

# 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?**

With my job, I have the opportunity to regularly travel across the state and country and am always talking to people about how great Hastings is. If you want to attract new investment and engage with the community your words must match your actions. Something that is quite simple, but that is important for me to practice as a member of the planning and zoning commission, is to thank people who come before us for their time and investment. While every investment might not be the right investment for our community, the developers' next investment might be. I want to operate with a tone that says Hastings is always open for business.

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

Since I began my campaign in February 2024, it has been important for me to learn as much as I could about how the city functions. I set up meetings with the city administrator to learn about the departments, their challenges, and their greatest needs. I also set up meetings with organizations like Community Development Authority, Hastings Economic Development, and Hastings Chamber of Commerce. I am not afraid to ask questions and to learn, in fact, I believe one of my greatest strengths is how much time I spend researching and preparing for anything I do.

I have also spent the last 1.5 years regularly attending city council meetings, in person. One of the things I have learned from this is that it is important for city council members to do their own research and ask questions before the meetings. It is important to run efficient meetings so that time and money are not wasted.

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

I learned a long time ago that the best results come from engaging with people who are different from yourself. My philosophy has been "listen to understand, and not to simply



respond.” It is important to first define the goal and then work backwards on identifying the steps to get there. Looking for common ground is an important first step.

As I have built my work teams over the years, I have always challenged myself to look for those who do not share all the same viewpoints and strengths as myself. Group thinking can be detrimental to progress. One of my strongest personal values is respect, and I will always show respect to those around me.

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

I believe in having open and honest conversations regarding budgets. It is easy to say we need to cut a police officer or fireperson position, but we need to make sure we understand the impact of that decision, not only today, but for years to come. When we consider spending, we need to prioritize projects and understand things such as scarce resources, inflation, and other risks that can lead to increased spending on projects. It is also important to study positions within city government, and whether those positions could be served better and cost less by contract workers. When deciding if and where to cut budgets, elected officials need to understand the overall effectiveness of city positions and where efficiencies can be created.