

2025

IOWA CITY SPECIAL ELECTION VOTER GUIDE



**This message is paid for by Greater Iowa City, Inc., 136 S Dubuque St, Iowa City, IA 52240. The President of Greater Iowa City, Inc. is Nancy Bird. This message is not authorized by any candidate, candidate's committee or ballot issue committee.

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RACES:

Iowa City – City Council, District C

- Ross Nusser
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2025 JOHNSON COUNTY VOTER INFORMATION

This Voter Resource Guide is intended to assist you with your decision-making process and provide important information about how to vote in this special election. 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, February 12. The toolkit also helps you find your early voting location. Other important dates and deadlines can be found to the right.



Special Election 2025 Toolkit

- 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](#).

Important Dates and Deadlines

February 12 – March 3

In person early voting begins Wednesday

5:00 PM on February 18

Last day to request an absentee ballot and vote by mail

5:00 PM on February 18

Deadline to register to vote

Otherwise, **you can still register to vote on election day.** Click [here](#) to learn about the requirements.

Election day polling place hours are 7AM – 8PM.

Bring your state issued ID/License.

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

Valid forms include:

- Iowa Voter Identification Card (must be signed)
- Iowa Driver's License
- Iowa Non-Operator ID
- US Military or Veteran ID
- US Passport
- Tribal ID Card/Document



Ross Nusser



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Realtor, Developer,
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Ross for Iowa City

What do you hope to accomplish on the Iowa City City Council and how will it benefit the business community?

I am committed to smart, strategic leadership that strengthens Iowa City's business community, economic resilience, and quality of life. My experience as a real estate broker, developer, and nonprofit leader has given me firsthand insight into business growth, housing development, and public-private partnerships—key factors in a thriving local economy.

One of my top priorities is ensuring that the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) is renewed and continues to thrive. The SSMID has been instrumental in fostering a strong downtown, supporting businesses, and creating a vibrant, welcoming environment. As a founding partner of Urban Acres Real Estate and developer of Market House, I have seen how public-private collaboration and strategic investment drive economic success.

Additionally, I support policies that reduce barriers for businesses, such as streamlining approval processes for development and infrastructure projects to prevent costly delays. I also advocate for targeted economic incentives, smart growth planning, and strong partnerships with organizations like Greater Iowa City, Inc. to ensure that the City Council is actively engaging with and supporting local businesses.

Iowa City's business community is essential to our city's success. I will work to ensure thoughtful development, economic opportunity, and strategic investment that benefits businesses and residents alike.

Promoting civility and encouraging our elected officials to work towards solutions is important to Greater Iowa City, Inc. What is your approach to working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? How do you reach consensus? Please provide examples.

Collaboration and pragmatic leadership are at the core of how I approach governance. My experience as President of the Board of Community and Family Resources (CFR) has provided me with firsthand knowledge of working across political lines to achieve meaningful results. Our board consists of county supervisors from Eastern, Central, and North Central Iowa, many with diverse political affiliations. Despite our differences, we reach consensus through productive dialogue and shared goals—a model I will bring to Iowa City Council.



Ross Nusser, continued



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One of the most critical aspects of effective leadership is assuming positive intent and seeking common ground. At CFR, we navigated a complex merger that required careful negotiation and compromise, ensuring that mental health and addiction services could expand across Iowa. In my real estate and development career, I have worked with government officials, business leaders, and community advocates to balance growth and sustainability in a way that benefits all stakeholders.

Iowa City needs leaders who listen, engage, and find solutions without unnecessary division. By focusing on shared priorities—economic resilience, housing affordability, and community well-being we can create a productive, solutions-driven council that earns the public's trust and moves Iowa City forward.

Greater Iowa City, Inc. has designated the area around the Sycamore Mall as a Strategic Investment District and intends to help revitalize the area through targeted programs, private investment, and support from the City of Iowa City. What is your view of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and would you support its use in this Strategic Investment District?

TIF allows for investment today without burdening the current tax base, ensuring that future tax revenues support long-term growth. I strongly support Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a valuable economic development tool—especially in areas like the Sycamore Mall Strategic Investment District—but it should not be the only tool we rely on. It has been an essential driver for successful projects across Iowa City.

However, a sustainable economic development strategy requires more than TIF alone. I have worked with multiple government entities to discuss alternative economic development structures, including pursuing TIF alternatives for rural communities. Cities must explore additional funding sources like Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), infrastructure investment programs, and private-public partnerships to diversify revenue streams and avoid overreliance on any single mechanism.

I fully support the Greater Iowa City, Inc. approach of combining private investment, targeted city support, and strategic infrastructure improvements to revitalize key districts. Economic growth happens when we balance incentives, streamline processes, and foster collaboration among businesses, developers, and city leaders.

Iowa City's future depends on smart, strategic investment—TIF is an excellent tool, but it should be part of a broader strategy that ensures long-term success and sustainability for our business community.



Oliver Weilein



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What do you hope to accomplish on the Iowa City City Council and how will it benefit the business community?

I hope to do everything I can to improve the material conditions of working people of Iowa City, to defend our most vulnerable, to embolden grassroots organizing, and create a more just and equitable community. When the working class have affordable housing, affordable childcare, affordable utilities, free public transit, etc, they have more disposable income to spend as a whole, and especially more money to spend on our local shops that add to our cities character. I wish to combat the hold that just a few landlords and real estate entities have on the commercial property around Iowa City, and especially downtown. I wish to look into policies, like right of first refusal, to provide local business owners the critical opportunity to purchase the units that they run their business out of, and could also play a part in curtailing the rising costs of commercial (or residential) leasing. When people have better lives, have more free time and more leeway in their budgets, they have the ability not only to spend more money, but to engage in community in ways that make it a more attractive place for businesses and people alike to call home.

Promoting civility and encouraging our elected officials to work towards solutions is important to Greater Iowa City, Inc. What is your approach to working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions? How do you reach consensus? Please provide examples.

As a founding member of the Iowa City Tenants Union, I have been in the same room with landlords who were actively engaging in fraud and abuse directed at their tenants, and held professionalism and composure in these negotiations. As a mediator, I know how to negotiate productively even with those I strongly disagree with, or even personally dislike. Putting aside emotion or personal grievance when the interests of the community are on the line is a core priority, and a skill that I have learned through my decade of community work in Iowa City. Going into conversations with good faith intentions, while assuming the same from the other party, is the baseline starting point in every meeting I engage in.



Oliver Weilein, continued



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Greater Iowa City, Inc. has designated the area around the Sycamore Mall as a Strategic Investment District and intends to help revitalize the area through targeted programs, private investment, and support from the City of Iowa City. What is your view of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and would you support its use in this Strategic Investment District?

With potential budget shortfalls coming in the near future, being more creative and getting more value out of our public dollars is something we need to be exploring. The future tax revenue the city can accrue from developments using Tax Increment Financing definitely has that potential, and needs to be explored. I believe that the community having a stake in development as a whole is extremely important to further democratizing our city. We need to make sure that when the city uses our residents tax dollars in development, it comes with mechanisms to ensure that the development is of long term benefit for the community, both in utility and potential tax revenue. We need to make sure to address the risk of potential development causing gentrification and pricing out low income residents by exploring ways to keep housing affordable in the area. If such mechanisms are in place, and if the public gets a good cut of the deal, I will definitely be in favor of using TIF to deliver much needed attention and improvements to the area surrounding Sycamore Mall.