding contracts with the city. The recommendation eventually failed to make it onto the ballot.

Would you support or oppose such legislation and why?

I support this legislation, as there are too many people who are on the city payroll and later move to elected office or vice versa. This is absolutely wrong. In addition, I believe School Board members should not have relatives on the LPS payroll.

10). What is your vision for Lincoln in the next 10 years and how do we get there?

My vision is for the city to have a balanced budget and surplus money for special projects. When that is accomplished, our leaders can begin to implement their dream projects on a pay as you go basis without raising taxes. If the State of Nebraska can do that, so can Lincoln.