



2017 City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Brayden McLaughlin

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?** Roads/infrastructure and Public Safety. These are each the highest priority.

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. I have been looking at ways we can automatically adjust the levy to avoid dramatic increases to property taxes caused by valuations.
- **If the City of Lincoln were to leave the current levy rate in place, what should it do with the excess dollars?** The excess money should be returned to the taxpayers. My next choice would be to pay down the pension debt.

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?** I believe any tax increase should be a last option, and only when all other options are exhausted. I would first look at other methods to fund infrastructure projects, including prioritize funding over lesser priority projects.

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?** Absolutely. The participation of Lincoln's private business community is vital to assuring we keep Lincoln moving in the right direction. I would like to see even more partnerships in any program where it would be beneficial to the city and private business community.

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?** We must do everything we can to attract and retain a more diverse talent pool. Large businesses and corporations look to hire a diverse workforce. Currently, Lincoln lacks the diversity many of these companies seek when looking at new locations. With several outstanding colleges and universities in Lincoln, we should have an opportunity to improve our diversity by keeping students in Lincoln after graduation. But we also have to have a friendly tax climate so we can attract new workers who are weighing property tax rates and other comparables between cities.

6.) Why should Lincoln Chamber of Commerce members support your bid for elected office? I am a pro-business, low tax, and limited regulation candidate. As a small business owner, I understand firsthand the challenges our business community faces by facing them myself through my own firm's interactions with the city. As an urban planner by education and trade, I have a great understanding of how infrastructure and infrastructure planning play a role in the growth and development of a community. This growth and development is vital to creating an environment conducive to economic development and job creation and I am prepared to lead on all of these issues.