

1. Please list your top three priorities / initiatives of action once elected.

If elected, I would strive to make Joliet a safe and healthy community to live, work in and raise our families. We as city must have improved communication. As leaders we need to listen to our constituents and communicate with them on the positive change we are making to improve their lives.

I would focus on putting in place a long-term comprehensive plan for our future.

I would do a budget analysis to ensure we are investing our tax dollars in the most equitable way possible.

Finally, I would restore the lines of communication with all our citizens, our partners in our neighboring communities, County, State and Federal governments.

2. Do you feel that TIF districts such as the Cass Street, former Silver Cross, and St. Joe's hospital areas have been fully utilized?

- **NO**

Please explain why or why not and any plans you may have for these areas.

I don't believe our economic development team, hired over the last year or so, has had enough time to sort through the opportunities in those areas.

We need stability in our departments to create continuity for opportunities in our economic development.

When you look at the TIF for St. Joes you see little to no new investment in that area. We see little to no new investment to the former Silver Cross area and little to no new investment within the Cass Street TIF.

3. Do you support further development on the south side of Joliet in and around the intermodal / Rt. 53 corridor?

I think there are enough plans in that area to carry us for many years. It should be part of our long-term comprehensive plan to determine what we have already engaged in and what we need to do for further planning in that area.

We also need to include the input of businesses and residents in the area.

4. What are your thoughts on the Chicago Street development plan, including the Van Buren Street Plaza?

I think we need to take a look at a complete plan for Chicago St. from Jefferson St. to the Ruby St. bridge.

We need to plan for a complete change over the next years of that environment. We will become a thriving destination for our town and the surrounding communities. There can be more opportunities for restaurants and retail development.

I was just in Dallas Texas for a conference and training, and one of the areas downtown had a nice city square about the size of ours. It was a combination of hardscape and artificial turf.

On the side of one of the buildings was a huge video wall the size of the mural we have on our Ottawa St parking deck. That mural could be replaced by a huge video wall.

I have traveled to cities that have parking deck façades that look like office buildings. We could do the same with our parking decks for better visuals.

In the plaza, we would want soft curbs so when we have festivals, we can shut down the streets around the plaza and get 8,000 – 10,000 people at a festival.

We could have removable tables, umbrellas and chairs so when we have no festivals this area would be a gathering spot for our downtown workforce and visitors.

We need to “imagineer” change for Chicago St. for the future.

5. What are your thoughts on downtown Joliet parking options such as the parking deck and how do you see street parking being handled going forward in downtown Joliet?

Most cities that have redone their downtown streets don't charge for parking. With a vibrant downtown the revenue generated by the restaurants and retail shops will offset the loss of parking revenue.

We must be fully prepared for the electrification of the automobile and plan accordingly for our parking decks and public charging stations throughout the downtown. Right now, the federal government is pushing to help the local municipalities to fund these projects.

6. What type of working relationship do you plan to have with neighborhood groups?

I want to have a good working relationship with our neighborhood groups. I just held my first town hall meeting with a tremendous turnout.

I would like to have town hall meetings in each district, with neighborhood groups where the district councilperson would be present to hear concerns from residents.

7. Do you feel that east side economic development has kept pace with economic development on the west side of Joliet?

No, I do not. I propose we have more equitable investment including economic development throughout the city.

I believe a lot of our legacy neighborhoods have been overlooked and we need to do more to address the aging streets and sidewalks and revitalize neighborhood by neighborhood with a specific need to get a grocery store and other services.

8. Do you have any ideas for revitalization for the near west area of town, the Jefferson Street corridor, and the Larkin entryway into the city?

Yes, I do. I believe we should start with cleaning up our entrance ways into the city including a beautification plan with flowers and signage.

We would need to engage a landscape architect to help us spruce up (glamorize?) all entrances to our **WORLD CLASS** city to create a better first impression.

9. Do you feel there is adequate economic development on the far west side of Joliet (west of Rt. 59)?

No, I do not. We still have plenty of blank canvas on the far west side and we need to address the development through a long-term comprehensive plan.

10. What type of impact do you believe the Cullinan Properties project and the Houbolt Bridge will have on the region?

I believe the bridge project will have a positive impact. This is a highly traveled area, and it will reduce the amount of truck traffic on local roads.

The Cullinan project, which has been in the works since 2015, has had to change gears a little bit. We now have the Hollywood Casino to anchor this space, we've doubled the number of apartments to be put up there, and we will need to be able to utilize the rest of the space for restaurants, entertainment venues, and retail space as the property matures. It is the crossroads of America.

11. What would you do to improve the overall safety of citizens in the City of Joliet?

As mayor, my first order of business will be to ensure our city focuses on public safety and quality of life for all.

We need to ensure a fully staffed, well trained and equipped police department. As first responders our police officers need to be culturally aware and sensitive to mental health issues.

The city has hired 134 new police officers. But is this putting additional officers on the street or replacing those that retired or left due to attrition?

We need to have a plan to keep a full contingent of officers on the street and we do that by planning ahead. Finally, we need NOPT (Neighborhood Oriented Policing Teams) in all neighborhoods that need them.

We should look at expanding partnerships with our surrounding cities and counties for more flock camera systems in our region. We should also get more partners with ring doorbells and business cameras to see what's going on in our city at a moment's notice.

12. Do you feel there is adequate affordable housing options in the city?

Housing needs have changed over the years.

Affordability has changed and once again we need to look to a fresh comprehensive long term plan.

The city needs to look at current zoning and make sure it fits today's needs of housing.

We need to address first time home buyers and empty nesters in particular. Give them all a reason to stay in Joliet.

13. Do you believe that there is a need / opportunity for additional SSA districts in the city?

SSA's are a contiguous area in which a special tax is levied. The additional property taxes generated are used to fund services benefiting the area for economic development activities, marketing, public improvements and special events related to the SSA.

- Once again, we need to look at the overall comprehensive long term plan for the city and find the optimal location to utilize SSA.

14. Do you believe there is a homeless and hunger issue in the city and if so, what can be done?

Yes, I do. Joliet needs to work on the homeless and hunger issues, but it is a regional issue. We need to continue to collaborate with our social service agencies and community based organizations, and work with our schools, neighboring municipalities, county, state and federal leadership to help find solutions that will make an impact on the people it affects.

15. Share with us your background and what unique qualities you believe you possess that stand out from the other candidates.

I have been invested as a business owner for over 30 years in Joliet. We have grown our business from 26 employees to 260.

In the 30-plus years I have been involved in the auto industry, I have served in leadership roles and on boards including the General Motors National Dealer Council which puts me in meetings with the top leaders of General Motors. So I know what is expected to serve in a leadership role as mayor.

In addition, I understand finances and getting big projects completed. While on the Illinois Tollway Board which operates the three hundred or so miles of toll roads, we rolled out a \$12 billion-dollar multiyear plan for expansion and improvements. I was one of three members of the finance committee and we reviewed and approved for full board confirmation all contracts, some months this approval was over \$100 million.

These experiences and more have prepared me for the role of mayor.

16. Have you previously or are you currently serving on a governing board such as a business, nonprofit, other government, or a religious or education organization?

Currently I serve on the following boards:

- Board Member, Silver Cross Hospital
- Machinist Union 701 Training Board of Trustees
- Victory City Church Board of Directors Member,

Previously, I served on the following boards/groups:

- Director, Illinois Tollway Board – Appointed by the Governor
- Founding Member and Director, First Community Bank of Joliet
- Past Board Member, University of St. Francis
- Past Board Member, Joliet Park District Foundation
- Board Member, United Way, Will County Pillars of Society
- Former Meals on Wheels Deliveries Volunteer
- Former Co-Chairman, Joliet Grade School District 86 Referendum Committee
- Former Co-Chairman, Joliet Park District Referendum Committee
- Former Board Member, Silver Cross Hospital Healthy Community Committee
- Former board member and Chairman of the Chicago Auto Trade Association
- Past Chairman of the Chicago Auto Show

17. If so, how would this experience prepare you for this role and if not, do you believe this lack of experience would be a concern for voters?

I have a vision and a plan for improving our city.

I will work with all of our partners and stakeholders with mutual respect and an open mind toward ideas. We need to work toward solutions and not create problems. That's how I have always led our businesses. I would be councilmember number 9 and vote on all action items placed on the agenda and the residents will know why I vote the way I do and not take a pass.

I know that I have the necessary skills, high ideals, professionalism, knowledge and experience to serve the citizens of Joliet.

18. What level of interaction do you plan to hold with constituents and do you feel that you have the ability to be continually accessible?

Again, I would like to have town hall meetings in each district, with neighborhood groups where the district councilperson would be present to hear concerns from residents.

- As of 2022, I have become just an advisor to our businesses, we have many good people running them. I will have the time to devote as your mayor.

19. What are your thoughts on the status of unfunded city pension and retiree healthcare liabilities?

I have concerns about our unfunded city pension and healthcare liabilities and our ability to address them.

I don't have enough information to answer how we might address these liabilities but I have successfully turned around failing businesses. I am sure with the right professionals in the room we can address this issue long term.

20. Do you believe that our local transportation system is adequate?

I think we can always improve our transportation system. Everyone in Joliet deserves access to safe, convenient, and affordable transportation.

21. Do you believe that the city is providing quality services such as water, garbage removal, sewer, snow removal, and infrastructure?

The city seems to be working very well in some of those areas. We are replacing a lot of lead pipes, and this year the city has appropriated a lot more money for road resurfacing. We need to continue with a rolling plan on road repairs and sidewalk repairs.

All of our city employees do a wonderful job keeping this great city moving, we need to make sure they have the proper training and resources to do their job as best they can.

22. How would you work to improve communication with the citizens of Joliet?

I would continue the quarterly newsletter that has been restarted recently to keep in communication and be sure that our district council members keep in communication with their districts, so the city manager and council are always up to date with what is going on.

I would also incorporate a series of regular town hall meetings for residents to hear firsthand from city leadership.

23. What strategic alliances can be explored and/or better utilized? Do you feel the city has a solid relationship with county, state, and federal elected officials? Please explain why or why not and how that can be improved.

First, as mayor I would fully participate in the Will County Governmental League with our city manager. They are a regional resource made up of every Will County mayor, and together we are much stronger in our quest for county, state and federal assistance. We can share ideas on how to help each other as Will County continues to be the fastest growing of the 102 counties in Illinois.

24. Do you have any conflicts of interest that would prevent you from participating in council business?

I would abstain from any conflicts of interest that might arise as I have on other boards.

25. How do we maintain and enhance Joliet's position as a complete community with a thriving commercial and retail sector, highly ranked schools, diverse workforce, affordable housing, vibrant and walkable neighborhoods, and plenty of opportunities for recreation?

Elect me as your Mayor!

We need to bring together all the leadership of our community stake holders, such as school districts, park district, major employers, realtors, developers and key influencers to create a common thread of communication.

So that we can share our resources to continue to make our community thrive and the quality of life be the forefront of what we do starting with a long-term comprehensive plan to know where the city is going to be 5/10 /20 years down the road. We need to know what kind of city we are going to leave the 43,000 young people under the age of 19 and the 32,000 residents over 55 years of age.