

Mayoral Candidate Questions

Shawn D Hartmann

As an individual seeking an elected seat to represent our community, how will you help to shape a positive, growth-oriented narrative for Hastings?

I will continue to pursue possible solutions to the housing and labor shortage as well as represent the decisions that the citizens make regarding how to move forward with ideas to solve that problem. I will focus on the quality things that we do have and use them to attract other such quality experiences and businesses to add to our community.

As an elected leader, how do you feel you can impact the talent availability in our community?

With my experience with MPAT and HAMA, and the work we have done that has been recognized by many other communities to retain local talent, I would like to explore those tactics in other fields of employment and see if we can generate the same types of success. I also refer back to what I have basically used as my main goal as Mayor, and that is to address the affordable housing shortage, that alone will attract people and that will attract talent.

With regard to a balance between lower taxes and investment in our community, how do you prioritize making realistic choices?

The first thing I would like to do is actually analyze the impact of lowering our taxes and if it would even be possible to do so. If that was not possible then I would explore other funding sources to help reduce taxes and also possibly increase investments in economic development and other areas as needed to pursue things that the citizens think are a priority. Look at long term sustainability of any of these ideas and then be flexible in how are able to utilize those funding sources in the future.



In comparing Hastings to peer communities, how do you feel we can have a more "business friendly" climate?

The city has done a great job identifying that there was a problem and presently the new City Admin and staff have done a great job to begin to "right the ship" but I believe there is still plenty of work that can be done. I think we can use our other local resources to develop a way to promote our city in a much more positive way and focus on those good things and help erase the negative narratives and experiences that the people that conduct businesses, that we would like to see move here, have grown accustomed to dealing with. We are on the right path we just need to continue to talk to the people that matter then ones that do commerce and help them as much as possible. Continue to develop what can we do to help you attitude that it takes to bring in business to a community.

Describe your thoughts about the relationship between the position of the Mayor and the City Council. Also, between the City Council and the position of City Administrator and Assistant City Administrator?

My thoughts are this, it's a team and that needs to be first and foremost. It's a team that needs to have a leader in the Mayor position that can remind the team members, the council members, of what their primary responsibilities are, to represent the people that elected them, and to help educate them and guide them through not just issues and ordinances but the procedures involved in handling those tasks. The Mayor also works with the City Admin and his assistant to find out what those things are that need to have the attention of the council and then coordinate the education process on those items to get them in front of the Council to discuss and decide. After those decisions have been made, the Mayor then works with the City Admin and his assistant on how best to achieve those decisions that have been made by the Council. This may be as simple as wording changes or it may be as complex as changing entire procedures and even possibly bringing things back in front of the Council when necessary to get their input, which is ultimately the input of the people. The most important thing that every ONE of these people needs to remember is that they are a representative of and/or work for the people of the city and that every decision that is made needs to take that ONE thing into account EVERY time! That I can NOT stress enough!