

General Election - City Council Candidate Questions

Raquel Maar

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

Before my current role, I served Hastings Public Schools as a social worker, listening to people's stories and getting them the resources they need. That is something I still love to do – listen and learn from my community. As a member of the City Council, I plan to learn from the community and engage in open dialogue the way I always have. I look forward to working with local businesses to determine what initiatives they would like to see to support their growth and prosperity. I'm also dedicated to listening to young people to determine what investment opportunities Hastings could pursue that would lead our young people to stay in our community. I know first-hand how important it is for our community to provide good-paying jobs and opportunities for success. We need to make sure that Hastings is a place where hardworking people can succeed, and that starts with growth and investment that benefits everyone.

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

I plan to engage with stakeholders, community members, and those who came before me. I plan to visit the facilities and observe the operations firsthand. I recognize that I am not an expert in everything, but I am a fast learner and I work hard. From day one I will work to build a foundation of knowledge that can help me make informed decisions that will help Hastings.

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

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

We must work to reduce the tax burden while continuing to provide important services. My goal on the City Council is to find common ground that will protect vital services in our community, like public safety. I will focus on evaluating existing programs and fostering collaboration with local businesses and community leaders to determine where we may gain better efficiencies. I think it is also important to pursue other sources of revenue besides tax dollars, such as federal funding and public-private partnerships. I believe in working together to find areas to improve.