



Voter Resource Guide 2023



This Voter Resource Guide is intended to assist you with your decision-making process and was designed to be a resource to help make voting as easiest as possible for you. In the Voter Toolkit on the next page, you can find your polling location, information on how to vote early, register to vote and much more.

Early voting begins on Wednesday, October 18. The toolkit on page 3 also helps you find early voting location. Other important dates and deadlines can be found below.

Important Dates & Deadlines

- Early In-Person Voting takes place October 18 – November 6
- Last day to request an absentee ballot and vote by mail is 5:00 PM on Monday, October 23.
- Register to Vote before 5:00 PM on Monday, October 23. Otherwise, you can still register to vote on Election Day. [Click here to learn about the requirements.](#)
- Election Day Polling Place hours are from 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM. Bring your state issued ID/License!

When you go to the polls on or before Tuesday, November 7, we hope this Voter Resource Guide helps you make informed decisions about the candidates and issues on your ballot, as well as decide whether to amend Iowa's Constitution.

When you vote don't forget to bring a valid form of identification!

Valid forms include:

- Iowa Voter Identification Card (needs to be signed)
- Iowa Driver's License
- Iowa Non-Operator ID
- U.S. Military ID or Veteran ID
- U.S. Passport
- Tribal ID Card/Document

This message is paid for by the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, 501 First St. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401. The executive director of the Economic Alliance is Doug Neumann. This message is not authorized by any candidate, candidate's committee or ballot issue committee.

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Dick Pilcher

Cary Smith

Tyler Turner

**Incumbent

VOTER TOOLKIT

It's your opportunity to be heard, to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions and to have a say in the policies that affect the future of our community. VOTE!

- [Confirm you are registered to vote here.](#)
- [Register to vote here.](#)
- [View your ballot here.](#)
- [Vote early by mail here.](#)
- [Vote early in person here.](#)
- [Find your Election Day polling place here.](#)



ALSO ON THE BALLOT: Investing in Cedar Rapids Schools

Voters that reside in the Cedar Rapids Community School District will be asked on their ballots whether to support a General Obligation Bond for Cedar Rapids schools. Under “Public Measure F” the school district seeks approval of a \$220 million bond referendum for future investment in district schools. This is the first bond measure for the district since 2000 – 23 years ago. A strong education system that aligns with the needs of the business community is critical to meeting our region’s workforce needs. *The Economic Alliance Policy Board voted unanimously to endorse the bond as it aligns with our mission to drive economic, workforce and population growth strategies in the metro area.*

We urge you to vote YES to support:

- Funding for Career & Technical Education classroom additions at Kennedy, Jefferson and Washington high schools.
- Solving inefficient middle school operations (school enrollments are at 67% of the capacity of our existing building) by renovating Franklin Middle School and building a new northeast side school, which would then position the District to reduce the number of middle schools in the district from its existing six to create a stronger feeder system for students in K-12, ensuring students stay together with classmates as they move from elementary to middle to high school.
- Modernizing Kennedy’s cafeteria and kitchen and Metro High School’s gymnasium.

The proposed bond money will benefit the Cedar Rapids region by keeping pace with competing school districts, investing in our future workforce, encouraging additional economic development, and operating schools far more efficiently.

Our community’s future successes depend on our ability to grow our economy and attracting and retaining our workforce. Investing in our world-class facilities is critical in demonstrating this community is dedicated to that future success.

This is an *important* vote for the entire community, and the Economic Alliance urges all members who live in the Cedar Rapids school district to vote YES on November 7.

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Economic Alliance contact information:

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Public Measure F

Shall the following public measure be adopted?

Shall the Board of Directors of the Cedar Rapids Community School District in the County of Linn, State of Iowa, be authorized to contract indebtedness and issue General Obligation Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$220,000,000 to provide funds to: a) construct, build, furnish, and equip a new Middle School building and acquire and improve the site; b) renovate, remodel, repair, improve, furnish and equip kitchen/café spaces at Kennedy High School building; c) construct, furnish, and equip Career and Technical Education additions to Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High School buildings and related remodeling; d) install turf fields and other site improvements at Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High School locations; e) construct, build furnish, and equip a gymnasium addition to Metro High Middle School building and related remodeling; and f) renovate, remodel, repair, improve, furnish and equip Franklin Middle School building and construct, furnish, and equip an addition to Franklin Middle School building and related remodeling?

Yes
 No



★ Pat Loeffler (incumbent)

57 years old
Salesman, Corner Store Apothecary & Wellness, Retired Business Manager for the Carpenters Union Local 308, Retired President of the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Building Trades

Why should the business community vote for you?

The past 4 years Cedar Rapids has survived and accomplished many great things. Still many in progress and much more to come. Couple examples with Derecho recovery and numerous Paving for Progress projects throughout Cedar Rapids. Recently the new Skateboard Park that's a new attractant. I'm a life long Cedar Rapids resident, small business owner in the Czech Village area. (Corner Store Apothecary) My years of experience in the construction field with contracts, negotiations and community relations is beneficial for the city to continue to grow. I look forward to continuing progress for Cedar Rapids and the Community that I grew up in.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

Open communications. Education too. Whether it's me learning from the situation or the other person. Educating is another way to get your point across. I always try to answer my phone or respond back when I can. It's important to listen to everyone. I will listen no matter what they have to say. Might not agree, but will listen and try to find a solution. Nothing different from my last job. Follow up is the key. Making sure to find that solution.

Ex. Our business is a prime example. We have numerous people of all ages come in to our shop looking for relief of some kind. Pain, stress, anxiety or specific medical needs. Cannabis is one of the biggest Stereotyped things in this country. It's saved my life! Education of Hemp and Marijuana stereotypes. When a person returns and thanks you for changing their life. Most humbling thing I've experienced in my life. ★

More Info

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[Facebook: Loeffler At Large](#)



★ David Maier

55 years old
Finance and Accounting Leader

Why should the business community vote for you?

I am the only non-incumbent running for an at-large seat on City Rapids City Council, and if elected, I will bring expertise in problem solving, forecasting, data analytics, and coaching and mentoring.

I am a Big 4 CPA, Kellogg MBA with more than 30 years of progressive finance, accounting, and audit experience. My professional career began at KPMG, which led to subsequent roles of increasing responsibility, including Accounting Manager, Regional Controller, and Senior Finance Director at Fortune 100 companies. I moved to Cedar Rapids in 2018 and have worked at Transamerica since 2019 in financial reporting and controls roles.

My career provided me the opportunity to travel extensively (about 80% of the time) throughout the USA and internationally to 40+ countries, including Oman, Venezuela, India, China, and Russia. This gave me the unique opportunity to build business partnerships and collaborate with individuals from different cultures, religions, political beliefs, and socioeconomic statuses.

The professional accomplishment I am most proud of is being awarded the Honeywell CEO's Premier Achievement Award in 2005 for a strategic project for which I was the leader. The award is the highest recognition given to an employee for individual accomplishment and leadership (only seven employees received the award in 2005).

Throughout my career, I have been especially passionate about developing future leaders by providing hands-on coaching and actionable feedback. If elected, I will use my platform to be a coach and mentor to young professionals in our community and encourage them to run for local elected office.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is

your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

We are fortunate that elections for City Council are nonpartisan, which facilitates Council members to make decisions based on what is best for the residents of Cedar Rapids and not solely based on the platform associated with their political party.

As a finance leader at global companies including Honeywell and PepsiCo, I have demonstrated success in collaborating with and influencing both frontline employees and executives, across business functions (sales, operations, engineering, and marketing), and with individuals from cultures or backgrounds that are different from mine.

My approach to reach consensus with others who disagree with my positions includes active listening, obtaining data to support my positions, and quantifying the impacts/benefits of taking my positions. A simple and recent example is that one of my opponents voted against a roundabout because they thought roundabouts are unsafe. Sharing data that demonstrates roundabouts are a safer alternative to traffic signals and stop signs, and are generally safer for pedestrians, would have helped build consensus.

Developing a personal relationship with others before a disagreement occurs is also extremely beneficial. I am fortunate that, through my leadership within the community (I served as the Treasurer on the Board of Directors of the CRMA, Revival Theatre Company, CR Pride, and CSPA Hall), I have developed friendships with the mayor and four City Council members. In fact, I recently had coffee with one of my opponents. I am confident that if elected, I will have a good working relationship with my peers on City Council. ★

More Info

[Facebook: David Maier for Cedar Rapids City Council](#)
www.davidmaierforcitycouncil.com



★ Ann Poe (incumbent)

71 years old
Program Manager/The District: Czech
Village & New Bohemia

Why should the business community vote for you?

I love Cedar Rapids. I am passionate about seeing our community continue to grow and flourish. I grew up here, my children and grandchildren live here, and I am motivated by the desire to provide the same quality of life to the residents of Cedar Rapids that I wish for my own family. I believe my experience and leadership will help navigate the City in next four years as we continue to move forward with the following opportunities:

- Economic Development programing and proactive business recruitment and retention which included WORKFORCE development.
- Inner City Street repairs.
- Strengthening and stabilizing neighborhoods, by continuing that work to reduce violence and support community leaders that promote safe neighborhoods, to support the basic infrastructure needs like streets, lighting, sidewalks, and curb and gutters.
- Affordable housing opportunities that includes supporting small developers that can assist with providing “missing middle” housing opportunities for supporting our workforce.
- Continue building our flood control system so that both sides of the river are protected.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

Over the last 12 years on Council, there is barely a day that goes by without someone criticizing or condemning our policies or positions on ordinances and unfortunately, at times, me personally. Our Council is non-partisan; therefore we are committed to building consensus focused solutions. The examples are too numerous to repeat, however, my approach for working with citizens or organizations who disagree with me, whether the issues that come before me are related to solutions important to the EA, has remained the same and is a matter of personal character and respect for others:

- Thank them for reaching out
- Avoid being defensive, judgmental, or having a knee-jerk reaction without all the facts
- Engage in active listening/more than talking
- Commit to getting answers to questions or concerns.
- Find solutions where possible
- Provide dignity and respect in an honest and professional way
- Give people grace. We do not live in their shoes or understand what has shaped their views in life.
- Always be empathic and compassionate ★

More Info

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★ **Scott Overland** (incumbent)

60 years old
Vice President, Investment Consulting
Cedar Rapids Bank and Trust

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

The Cedar Rapids City Council realizes that all the positive attributes of our city require a strong economy and one that creates high quality jobs. Partnering with others in supporting local companies as well as attracting new companies to our city are critical in making Cedar Rapids a place to do business. Local government is a critical player in providing this support with incentives and community development that help retain local companies and support their expansion. In attracting workforce, the council realizes quality of life is a top priority. Our community must have amenities, quality educational institutions and affordability to enable our workforce to thrive. I as a member of the city council will continue to support these policies and look for opportunities to support our local companies and new entrants to our market.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

A non-partisan council has worked well for the citizens of Cedar Rapids since the change of government. The annual goal setting session for council aligns priorities with the needs of the community. Because council members function in a non-partisan format, partisan politics are not a factor in getting goals accomplished and council can come together to move issues forward. Unlike state or federal bodies, council members operate with respect for one another and the citizens we serve. We listen to the community and make decisions without rancor or delay. I cannot remember a time when partisan politics impeded decision making with any of the councils for which I have been a member. I look forward to continuing to serve in this manner. ★

More Info

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★ Dan Bahan

33 years old
Senior IT Technician

Why should the business community vote for you?

With a degree in graphic design, over a decade of technology experience, and fifteen years as a martial arts instructor, I offer a unique perspective on problem-solving that aligns with the community's well-being.

My graphic design expertise benefits the business community by enhancing visual communication. In today's digital age, effective branding and marketing materials are crucial. I can create compelling materials to help local businesses connect with their audiences in a competitive marketplace.

My extensive IT experience is invaluable in our tech-dependent world. I understand IT infrastructure, data analysis, and cybersecurity, which can streamline city operations, support data-driven decisions, and protect digital assets.

Additionally, my principles from martial arts stress discipline, respect, and community. These values apply directly to business ethics, promoting fair treatment of employees and fostering positive work environments.

In summary, my graphic design skills, IT expertise, and strong principles benefit the business community. I'm committed to supporting local businesses, promoting innovation, and ethical practices. By voting for me, the business community ensures their interests are represented, fostering a prosperous local economy.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

In the world of business, collaboration and consensus-building are essential for progress. When working with individuals or groups who may initially disagree with my positions, I employ a pragmatic and empathetic approach.

I believe in finding common ground and building rapport. One effective way to do this is by discussing shared interests, such as hobbies and personal passions. People tend to be more open to productive discussions when they feel a personal connection beyond their professional roles. For instance, in my current role within a large company, I've successfully initiated updates to training manuals by first engaging colleagues in conversations about their hobbies, like sharing stories about their beloved pets. This humanizes the interaction and lays the foundation for constructive dialogue.

When dealing with larger groups, I rely on raw data and facts. I believe in presenting well-researched, data-driven arguments grounded in objective reality. Facts provide a common framework for discussion, and once these facts are established, finding a mutually beneficial middle ground often becomes more achievable.

In essence, my approach is about fostering understanding, empathy, and open communication. It's a strategy that has proven effective in bridging gaps, finding consensus, and achieving productive outcomes. In the dynamic world of business, these principles are invaluable for driving progress and ensuring that the best interests of all stakeholders are considered. ★

More Info
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★ Scott Olson (incumbent)

77 years old
Commercial Realtor, Retired Architect

Why should the business community vote for you?

Having lived in Cedar Rapids since 1961, I have had the opportunity to work as an architect following graduation from Iowa State University and the last 30+ years in commercial real estate. But more importantly, since 1978 I have been a part of starting 6 local businesses and 4 non-profit entities. In addition, my architectural and real estate practices have allowed me to help hundreds of businesses to start as well as expand in the metro area. My community service during this time included being active in over 50 civic, community and professional organizations on a local, regional, state and national level. I have been a Chamber/EA member, Priority One/MEDCO member for over 40 years. Plus, I had the honor of being Marion Chamber president in 1983. It is important that our city council creates a positive business environment especially for small business plus city amenities that attract employees to our city and region. At the same time, affordable housing, homelessness, street improvements, utilities, flood protection and public safety are top priorities for the city council.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

As a 62 year resident of this great city and an 11 1/2 year member of the Cedar Rapids City Council, I have maintained a focus on making Cedar Rapids a great place to have a business and call home. My approach to working with people or groups is to:

- Respond rapidly to citizen concerns whether

- positive or negative
- Provide strong, creative, compassionate leadership teamed with the Mayor and the City Council
- Most importantly; to listen, find creative solutions to issues, build consensus, identify funding sources and assemble a team to make it happen.

My examples I would like to highlight are in the non-profit world:

- A founding and 50 year active member of Four Oaks to provide the many services/housing needed for troubled youth and families.
- A 42 year member of Discovery Living that provides services and homes for disabled and mentally challenged adults.
- A founding and 28 year active member of the Ecumenical Community Center
- Foundation to serve those in our community that are unable to pay for basic needs
- plus provide an incubator site for non-profit agencies.
- As the only veteran on the city council, I have joined efforts by our Veterans
- Commission and other organizations to help those that served and sacrificed for our country

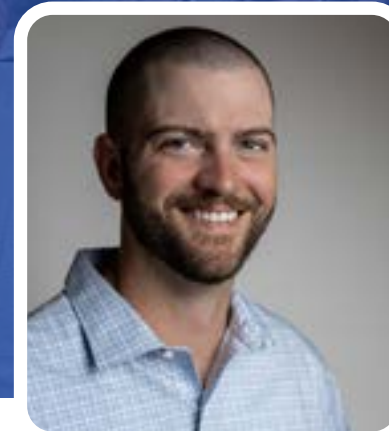
These collaborations are what makes a community a great place to call home. I respectfully request your vote on November 7. ★

More Info
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★ Jeff Cater

55 years old
Emergency Physician Assistant



★ Ben Fiedler

31 years old
Product Owner at Benchmark, Inc.

Why should the business community vote for you?

My family and I have lived in Hiawatha since 2016. We love our current location and all that the City of Hiawatha has to offer. I first became interested in serving the community in 2021 and ran unsuccessfully for city council at that time. However, as a result of that run I was offered the opportunity to serve on the City Planning and Zoning Commission, the Fire Department 2 Steering Committee and the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee in 2022. The experience gained from this convinced me that playing a role in the future direction of the City was a valuable endeavor. My goals center around promoting the opportunity that exists here for retail growth, increasing food and beverage options, and continuing to offer as many recreational options for Hiawatha and Linn County citizens in general as possible. I favor using tax incentives where appropriate to allow us to compete for businesses looking to locate in the area. The future of Hiawatha is bright and with the right leaders steering the direction of the City we can continue to promote all the great work that has been done to date and look for additional opportunities to enhance the lives of those living here going forward.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

The seats on the City Council of Hiawatha are non-partisan. The staff of the city work hard to make decisions for all of the citizens regardless of background, economic status or political association. So the daily operations and governance of Hiawatha are an enduring example of working with diverse groups and forming consensus to move the city forward. ★

More Info

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Why should the business community vote for you?

I have been fortunate to spend most of my career working for small to medium-sized businesses and have come to realize the importance these businesses have. These organizations provide the greatest support for our community through job creation, economic growth, charitable giving, etc. According to a 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics report, small businesses employ 57% of our workforce. The future of Hiawatha depends on driving sustainable growth in our business sector by attracting small businesses to our community.

One of the key reasons for my candidacy for Hiawatha City Council is the recognition of the success of previous City Councils. As a City Councilor, I aim to see this economic growth continue and provide new opportunities for small businesses to thrive in our community. During the 2023 State of the City, Chad Pelley discussed why he seeks development opportunities in Hiawatha. He explained that he seeks Hiawatha because city staff ensure that the process for new development is as smooth and efficient as possible. I hope that Hiawatha can be universally recognized as a leader in promoting business development.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

At a recent leadership conference, I heard a speaker discussing conflict. He stated that conflict leads to

revelation. Without conflict, our city cannot reveal deep-seated issues in our community. Therefore, conflict within a city government is fundamental. We must manage this conflict and use it to build a positive culture. To do this, Hiawatha must lead with compassion and empathy for one another. By listening and understanding someone with opposing views, I can address their concerns and find ways to incorporate their perspective into the plan.

In 1956, John F. Kennedy released a book titled "Profiles in Courage." In this book, Kennedy identified 8 senators who had to make tough decisions that ultimately cost them their seats. However, each decision was made with the country's best interest in mind and was later determined to have been the best possible option. They were selfless in their leadership by being courageous enough to make a hard decision that negatively impacted them. Consensus will not always be possible. In those situations, it will be imperative for me to make decisions I believe are the most beneficial to the City of Hiawatha. ★

More Info

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★ Aime Wichtendahl (incumbent)

43 years old
Business Care Advocate - U.S. Cellular,
Freelance writer and author

Why should the business community vote for you?

Stand with local businesses was my campaign slogan when I first ran for the Hiawatha City Council in 2015. In the eight years since was elected we have had phenomenal business growth. We have developed new commercial hubs such as Peck's Landing and important infrastructure developments such as the completion of the Tower Terrace Interchange. We have also reduced the property tax levy from \$15.41 to \$14.75 and my plan is to reduce that levy rate further by reducing our debt service levy in my next term.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

I believe in building working partnerships not only with other community leaders in the metro area, but also with our partners in the legislature. The Tower Terrace project was one that spanned multiple years, and required working with members of both parties in the legislature to advocate for funding and grants for the projects. ★

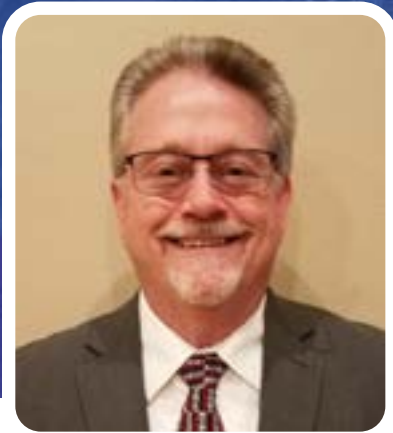
More Info

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★ Steve Dodson

71 years old
Retired from Mercy Medical Center

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

Business community should vote for me because of my 6 years experience on the city council showed that I support the Hiawatha business community. Prior to serving on the council, I was on the development of the 2036 Comprehensive Plan as a citizen and worked on this plan with city staff and Hiawatha business owners. I also served Hiawatha on the Board of Adjustments. I support current and future Hiawatha businesses. I attend as many ribbon cuttings as possible for new and existing businesses celebrating milestones in Hiawatha.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration between elected officials and groups/people who differ in opinion is an asset that I have been able to nurture over the years. A recent example is a developer wanted to build a senior, low-income housing project to Hiawatha. It happens to be across the street from the subdivision I live in. Some of my neighbors and friends were initially

against this development. I listened to their side of the story to gather information about why they were against it. When they were done, I explained why the city was for the project. Some of their fears were simply not understanding the concept of “healthy neighborhoods” and who this development was planned. Did we get a consensus of 100%? No. But almost. In going back to the developers of the project, they agreed to make some changes to the elevation of the building that citizens wanted to see. ★

More Info

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[Facebook](#)



★ Steve Jensen

68 years old
Retired

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

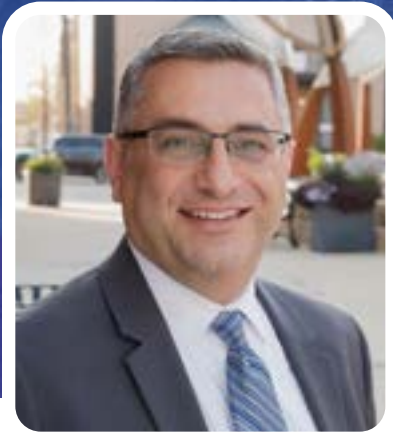
I have been a strong supporter of the business community for 40 years. This is demonstrated by the terms I served on the MEDCO and Chamber of Commerce boards. I had 2 year terms as Chairman on each board. During my term as chairman on the MEDCO board, we led the fundraising initiative to fund MEDCO's first full time President. This has allowed both Boards to play a more robust role in supporting the business community in Marion.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

One of the most important traits of a person on city council is to be a good listener. When I am discussing an issue with someone who has a different opinion, by listening, you can determine what their real concern is with a particular issue. Many times, after listening I discuss my position and, while it may not change the other person's opinion, they better understand both sides of the issue. ★

More Info

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★ Nick AbouAssaly (incumbent)

57 years old
Attorney/Partner at Simmons Perrine
Moyer Bergman PLC

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

I have been an advocate for progress and growth in the region for more than two decades, always promoting a bigger vision and working to bring leaders together. In the City of Marion, I have been leading from the front and personally involved, along with community partners, in all economic development and business attraction efforts. I have established a high standard of excellence and promoted development that gives people greater opportunities to enjoy their lives and achieve their goals. As a result, Marion is now playing a positive and important role in creating a region people love to call “home” and where businesses see opportunity for success.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

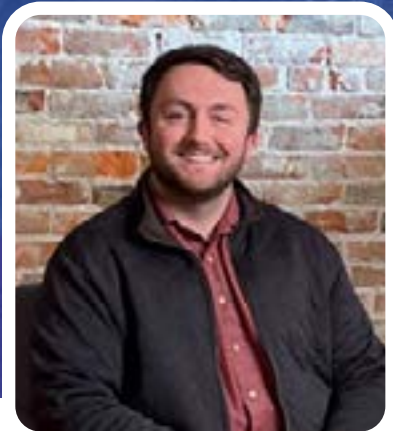
Creating a prosperous region requires collaboration by public officials, business leaders and community partners. Our region benefits when we desire the best for each other and work together to solve issues and promote growth and prosperity for all who live and work here. True leaders understand that no one accomplishes anything on their own and the best results are achieved when people work together for common goals. My approach is to first determine the desired outcome and then

invite to the table anyone who can add value and help to achieve that outcome. My eight years as Marion mayor have been anchored in insistence on collaboration between the City team, community partners, business leaders and the community at large (one Team Marion) to achieve a vision of excellence for the community and to create a place where people and businesses want to be. Utilizing this approach, I led the City of Marion successfully through the historic challenges of the derecho and the pandemic and set the city on an unprecedented trajectory of growth and investment in providing residents with unequalled opportunity and an amazing quality of life. ★

More Info

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[Facebook: Re-Elect Mayor Nick](#)



★ Gage Miskimen

26 years old
Community Engagement Coordinator
at Four Oaks

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

As a young professional in the area, I recognize that to keep people in the area, cities need to be able to offer great jobs, affordable and secure housing, and a high quality of life. While other communities in the state are losing population, Marion is growing and it's because the city works hard to make Marion a great place to live, work, and play.

I will continue to support strategic and intentional commercial growth in all corners of Marion to diversify our business community and alleviate pressure off of the residential tax base. I will also continue to support quality developments that offer stable housing for families and individuals at all stages of life as well as recreational projects that increase the quality of life and offer more things to do for residents and visitors to the area that help spur economic development.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

As a former journalist, I always approached the job with an objective fairness to tell stories in my hometown. Of course, we are all human and we all have biases, but good journalists and good local officials are able to push their biases to the side to be effective and make change. I have always been driven by finding solutions and common ground with others.

I believe it's most important to listen to others, have patience, and empathize with where they are coming from, even if you don't necessarily agree. Because most of the time, the solution and the truth of an issue is somewhere in the middle of the parties involved.

Listening to residents' concerns and connecting the right people to find neighborhood solutions is a lot of what I have done in my first six months on city council. Listening fully and having empathy is how officials practice great governance.

Being one of the youngest elected officials in Eastern Iowa, I don't always agree with folks on issues. We may sometimes disagree with the path to get somewhere, but I do believe the majority of Eastern Iowans are aiming for the same result in building healthy, equitable, and thriving communities. ★

More Info

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Facebook.com/[gage.miskimen](#)

[gagemiskimenformarion.com](#)



★ Grant Harper

69 years old
Current At-Large Member of Marion
City Council, Retired

No Opponent

Why should the business community vote for you?

My experience on City Council has shown that ongoing municipal development is vital to show community vibrancy as a beacon to attract new businesses, customers, and residents, all of which must be completed with transparency and effective communications to the community. Therefore, my focus has been to ensure city funds are expended to drive a real cost-benefit and value to the community, advocating for a balance between promoting new development and maintaining existing community infrastructure and services.

As a council liaison to the Marion Metropolitan Airport Committee and the Airport Visioning Team, I've helped focus on safe operations and the airport's forward-looking development. Marion's airport can be so much more than a hobbyist airfield to stimulate additional economic benefit to Marion's local economy.

As Chair of the Executive and Policy Boards of the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization, I work with other members to guide the effective allocation of available federal funding for critical transportation projects which are vital for Marion's development and the broader Cedar Rapids metro area. Developing Marion in unison with other metro area municipalities helps meet our regional transportation objectives.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

Fortunately, city council positions are nonpartisan and legislatively focused, with most issues facing the City being service and infrastructure-based matters supported by fundamental analysis. Driven by the community's needs, responsible spending on community assets like roads, water, sewer systems, and recreational facilities is primary. In addition, such expenditures benefit the overall business climate of the city.

For the more complex issues facing the City, I work with all stakeholders to focus on measurements that accurately affirm the depth and severity of a given problem. Doing so allows the community to validate the issue and measure whether they are solving the identified problem for the community's general good. While not a perfect fit, more typical examples of those matters that I have promoted through my assignments are periodic, structured reviews of city policies and the creation of operating standards and a development plan for the Marion Municipal Airport.

In a publicly visible way, I have effectively established my ability to work thoughtfully and collaboratively. I shall let that belief underpin my future contributions to the City of Marion. ★

More Info
[HarperForMarion.com](https://www.harperformarion.com)

 **Will Brandt**

No Opponent

No response provided



★ Leigh Cook

54 years old
Financial Services



★ Justin Deahr

Age: Not Provided
IT Infrastructure Engineer

Why should the business community vote for you?

Robins is a very special place. If elected for City Council, I will continue to support the efforts for Robins to grow responsibly, provide guidance for future infrastructure plans, and ensure annual planning for family-oriented events.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

I will be an active listener; we will discuss the positives and negatives of the position until we reach a decision that best fits the needs of our community. ★

More Info

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Why should the business community vote for you?

A healthy community where people want to live must contain a variety of healthy businesses. Look outside. Everything that you see was provided by a business and paid for by people who own or work at a business. Look around inside. Same story. Businesses bring in sales tax, pay wages, and provide the housing, food, clothing, entertainment... Everything that makes a city work is provided by the businesses.

I am asking for your votes because I realize how important businesses are for the community and plan to support them.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

For the Robins City Council, I prefer to use the word “non-partisan” instead of bipartisan. I believe that all too often people who ask for “bipartisanship” are really using the word as a cudgel against the opposition. It is very seldom that someone gives up their position in the name of bipartisanship. Instead, everyone demands that someone else gives up their position. It is even less often that a politician has the citizens from their own party knocking on their door, asking them to join the opposition for a vote in the name of bipartisanship. If you see a politician complaining about a lack of bipartisanship, ask them why they did not switch

their own vote in order to achieve bipartisanship.

Teamwork and analytical thinking have been critical to my career in Information Technology. Work also introduced me to the concept of a servant leader who leads by making sure the team has what they need to succeed. I believe that this experience and mindset will transfer well to the Robins City Council. Our City Council offices are considered “non-partisan” and political parties are not listed on the ballots. It is my intention to work for the citizens of the community and to leave partisan politics completely out of the equation. Fiscal responsibility, steady improvements, and consideration for the potential impacts on citizens will guide my decisions. These are the same arguments I will use to try to persuade others. By the same token, these are the ideas that I will LISTEN for, when others are trying to persuade me. ★

More Info

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[Facebook.com/JustinRobinsCityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/JustinRobinsCityCouncil)



★ Mike Foley

59 years old
Co-Owner/Managing Partner
Platinum Advisory Group, LLC

Why should the business community vote for you?

As a Business Owner and Community Volunteer, I hope to bring new perspectives, effective communication, and real-life experiences to the Robins City Council for the betterment of all citizens of Robins.

I have 35 years' experience in the Cedar Rapids financial services industry. As the Co-Owner and Managing Partner of Platinum Advisory, Group, LLC, an independent insurance and investment advisory firm, I serve business owners, professionals, and high net worth individuals. I have been fortunate to work with clients with a wide range of backgrounds, personalities, occupations, and goals.

Over the last 24 years, I have been dedicated to community service as a volunteer for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Corridor, an organization that provides youth development programs. I have served as Board President, Trustee, co-founder/creator and Committee Chairperson for Fish-O-Rama, and Capital Campaign Committee Member. Fish-O-Rama has grown to become the largest fishing event in the state of Iowa and the top fundraising event raising \$2.1M over the past 21 years. We host 1,500 participants and are supported by 100 weekend volunteers. As a Capital Campaign Committee Member, we just completed a \$9.5M fundraising campaign to build a new youth facility on the SE side of Cedar Rapids (construction began on September 15, 2023).

As your neighbor, I would be honored to serve on the Robins City Council.

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

I take the approach of having an "open door, listening ear" policy. Take the time to fully understand everyone's opinions before rendering a decision or making a recommendation. There is so much to learn if you're a good listener!

When I have been in disagreeable circumstances, I try to effectively communicate my position and if we do not come to that conclusion whether it be professionally or in a volunteer committee meeting it's Ok to agree to disagree and move on.

I will listen to the concerns of the community and implement policies for the benefit of all Robins citizens. This election comes at a critical point in city development (Tower Terrace Road Extension, West Main Street Reconstruction, Robins Landing, the Villages, Tradesman Square, etc.). These projects have the potential to improve property values and lower taxes. If elected, my top priority over the next three years would be to work with other City Council members to ensure that the development of Robins positively impacts the community as a whole. ★

More Info
mdfoley@mdfoley.com

★ Dick Pilcher

No response provided.

★ Cary Smith



★ Tyler Turner

37 years old
Manager of Data Strategies at the
Harrison Group

No response provided.

Why should the business community vote for you?

I have a small business mindset. I work in operational support for a small business located in downtown Cedar Rapids. Since I joined in 2016, we have grown from a company of 7 to over 35 employees. Through that significant growth I have had to wear many different hats in order to stay ahead of the needs of our growing company. I pride myself in finding solutions and getting things done, when you work in a small business you have to have that mindset. I do that by being adaptable and not shying away from hard work. This is the same attitude that I would bring to Robins City Council. I would try and deliver a new perspective and work with my fellow citizens and the council to move our community forward.

to have a command of the rulebook, gather information from my team of referees, and find a way for all of us to move forward. This can be very difficult, but I think there are a lot of parallels to local government. Information gathering is key, asking questions and actually listening with empathy to what people have to say. If you are able to do that, then you should be empowered to make the best decision for your community. ★

More Info

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[Facebook](#)

homegrowniowan.com/chickens-not-allowed-to-roost-in-robins-but-issue-could-peck-away-at-change-for-city-council/

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration is important to the Economic Alliance and our members. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? Please provide examples.

Gather information, listen to what people have to say, think critically, and be decisive. Outside of my family and my career, I also referee Division 1 soccer. This puts me in charge of very emotionally heated situations with 2 opposing viewpoints. To be successful in those situations its imperative

But wait, there's more!

Voters who reside in the College Community School District will be asked on their ballots to support a \$43 million general obligation bond issue that would fund construction of a district aquatics and wellness center. The facility would be owned by the College Community School District and operated by the YMCA, which will cover operational costs like the electricity, pool maintenance and small repairs, saving the district the cost of ongoing maintenance. The school district will be responsible for any major structural and maintenance costs.

Please consider voting YES on your ballot to help keep our school districts competitive, add a quality of life amenity that helps talent attraction efforts, and positions this region with services critical to support more population growth.

