

GREATER IOWA CITY, INC.

2026 VOTER GUIDE

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- VOTER TOOLKIT
- JOHNSON COUNTY JAIL BOND
- KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOND
- STATEWIDE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
- CANDIDATE PROFILES

RACES:

Governor

- Rob Sand (D)
- Zach Lahn (R)

United States Senator:

- Josh Turek (D)
- Ashley Hinson (R)
- Thomas Laehn (L)

United States House of Representatives District 1:

- Christina Bohannon (D)
- Mariannette Miller-Meeke (R)*
- Michael Bridgford (No Party)

Iowa Senate District 43

- Meghann Foster (D)

Iowa Senate District 45

- Janice Weiner (D)*

Iowa House of Representatives District 85

- Amy Nielsen (D)*

Iowa House of Representatives District 86

- Dave Jacoby (D)*

Iowa House of Representatives District 89

- Elinor Levin (D)*
- Daniel Arch (No Party)

Iowa House of Representatives District 90

- Adam Zabner (D)*

Iowa House of Representatives District 91

- Mark Divitt (D)
- Judd Lawler (R)*

Iowa House of Representatives District 92

- Brittany Erickson (D)
- Heather Hora (R)*

Johnson County Board of Supervisors District 1

- Lisa Green-Douglass (D)*
- Greg Erceg (R)

Johnson County Board of Supervisors District 2

- Jon Green (D)*
- Phil Hemingway (R)

Johnson County Board of Supervisors District 3

- Sue Dvorsky (D)
- Jennie Wunderlich (R)

Johnson County Board of Supervisors District 4

- V Fixmer-Oraiz (D)*
- Wanda Foster (R)

Johnson County Board of Supervisors District 5

- Mandi Remington (D)*
- Donna Dane (R)

OTHER RACES THAT WILL APPEAR ON THE BALLOT:

Secretary of State:

- Ryan Peterman (D)
- Paul D. Pate (R)*

State Auditor:

- Taylor Wettach (D)
- Chris Cournoyer (R)

State Treasurer:

- John Norwood (D)
- Roby Smith (R)*

Secretary of Agriculture:

- Chris Jones (D)
- Mike Naig (R)*

Attorney General

- Nate Willems (D)
- Brenna Bird (R)*

County Treasurer

- Scott Finlayson (D)*

County Recorder

- Kim Painter (D)*

County Attorney

- Rachel Zimmerman Smith (D)*

***Incumbent*



This content is paid for by Greater Iowa City, Inc., 136 S. Dubuque Street, Iowa City, IA. The president & CEO of Greater IC is Nancy Bird. This message is not authorized by any candidate, candidate's committee, or ballot issue committee.

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2026 JOHNSON COUNTY VOTER GUIDE

The purpose of this voter guide is to inform your decision-making in the upcoming midterm election, share information on candidates and ballot issues, and provide instructions for where and when to vote. While Greater Iowa City, Inc. is a non-partisan entity and does not formally endorse or donate to political candidates, we do encourage our members to be informed about issues and vote for business and community-friendly candidates and initiatives when they go to the polls.

Thank you for
viewing our guide.
Make your plan to
vote today!



Voter Toolkit

- Confirm you are registered to vote [here](#).
- Register to vote [here](#).
- Vote early by mail [here](#).
- Vote early in person [here](#).
- Find your election day polling place and view your sample ballot [here](#).

Important Dates and Deadlines

October 14: First day of early voting, first day mail-in ballots can be sent out

October 19: Deadline to pre-register to vote, last day to request mail-in ballot

November 2: Last day for in-person early voting

November 3: General election, polls open from 7am-8pm

*Bring your state issued ID/license:

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

You are still able to register to vote on election day. View the requirements for doing so [here](#).



Johnson County Jail Bond Referendum

Summary

In August of 2026, the Johnson County Board of Supervisors approved the placement of a \$94.5 million General Obligation Bond referendum on the November ballot. If authorized by voters, the bond would fund the acquisition of land, construction, equipping, and furnishing of a new sheriff's office and jail facility. The jail would account for approximately 45% of the building, with the sheriff's office making up the other 55%. The facility is anticipated to include 120 beds and will be located near Melrose and Slothower Road.

Full Text

Shall the County of Johnson, State of Iowa, issue its general obligation bonds in an amount not exceeding the amount of \$94,500,000 for the purpose of acquiring land and constructing, equipping and furnishing a new sheriff's office and jail facility?

A "Yes" vote

Supports the allocation of no more than \$94.5 million in bond funds for the construction of a new jail and sheriff's office facility.

A "No" vote

Opposes the allocation of \$94.5 million in bond funds for the construction of a new jail and sheriff's office facility.

Additional Information

- The proposed project would add \$88 per \$100,000 annually in taxable property value to taxpayers, and the tax increase would last 12 years.
- Under Iowa law, General Obligation Bond measures for major projects such as building construction, renovations, or land purchases must meet a higher approval threshold than a simple majority. **At least 60% of voters must vote "yes" for a bond referendum to pass.**
- More information on the jail bond and its tax impacts can be found [here](#).



Kirkwood Community College Bond Referendum

Summary

This proposed bond referendum asks voters across 18 counties in Iowa, including Johnson County, to approve a General Obligation Bond of \$88 million for Kirkwood Community College. The funds generated from this bond would go towards renovating and expanding existing campus facilities and student training infrastructure by upgrading and modernizing classroom space and lab equipment. Career programs that would benefit include healthcare, emergency response, business, agriculture, information technology, and trade professionals.

Full Text

Shall Kirkwood Community College (Merged Area X) in the Counties of Benton, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, Iowa, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Keokuk, Linn, Louisa, Poweshiek, Tama, and Washington, be authorized to renovate, improve, erect, and equip facilities to modernize learning spaces with an emphasis on health sciences, industrial technologies, agricultural sciences, and business and information technology, contract indebtedness therefor, and issue General Obligation Bonds in an amount not exceeding \$88,000,000 for those purposes?

A “Yes” vote

Supports the allocation of \$88 million in proposed bond funds for Kirkwood Community College and their campus capital improvement projects.

A “No” vote

Opposes the allocation of \$88 million in proposed bond funds for Kirkwood Community College and their campus capital improvement projects.

Additional Information

- The proposed projects would add \$9.35 per \$100,000 annually in taxable property value to taxpayers.
- Under Iowa law, General Obligation Bond measures for major projects such as building construction, renovations, or land purchases must meet a higher approval threshold than a simple majority. **At least 60% of voters must vote “yes” for a bond referendum to pass.**
- More information on the Kirkwood Community College bond can be found [here](#).



Iowa Constitutional Amendment— Taxation Limitations

Summary

This proposed constitutional amendment would require a two-thirds vote, or supermajority, of both legislative chambers to pass any bill that would increase the individual or corporate income tax rate.

Full Text

Passage of a bill that increases the individual income tax rate or the corporate income tax rate, or the rate of any other type of tax based upon income or legal and special reserves, shall require the affirmative votes of at least two-thirds of the members elected to each house of the general assembly. This requirement does not apply to taxes imposed at the option of a local government. Passage of a bill that establishes a new tax on any type of income or legal and special reserves imposed by the state shall require the affirmative votes of at least two-thirds of the members elected to each house of the general assembly. A lawsuit challenging the proper enactment of a bill under this section must be filed no later than one year following the enactment. If such a lawsuit is not filed within the one-year limit, the bill shall be considered properly enacted under this section. Each bill to which this section applies must include a separate provision describing the requirements for enactment prescribed by this section. The general assembly shall enact laws to implement this section.

A “Yes” vote

Supports amending the state constitution to require a two-thirds vote in both chambers of the state legislature when passing a bill that would increase the individual or corporate income tax rate or create a new income tax.

A “No” vote

Opposes amending the state constitution, therefore maintaining the current requirement of a simple majority vote in both chambers to pass a bill increasing the individual or corporate income tax rate or creating a new income tax.

Additional Information

- Local option taxes would not need to be approved by a two-thirds majority.
- **A simple majority vote of over 50% of “yes” votes are required to pass statewide constitutional amendments.**
- More information on the statewide constitutional amendment can be found [here](#).



Rob Sand (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Iowa State Auditor

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What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I've released a number of plans throughout my campaign, including an "Opportunities for All" plan that supports small businesses by cutting bureaucratic red tape. As State Auditor, I made recommendations for a program to streamline application processes to better support our small businesses owned by women, veterans, and disabled Iowans. As governor, I would expand this program to ensure any Iowan who wants to start a small business has the support they need and the opportunity to succeed, especially in our rural communities. If Iowa's businesses succeed, our economy and our workforce succeeds. I want to make sure our state is the best place to work in and live in. Right now, Iowa is facing three crises: a crisis of costs, a crisis of cancer, and a crisis of corruption. If we want to be able to tackle those issues – and the many others that Iowa faces – we need our elected officials to be working for us, not powerful insiders or special interests. That starts with ending the two-choice system and implementing policies that rebuild trust and prioritizes accountability, like term limits, age limits, and making town halls mandatory for elected officials. It also means restoring the powers of the Auditor's Office so Iowans know their tax dollars are being spent wisely, and mandatory jail time for anyone abusing taxpayers. Addressing Iowa's cancer crisis is also a top priority, and I've released a comprehensive "Healthier Iowa for All" plan to clean up our water and bring down our cancer rates. It includes a number of proposals, including investing in water quality monitors, expanding conservation programs, and increasing wetlands and grazing lands. I've also called to end the privatization of Medicaid, which has been a disaster for patients, providers, and the state.



Rob Sand (D)



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Iowa State Auditor

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

After I was first elected as State Auditor in 2018, one of the first things I did was promote a Republican and an independent to senior leadership positions. Both had made campaign contributions to my opponent. Our office went on to recover a record amount of misspent money by working together. For me, it's never been about right versus left, but right versus wrong. Iowa has had a decade of one-party control, and look at where that's gotten us: we're at the top for cancer rates, middle of the pack in education, and bottom for income. We can do better, and Iowans deserve better. Our state has a rich history of divided government. It's time to get back to divided government in Iowa again. It's also time for our public servants to work for the people that elected them, not a party or political interest. We can do that by requiring them to hold town halls that are open to the public. Since first being elected, I've held 100 Town Halls each year so Iowans can voice their concerns, speak to me, and hear my thoughts. I think that part of the job is showing up, but too many politicians have forgotten that. I also want to implement approval voting, which would force our elected officials to work together more instead of attacking one another while Iowans are left behind. As governor, I'd have a bipartisan Cabinet to represent a wide array of views and ideas. I've said often: if it's a good idea that helps Iowans, I don't care where it comes from, and as governor, I'll work with anyone that wants to make Iowa better, healthier, and stronger.



Zach Lahn (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Businessman, Entrepreneur,
Farmer

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What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office and how will it benefit the business community?

Since winning the primary, I haven't stopped talking about four priorities: keeping Iowa's kids here, improving education, saving our family farms, and confronting Iowa's cancer crisis. That's because I believe getting these four things right will create an environment where Iowa families, and Iowa businesses, can thrive. First, we have to keep our kids here. Iowa businesses need workers, entrepreneurs, customers, and future leaders. That means making Iowa a more affordable place to buy a home, raise a family, start a business, and build a career. Second, we need an education system that prepares students for the real world. We should graduate young Iowans with the skills employers actually need, expand pathways into the trades and technical careers, and make sure businesses can find talented workers right here in Iowa. Third, we have to save the family farm. Agriculture remains foundational to Iowa's economy, but consolidation and rising costs are squeezing producers and hollowing out rural communities. I want Iowa to be a place where farmers can innovate, diversify, build new businesses, and pass their operations to the next generation. Finally, we must confront our cancer crisis. A healthy workforce is essential to a strong economy. We need independent research into what is driving Iowa's cancer rates, greater access to early detection, cleaner food and water, and policies that help Iowans live healthier lives.



Zach Lahn (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Businessman, Entrepreneur,
Farmer

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I don't believe good ideas become bad ideas because they come from the other party. As governor, my approach will be simple: know what you believe, listen to people who disagree, and stay focused on actually solving problems. I've tried to take that approach throughout this campaign. On Iowa's cancer crisis, for example, this shouldn't be a Republican or Democratic issue. I have been willing to work with farmers, doctors, researchers, environmental advocates, businesses, and families who may disagree with me on plenty of other issues. We may not agree on every potential cause or solution, but we can agree that Iowa's cancer rates demand serious attention, independent research, better prevention, and earlier detection. I've talked about putting a whiteboard in the Governor's Office with the most important measurements of whether Iowa is actually succeeding. Are more of our kids staying in Iowa? Are we creating more family farms instead of losing them? Are cancer rates coming down? Are Iowa families better off? That's how I run my businesses, and it's how I want to run state government. Too often, government measures success by how much money it spends, how many programs it creates, or whether one party got a political win. I want to measure results.



Josh Turek (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office
and how will it benefit the business community?

No answers provided

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration and encouraging
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Greater Iowa City, Inc. What is your approach in working with
people or groups that may disagree with your positions to
reach consensus? Please provide examples.

No answers provided



Ashley Hinson (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Member of Congress, formerly a state representative and news anchor at KCRG

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What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I want Iowa to remain a place where, if you work hard, take initiative, and have a good idea, you can still build a future for yourself and your family. I don't think the American Dream is gone, but I do think it feels further out of reach for too many Iowans right now. We're not going to fix that overnight, but we can start by getting back to common sense: letting small businesses thrive, not just survive, by cutting unnecessary red tape, continuing to lower taxes, and making it easier for people to build a good life. I have consistently fought to lower the burden on small businesses and their employees with policies like no tax on tips, no tax on overtime, and making the small business deduction permanent – empowering small business job creators and Iowa workers. I've also championed efforts to support Iowa's working families struggling with the high cost of housing and childcare, helping more families save tax-free for a down payment on a first home and ensuring they have access to quality, affordable child care. I will continue to prioritize these policies in the U.S. Senate.

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

I'll work with anyone to make life better and more affordable for Iowans. I ranked in the top 20% of House members for bipartisanship in the 119th Congress. Specifically, I've worked across the aisle on priorities that matter most to Iowans, including legislation to improve access to cancer screenings in rural communities, help make childcare more affordable, and support locally-led conservation practices to improve our soil health and water quality. I've also championed several bipartisan priorities that were signed into law by President Biden, including the Sergeant Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act to improve access to mental health care for veterans in rural areas, and the Maternal and Child Health Stillbirth Prevention Act, which expands access to resources to prevent the tragedy of stillbirth.



Thomas Laehn (L)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office
and how will it benefit the business community?**

No answers provided

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

No answers provided



Christina Bohannon (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Professor, University of Iowa
College of Law

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**What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office
and how will it benefit the business community?**

One of my biggest priorities in Congress will be to bring innovation, business opportunity, and economic growth to Iowa. Economic growth is the tide that lifts all boats by bringing good-paying jobs, critical services, and cultural enrichment to the area. I will work to incentivize innovation while ensuring healthy competition. Moreover, because government regulations can sometimes stifle business development, I will work to ensure that regulations are enacted only where necessary and that they are clear and easy to implement.

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

I am a strong supporter of bipartisanship and compromise. When I was in the Iowa House of Representatives, I worked across the aisle to pass several important laws, from cracking down on human trafficking to decreasing unnecessary business regulations. I am an independent-minded centrist who never agrees 100% with either party. I am a strong believer in sitting down and having a conversation with the other side – rather than criticizing them publicly – with a goal toward reaching compromise. Above all, I will work with anyone to improve the lives of the Iowans I represent.



Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Ophthalmologist, retired Army Lt. Colonel, and U.S. Representative for Iowa's First District

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I did my residency at the University of Iowa and spent decades as a doctor in southeast Iowa, so I know what keeps an employer up at night here: finding workers, finding housing for them, and paying for their health insurance. Those are the three things I want to keep fixing. Housing first. This summer I helped pass the housing law that cuts the red tape that slows homebuilding, keeps Wall Street investors from buying up neighborhoods, and builds more homes families can afford. Republicans and Democrats passed it together, and it is now law. More homes means Johnson County employers can hire people who can actually live here. Health care second. As a doctor, I watched premiums climb while middlemen marked up prescriptions. I wrote the bill the House passed to lower premiums, and part of it lets small businesses and the self-employed band together to buy coverage the way big companies do. I also brought Iowa \$209 million to keep rural hospitals open, because you cannot recruit to a town without one. Third, growth. The largest steel plant in American history is coming to Lee County, more than 1,700 permanent jobs, and I am proud to have helped make it a reality. I voted to speed up federal permitting so the next project does not wait years. And I have brought federal dollars straight home to Johnson County: \$2.5 million to finish Forevergreen Road in Coralville, \$1 million for the University of Iowa Flood Center, \$1.5 million for the university's space technology program, and \$1 million to fix the Highway 6 and Deer Creek Road intersection. I own no individual stocks, I answer to the people of this district, and I am asking for two more years to keep at it.



Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Ophthalmologist, retired Army Lt. Colonel, and U.S. Representative for Iowa's First District

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I was a soldier and a doctor before I ran for office, and neither one asks your party before helping you. You listen, find out what is wrong, and work with whoever is in the room to fix it. That is how I legislate. I will sit down with anyone, and I judge a bill by whether it helps Iowans, not by who wrote it. The record shows it. When the House voted to cap insulin at \$35 a month, I was one of twelve Republicans who voted yes, because I had watched patients ration it. Now I am leading a bill with Democratic Reps. Diana DeGette and Angie Craig to extend that cap to people with private insurance. With Democrats Terri Sewell and Raul Ruiz, I passed the law, signed this year, that lets Medicare cover a single blood test that can catch dozens of cancers early. The housing law I mentioned above passed the House 358 to 32 and the Senate 85 to 5, and I publicly urged the President to sign it. It is now law. Sometimes it means breaking with your own side. In September I was one of seven Republicans who joined every Democrat to pass the war powers resolution on Iran. I served 24 years in the Army. I said in March the mission had to stay focused and limited, and I will not keep our soldiers in an open-ended war without a plan from the President to win or get out. I also chair the Conservative Climate Caucus, which keeps Republicans at the table on energy, and we have found common ground on ethanol, nuclear power, and getting energy projects built faster. None of it required giving up my principles. It took showing up and listening.



Michael Bridgford (No Party)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Financial Advisor/Small
Business Owner

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

One of my primary goals is to replace Washington gridlock with fiscal discipline, economic predictability, and common-sense reform. For too long businesses have been forced to navigate volatile inflation and erratic trade policies caused by both parties. My priorities will benefit our business community in four ways:

1. **Lower Employer Healthcare Costs:** By mandating hospital price transparency and reining in the PBM industry, we can drive down health insurance premiums which are one of the single largest overhead burdens for businesses.
2. **Curbing Inflation with Fiscal Sanity:** Deficit spending fuels inflation and pushes interest rates higher, which stalls investment. I will push for single issue legislation to end thousand page omnibus spending bills. I will also work with both sides to find ways to cut spending and raise revenue to reduce our \$2 trillion deficit which adds to our \$40 trillion national debt.
3. **Regulating AI and Data Center Expansion:** Rapid AI advancements are taking the business community by surprise, in both positive and negative ways. I will push for smart regulatory frameworks that protect our economy, power grid, and water resources. Our businesses should not be saddled with higher bills to fund data centers. This is an issue where independent representation can lead the way by being free from Big Tech special interest funding.
4. **Enacting Congressional Reform –** Career politicians prioritize rewarding those that fund their campaigns rather than representing the people of their district. I will advocate for term limits, campaign finance reform, and new rules to set Congress up in a more bipartisan way to solve problems.



Michael Bridgford (No Party)



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As an Independent my approach to consensus is simple: I don't answer to a party boss or special interest donors. I only answer to the people of Iowa and will do what is best by them. By not having partisan obligations or pressures, collaboration becomes the standard as opposed to the exception. My sole focus will always be in a position where I can work with both sides to find common ground for legislation to move forward instead of the ever-changing Executive orders that we all have grown too accustomed to.

As someone who has spent their entire career in business, I know the norm is working through challenging problems by finding common ground which leads to compromise. No successful business operates in the way we see Washington today, with partisan gridlock and a party-over-country mindset.

As a financial advisor, I consistently work with clients to find consensus that helps them meet their financial and life goals. Previously I also worked in the logistics industry which demands constant consensus with ever evolving deadlines and priorities.

Leadership shouldn't be about winning an argument, it should be about delivering results. In Congress, I will proudly partner with anyone – Republican, Democrat, or Independent – who is ready to work together to solve problems.



Meghann Foster (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

As a former local elected official, I have firsthand experience with how the decisions made in Des Moines impact people at home. I want to restore respect for local control and make state government a partner to Iowa's communities. I've always believed that community development and economic development go hand-in-hand. This means investing in the resources and services that help people build good lives. Strong public schools, affordable housing and child care, accessible health care and mental health services, clean water, and quality of life initiatives provide opportunity for healthy economic growth.

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

I served eight years in a non-partisan office. This experience taught me that while leaders might have differences on certain issues, there are many areas of agreement. I learned a lot about how to find and work from common ground and leaned into my collaborative and relationship-building skills. Conflicts and disagreements are normal and while they can be uncomfortable, they can also be a catalyst for growth. I'm always willing to engage in good faith, challenging conversations to find solutions that benefit our communities.



Janice Weiner (D)



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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

My goal is first to continue to be accessible - to listen - so I understand what is needed and how the legislature can help - or frankly, get out of the way. The legislature does not need to micromanage every local government issue, nor curtail local control. I hope we can pass a bill to allow smaller population areas to have transportation authorities - which would create efficiencies and save money in Johnson County, for example, I would like to finally pass a bill to solve the short-term rental issue created during the 2020 COVID session. This has proven problematic for different towns and cities across the state and we should fix it - it would be an additional source of affordable housing and allow modest regulation by a city. If there are regulations that make no sense, let's get rid of them. My overall goal is to work with others to bring this state back to balance so it is a welcoming place for all, where everyone can thrive - including businesses - so we can have an easier time attracting businesses and talent to our communities.



Janice Weiner (D)



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

My rule number one is to listen and seek to understand. I can disagree with colleagues on some fundamental issues - and still work with them on matters that will benefit our state and our communities. It's important that I be able to lay that out in a way that others will listen. We've worked on housing and childcare issues. I've met with countless people at the Capitol (and closer to home). Most of the time you don't see that work because it goes on quietly, behind the scenes. I try to show up everywhere - not just in Iowa City or Johnson County, but at events and for other groups around the state - so I can listen and learn and build relationships, especially in areas where I am not particularly knowledgeable. And then I keep in touch with those people, whether they are school superintendents, farmers, business owners, or those involved in the non-profit sector - so I can get a reality check, see the bigger picture, and ask questions when issues arise. I have good relationships with counterparts in the legislature. I also see how not to govern, how not to treat someone. And if I think I can help - but it is better for someone else to take credit, or better to make it happen quietly - I'm fine with that, as long as it gets done. I did some of that behind the scenes work when I was on City Council as well - especially during COVID - talking with people from different governmental entities, the university, student government, public health - so we could all find a path forward.



Amy Nielsen (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office
and how will it benefit the business community?

No answers provided

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

No answers provided



Dave Jacoby (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office
and how will it benefit the business community?

No answers provided

Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration and encouraging
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Greater Iowa City, Inc. What is your approach in working with
people or groups that may disagree with your positions to
reach consensus? Please provide examples.

No answers provided



Elinor Levin (D)



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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

The importance of local independent businesses can be demonstrated in the numbers; in economic impact on the movement of money in our community; in direct sponsorships and partnerships with local nonprofits; and in the creation of quality, desirable jobs. Yet the real importance of local businesses is felt more than seen on paper; in the building of long-term, productive relationships that keep a place improving and serving its residents; in the tales of local eateries, arcades, and bookstores with something unique to offer. I will push for progressive taxation that ensures Iowans are not overburdened by state taxes. In addition, I will work to ensure that small businesses are incentivized to innovate while protecting their owners, employees, and Iowa's future. Long-term, Iowa's economic reliance on so few industries is hurting us more and more. I will fight to make Iowa a place where young people see a future for themselves, where they believe they can make a good life and feel a sense of community, to keep graduates here and incentivize people from other states to make Iowa their home.

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

I come to every discussion from a place of inquiry, meaning I tend to bring a lot of questions to the table and leave my assumptions behind. This has served me well in my time in the Legislature, particularly in subcommittees where, due to the current makeup of the legislature, a subcommittee is made up of 1 Democrat and 2 Republicans. Regardless of who my colleagues are on that committee, I take our role seriously and come prepared, fully understanding the bill before us and ready to discuss, whether I am initially supportive or initially unsupportive. I have been able to engage in real, productive conversations about potential legislation with my colleagues, and regularly to see legislation tabled (set aside) or improved through my work. Every member of the House was elected just as I was, and I see our responsibility as working together to select the best policies to improve the lives of Iowans.



Daniel Arch (No Party)



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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I would seek to enforce stricter laws on the use of eminent domain by private companies to strip private property away from individual's ownership, such as small farms, businesses, etc. Businesses in Iowa City are suffering from the homeless crisis affecting the southside and downtown. I hope to utilize state resources to help with the homeless crisis that negatively affects too many businesses in Iowa City. I will launch a state investigation into the mismanagement of taxpayer money in the Iowa City Community School District. This will benefit businesses which pay an increased amount in property taxes due to the financial negligence of the Iowa City Community School District.

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

I am an independent, I owe no party my allegiance or obedience. I can work with people from both sides of the aisle. In my time running as a candidate, I have already met with prominent party leaders from both political parties to talk about how we can bring positive change to Iowa City, and Iowa as a whole. I always listen to differing opinions than my own to see different perspectives on issues.



Adam Zabner (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Organizer and Data Scientist

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

In the Iowa legislature, I've stood up to the extremist takeover of our state, and I've won and delivered for working families. Despite the Republican trifecta in our state government, I have delivered real results. If elected to serve again, I pledge to continue that work to improve the quality of life for Iowans. When I found out that Kim Reynolds' Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) was denying Iowans on Medicaid their right under federal law to register to vote, I took them on and fought for Iowans. It took amendments, allies, speeches, and getting yelled at by the Iowa HHS Director Kelly Garcia. After months of fighting with the Reynolds Administration, we won, and in August 2024, the HHS finally caved and began including a full voter registration form in the Medicaid application as required by law. The results are stunning: Through this program, nearly ten times more Iowans on Medicaid are registering to vote. When I was first elected, many members of my party told me that working across the aisle was impossible. I did not listen to that advice. I'll work with anyone to help my constituents. Passing legislation to improve state park access for Iowans with disabilities required working with a Republican from one of Iowa's reddest districts. The number one concern I hear in our community is the rising cost of housing. I worked with a conservative Republican to introduce and pass into law zoning reform legislation that will increase housing construction and make housing more affordable. Our bill was supported (and opposed) by members of both parties. We have so much work to do on affordability, education, healthcare, and water quality. There is a raging debate in my party about whether Democrats should focus on fighting or consensus building. Most of my neighbors don't want political fights; they want results. Ten years into the GOP trifecta, clinics are closing, math and reading scores are down, our economy is struggling, and we face a cancer crisis. If given another term, my focus will be on delivering real change for Iowans.

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

I've worked across the aisle to pass legislation that really matters to Iowans on issues like housing affordability and state park accessibility. I'm also willing to put up a fight when our community needs it.



Mark Divitt (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Retired software engineer,
founder, EcolInference.ai

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I'd like to get three things done, and all three matter to anyone who runs a business here. The first is data centers. Iowa should want the investment, but the cost of new power plants built to serve these AI data centers shouldn't land on everyone else's electric bill. This year the House Commerce Committee voted 23 to 0 for a bill that would have put data centers in their own rate class so that cost stays with them. It never got a floor vote. Johnson and Linn counties each passed their own moratorium. I'm proposing an 18-month statewide moratorium, and I don't want it to simply run out. It should end when the rules on power costs, water use and air quality are actually written into law. The second is property taxes, and the habit Des Moines has of cutting a tax and leaving local government with the bill. In 2013 the state lowered commercial property valuations and promised cities and counties \$152 million a year to cover the gap. In 2021 the legislature voted to phase that payment out. There's also a credit for low-income homeowners and renters that has been in Iowa law since 1994 and has never paid a claim. The law itself sets \$27 million as the level that funds it fully. The Taxpayer Relief Fund earns about \$80 million a year in interest, so a third of the interest would cover it. The third is broadband. I spent forty years building systems that run on these networks, and a lot of rural Iowa still can't get a decent connection, whatever the coverage maps say. I'd push for state money that actually gets fiber to farms and small businesses. When the state makes a promise, it should pay for it.



Mark Divitt (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

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

I'd start with my opponent. Representative Lawler has been right about pipeline companies and eminent domain, and I've said so publicly. I'm a Democrat and proud of it, but when someone on the other side gets something right, I think you say so. Right to repair shows how much agreement already exists. When a combine breaks down in the middle of harvest, the farmer shouldn't have to wait days for a dealer to unlock the software before fixing equipment they already paid for. The Iowa House passed a right-to-repair bill 70 to 18 this year, with a Republican leading it, and it stalled in the Senate. I'd work with anyone in either party to get it the rest of the way. The data center bill is another one. It came out of the House Commerce Committee 23 to 0, which means Republicans and Democrats had already agreed on it, and it still never got a floor vote. Most of the hard part of reaching consensus was already done. When I disagree with someone, I try to figure out exactly what we disagree about, because in my experience it's usually narrower than it first looks. I spent forty years as an engineer, and the fixes that held up were the ones that worked for everybody who had to live with them. I think laws work the same way. It takes patience, and it means giving the other side credit when they've earned it. The people I'd represent don't live in a red Iowa or a blue Iowa. They live in Iowa.



Judd Lawler (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Stay-at-home father, retired attorney

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What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I want to make sure we have the best possible conditions in place to help Iowa businesses thrive in order to improve the jobs, products, and services that are available to all Iowans. Key issues include:

- **Workforce.** I have supported higher education programs that strive to connect students with the many jobs that are unfilled in our state. At the moment, many of those jobs are in fields like nursing or the trades. We need to monitor how workforce needs change over time and adjust accordingly. Housing is also an issue that I view as critical to workforce issues. I would like to see us simplify permitting processes and codes where it can safely and reasonably be done.
- **Innovation.** Creativity and entrepreneurial risk-taking are vital to Iowa's economic future and its ability to attract and keep the next generation here. So our startups and small businesses need access to capital. I will support policies that attract seed money, venture capital, and debt financing for start-ups and small businesses. That includes the continuation of tax credits that encourage business development as well as eliminating archaic regulation that hinders entrepreneurs.
- **Energy.** Nothing happens without energy. Energy policy can't be an afterthought, and it can't be dictated by NIMBYism. Every Iowa ratepayer depends on reliable and affordable energy. Demand in Iowa is increasing — particularly in the Corridor — so supply must keep up. If we block every attempt to increase supply, we're going to increase residential rates for everyone. Energy costs impact every business's bottom line, so if Iowa can achieve lower rates, our businesses will gain a competitive advantage.

It is important to hear from business owners about what's happening on the ground.



Judd Lawler (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Stay-at-home father, retired attorney

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

A few years ago, a long-time Iowa City businessman said to me, “It’s amazing how much success I’ve had in business just from getting along with people.” Wise words.

Collaboration and compromise are essential to commerce. It is not a dogmatic arena. Teddy Roosevelt provided one of my favorite quotes: “Do what you can, with what you’ve got, where you are.” We rarely do business or legislate in perfect conditions, so we must get the best result possible. Something is often better than nothing.

I started my legal career working on commercial matters, which, of course, involved a variety of agreements. Understanding the views of both parties is essential to reaching agreement. Clear communication is vital. If the parties establish some form of trust with each other, agreements form much more quickly. And we often said that if both parties were a little bit disappointed by the details of the final agreement, then it was probably fair.

I note, however — and as any businessperson already knows — there are a few people who simply will not work with you, and you have to walk away from them. You can’t let those folks prevent you from getting good work done with willing parties.

The Speed of Trust by Stephen Covey convinced me that not only does earning trust feel good, but it pays off in business. It eliminates hurdles, speeds up execution, reduces costs, and pays big dividends. I try to apply these principles in the legislature, although, admittedly, it is sometimes a more difficult arena in which to build trust.



Brittany Erickson (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

No answers provided

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

No answers provided



Heather Hora (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Farmer

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

My goal in office has always been to make Iowa a place where businesses of every size can grow, invest, and create good paying jobs. That means keeping taxes competitive, cutting unnecessary red tape, strengthening our workforce, and making sure government works with our businesses and not against them. When Iowa businesses succeed our communities benefit. I want to continue to support an environment where entrepreneurs are encouraged to take risks, existing businesses can expand, and the next generation sees Iowa as a place to build their future.

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

I believe good government starts with listening. We may not always agree on every issue, but that should never prevent us from being able to find common ground and work towards solutions that benefit Iowans. My approach has always been to treat people with respect, listen to their perspectives, and focus on the things we can agree on rather than allowing our differences to stop progress. I know from experience we can find some of the best solutions when legislators, local leaders, businesses and community members bring different experiences and ideas to the table. My record will show that I have cast many votes alongside members of both parties, many with unanimous bipartisan support. I will always stand by my principals, but I also know we are able to accomplish more when we are willing to work together.



Lisa Green-Douglass (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

The single-most pressing issue we face is growth, both a challenge and an opportunity. I'll address impacts of growth in 3 specific ways. First, we need to ensure sufficient housing to accommodate a wide variety of income levels. The Board of Supervisors has strong partners in the housing arena, including the Johnson County Affordable Housing Coalition and the Housing Trust Fund of Johnson County. They're doing the work of advocacy, education, and development. I'll continue grant support to these organizations. We're also providing smaller cities a way to lean on expertise in our Planning, Development, and Sustainability Department. With a plan to increase their affordable housing stock they can leverage funding options through the County. Step two is to support accessible affordable childcare solutions, which ensures that parents can remain in the workforce. Step three of managing growth responsibly is to improve water quality, an issue throughout the state. Our groundwater is contaminated with chemicals, both naturally occurring and from human actions. We can address some areas pertaining to water quality. The Conservation bond of 2024 will be used for acquisitions that clean and protect air, soil, and water. On a smaller scale, I've encouraged soil health programs because healthy soil leads to healthy, cleaner waters. I introduced the Pocket Prairie Program to Johnson County to educate participants about the importance of native plantings and their impact on soil and water. I will encourage our lobbyists to advocate for state support of and funding for water quality testing through strategically placed sensors. I support full funding of the Iowa Water and Land Legacy (IWILL) fund, established by constitutional amendment approved by two-thirds of voters. Through the Urban County Coalition I've encouraged support for watershed management authorities and local conservation partnerships. Our water is our future!



Lisa Green-Douglass (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

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

First and foremost is to communicate to find common ground. This is accomplished by clearly identifying the objective. The 'what' is easier to agree upon than the 'how'. Using data-driven information helps to increase a rational approach to achieving the goals of a project and it helps to reduce the emotional approach to decision-making. An example is the upcoming Sheriff's Office and Jail Facility bond that will be on the November ballot. The common goal that people on both sides of the issue have is a desire for public safety. I believe that people on both sides also understand the inadequacies of the current facility where our Sheriff's Office is housed as well as inmates who have been arrested and are incarcerated. There have been ample opportunities for people on both sides of the issue to voice their thoughts, concerns, and ideas about the proposed facility. With regard to the jail portion of the facility, we have provided the data that show how many people use the facility, how they get there, what happens when there is not room for them, how much it costs to house and feed them, how much it costs to transport them to other facilities when ours cannot accommodate them, what engineers, architects, and the state jail inspector have determined about the structural integrity of the current facility, and what it would cost to build a new facility. The architect's rendering of the proposed facility includes areas that many providers said would be helpful. These areas would allow community providers to consult with inmates and provide services to them that could ease their transition upon re-entry into the community. While decisions should be made based on data, in this particular case all we can do is provide those data to people with whom we disagree.



Gregory Erceg (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Retired Special Agent

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I'd like to bring new businesses into the county. Of course, since this is my first foray into politics, I'm not well versed in how to bring that about. I would like to establish a working relationship with Greater Iowa City, INC. to make that happen. One area I think would be worth exploring is to try and establish some type of relationship with the University of Iowa Physics and Astronomy Department. With the expertise there, I would think that there might be some students who may have not only the ability to come up with ideas that would be beneficial to the Space Program but perhaps would have some type of Entrepreneurial drive to make that happen. In short, I'd like to provide whatever help that is possible to aid in creating a diverse and vibrant business community.

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

I'm always willing to listen to any and all positions even if I disagree with any of them. If a cogent argument is made, I can be persuaded. With that said, I will always look out for the best interests of the taxpayers of Johnson County. As my background is not in business, I have no examples to provide.



Jon Green (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Supervisor At Large

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

Last year we hired our first economic development director, after piloting a similar position within GreaterIC. Sarah has been very successful in bringing a more hyperfocused degree of this work to our smaller communities, and I think that is generally the better approach for County government in terms of direct economic development. The metro area is well represented in that space, and I would continue to work with GreaterIC and the metro municipalities where there are areas to collaborate. The biggest direct economic development impact the County can have is through the construction of housing for our growing, graying, population. We have been very active in that space and I anticipate further work in the next 2-4 years; the County should have a hand in adding dozens of residences through land use policy and through the provision of technical and financial assistance to our smaller city partners..

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

I will work with anyone, and listen to anyone, and then I will make my decision. Once a decision is made by the Board, I work to ensure it comes to fruition, even if it isn't exactly (or even mostly) what I wanted. I think the jail proposal is as good an example as you will find. The need is real, everyone acknowledges that. Finding a proposal that is sufficient but not excessive has been a significant effort at building consensus where possible, and making difficult decisions when necessary.



Phil Hemingway (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Mechanic

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I hope to bring fiscal oversight and a blue-collar work ethic to the board. As a lifelong resident and small business owner, I know the challenges facing our community. Johnson County is one of the most expensive places in the State of Iowa to live in. It is important to do everything in our power to make it affordable for ALL of our residents..

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

I believe I am uniquely qualified having been elected to the ICCSD Board of Education as a registered Republican. Although these positions are considered non-partisan, we all know better that in Johnson County they are not. I provided fiscal oversight during the school district's largest bond issue at the time. Our budgets were balanced and we did not have millions of dollars missing. I worked with other board members to get FFA and Ag Education to get approved as a course of study. I was an advocate for career and tech education decades before it was vogue. I hosted, at my business, weekly discussion groups with anyone interested in discussing public education. I was approached by students, staff, and community members and was always open to hearing other views and opinions. On the school board, I was a strong advocate for Special Ed students and parents. I think any close examination of my school board service would show how I was able to work with others for the betterment of the community. It is okay to disagree as long as it is done with respect and an open ear to listen to other views and opinions. Regardless of how the vote turns out, once a decision has been made, every board member should work towards that goal.



Sue Dvorsky (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Retired

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I believe that the business community is looking for the same standards that benefit the non-profit sector and the general public: Predictable and transparent policies that are evenly applied in a “regular order” process. Of course, not every emergency can be anticipated. But recovery efforts are more successful when strong collaborative relationships have been nurtured before a crisis. Communities are strongest when the business sector is robust, the non-profit sector can rely on broad support, and elected policy makers provide as much predictability as possible to both. I believe that the Board of Supervisors would benefit from a public-facing discussion about policy development, budget and finance, and self-governance. A professional administrator must be part of that discussion. This issue was raised across every group of respondents during the recent strategic planning process. It deserves a thorough airing engaging multiple stakeholders. This is a central theme of my candidacy, and if I have the honor of serving, it will be a major focus of my time on the Board.

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

Civility, respect and working collaboratively toward consensus solutions must be an internal culture before it can be focused forward on any other stakeholders. Much of the work of any elected body is the management and approval of issues that are non-controversial in nature. I believe that the new system of representation by districts will necessitate conversation, discussion, and compromise to reach even the bare majority of three votes. Whoever sits on the Board in January of 2027 will be navigating uncharted territory. Between themselves, other electeds, department heads and staff, and most importantly, the residents of the County, there must be a commitment to respectful listening, thoughtful discussion, and transparent decision-making. A touch of humility wouldn't go amiss either. Issues that come before any elected body, by definition, do not have simple, or obviously correct, answers. If they did, they would have been solved already. It is difficult to make data-driven decisions if the decision maker's mind is made up. It's a big county. One size will not fit all solutions. And I know we can bring more voices into our conversations and decision-making.



Jennie Wunderlich (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

President/Co-Owner, PSC
Distribution & Studio H2O
Kitchen, Bath, and Lighting
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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I hope to bring the voice of a 4th-generation small-business owner to the board — perspective and experience on the revenue, expenses, and overall affordability of doing business in Johnson County. I also want to bring a rural voice to help raise agriculture concerns and bring more ag business folks into county discussions. I hope to foster more collaboration between departments, working with department heads and staff to find greater financial and operational efficiencies. Efficiencies that save money help prevent the need for additional tax dollars — and I have real hopes of decreasing taxes through a sharper focus on core services. Our rural businesses have paid a disproportionate share for non-essential services, including a 9.3% increase on rural commercial property this year alone. Productive conversations, a close look at budget line items, and sticking to the budget all help our businesses by making the county more attractive to new businesses and better at retaining the ones we have. We also have to make Johnson County more affordable for residents. As a small-business owner, I know firsthand how much it hurts businesses when there isn't attainable housing for employees. I hope to reduce regulations that don't affect health and safety so we can bring down the cost of homebuilding and remodeling. I also strongly believe we need a new law enforcement facility and jail. Businesses value a safe community — both to operate in and for their employees to live in — and I would work diligently toward a facility that meets our community's needs for decades to come.



Jennie Wunderlich (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

President/Co-Owner, PSC
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Kitchen, Bath, and Lighting
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Promoting bipartisanship and collaboration and encouraging our elected officials to work towards solutions is important to Greater Iowa City, Inc. What is your approach in working with people or groups that may disagree with your positions to reach consensus? Please provide examples.

I have found great joy in working with people with different perspectives and experiences, and I've repeatedly worked with people over the years with varying viewpoints to work towards solutions. I greatly enjoy serving on the Executive Council for Greater Iowa City Inc. and the Board of Directors of the Iowa City Area Homebuilders Association, along with other subcommittees of those organizations. All of those groups have included people with differing viewpoints, whether political, economic, religious, or social. While in leadership in those organizations, I made sure to ask questions, listen to understand, and facilitate healthy dialogue around tough topics. The greater missions of a better community and better housing drove the conversations and helped keep us unified, even when we had points of disagreement. I enjoy being a bridge between organizations and people of differing opinions, finding common ground and bringing positive leadership and humor when possible to bring people together. I strive to lead with a positive attitude that's respectful in communication and deed. We can disagree without being disagreeable, and I seek to bring people together around common missions with purpose, respect, and a willingness to serve others with hard work and dedication.



V Fixmer-Oraiz (D)



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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

One of my core beliefs is that our lives are improved when we have a diverse community that feels a sense of belonging. My planning firm created the Inclusive Economic Development Plan for Johnson County, which is a Better Together 2030 pillar of work. Removing barriers for Underestimated/ Historically Excluded (U/HE) business owners is key to making sure that our economic ecosystem thrives. To accomplish this, I have been working with a group of local business owners/leaders to create a fund to help support U/ HE businesses that are intended to be led by and serve U/HE community members. I will continue to seek creative and effective ways to increase access, remove barriers, and make Johnson County a more inclusive and diverse business ecosystem.

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

My approach to consensus building is to increase the number of stakeholders at the table. When we have more voices represented, we are prone to seeking common ground and creating empathy, which ultimately results in more creative solutions that benefit everyone. My practice is to identify community stakeholders and create a space for them to have facilitated conversations that reach decision makers and effect policy. Here are a few examples I have helped create:

The Johnson County Transgender Advisory Committee (TAC) is led by and for the people it serves. The TAC provides recommendations to the Board annually.

The Disability Advisory Committee provides input for development and programmatic aspects of the Johnson County Historic Poor Farm.

Affordable Housing leadership meetings that include non-profits that serve immigrants and people with disabilities, as well as co-housing leaders and organizations who serve unhoused community members. These meetings are aimed at identifying gaps in service and creative solutions for the diversity of vulnerable groups who need housing in our community.



Wanda Foster (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Associate Professor,
Management

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

Wanda Foster, Candidate Johnson County Supervisor, will narrow the gap between what our residents need and what the county can provide through efficient county government, fiscal responsibility, and public safety. The business community will benefit from county services when the Board takes action in only the areas that it is empowered to serve, <https://johnsoncountyiowa.gov/board-of-supervisors/about>. Deviation from these County responsibilities is beyond the scope of our Board. Efficient county government impacts business by assisting current and encouraging future business growth. From my corporate and academic business experience, it is vital that processes in our county are managed effectively and our results are in line with what Johnson County residents need most. Importantly, duplication of services both internally and externally must be addressed. Collaboration between business and county government is essential and must run smoothly without unnecessary mandates and protocol. Examples for business outcomes include; proactive plans for improvement of county roads and infrastructure, and revision of licensing and zoning applications for timeliness, accessibility, and affordability. These improvements serve as a foundation to build an environment attractive to current and future business in Johnson County. Fiscal responsibility in county tax levies and spending must be prioritized to first cover essential county objectives and needs. The Board needs to demonstrate publicly how funds are spent in a manner that all can understand. The budget must be examined for overlap of services as well as, the expansion into areas superfluous to Johnson County needs. An important outcome for fiscal responsibility is reinstating a document, formerly a budget book, so residents and businesses can review tax levies and how funds have been allocated. Public safety is essential to our residents and the business community. Established business will exit and new business starts will be stifled when a county lacks safety and emergency services. The same situation is true with our county population. Residents are essential to support local business. Our county protects the rights of our business and residents by encouraging good citizenship while discouraging and penalizing unlawful behavior. An outcome for public safety is making teamwork between the Board and the Sheriff's office a priority.



Wanda Foster (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

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

It is difficult to approach bipartisanship and collaboration in Johnson County when our representation is on one side of the political aisle. A major reason for my candidacy is that different voices will be represented in county government to provide a balanced approach to the concerns of the business community. Collaboration begins with an openness to various views and respectful dialog on contentious issues. I belong to a bipartisan group, Braver Angels, which meets locally to better understand each other and practice civility to find common ground; <https://braverangels.org/>. This experience for working through differences, I will bring to the County Board. To apply bipartisanship and collaboration in Johnson County, the county jail issue is appropriate. Most businesses and residents agree that our county must plan for future growth, be responsible with our resources, and protect public safety. These points can be used to establish common ground for dialog to find solutions. Digging into one side versus another is destructive to the future of our county. As a County Supervisor, I will listen to our business community and residents. I will take their views to board meetings to find the common ground for Johnson County's plan for future growth, responsible use of resources, and overall public safety.



Mandi Remington (D)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Johnson County Supervisor

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

I want to help build a Johnson County where people can meet their basic needs, easily participate in their local government, and be part of a community that brings people, ideas, and resources together to solve problems and create opportunities. That starts with responsible investment in the basics people and businesses rely on every day- roads, infrastructure, and public services. I want us to plan ahead, make smart investments, and be good stewards of taxpayer dollars rather than waiting for problems to become more expensive emergencies. That means thinking long-term about protecting our water quality and building our climate resilience so that our communities remain healthy and strong for generations to come. I also want to expand practical community resources that make us safer and more resilient in other ways. Expanding community responder capacity and adding field mediation will give residents and businesses more options when they encounter difficult situations. A lot of our residents continue to struggle with access to housing and other basic needs, and addressing those problems is one of my top priorities. Employers have a stronger and more stable workforce when their employees can access the services they need and afford to live in the communities where they work.



Mandi Remington (D)



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

My approach to working through disagreement is to be clear about where I stand, listen seriously to people with other viewpoints, and look for places we can progress together. A good example is the work I have led around community responders and field mediation. I've brought together people with very different perspectives on public safety- including law enforcement, behavioral health providers, victim-service organizations, and community advocates- to work on these issues together. For most of this year we have met every week or two to develop practical approaches to situations that don't require a traditional law enforcement response. That work is helping us develop field mediation protocols and expand local community responder capacity. For local businesses, that means having more options and more resources when encountering challenging situations, including behavioral health or interpersonal conflicts. I don't expect people with fundamentally different perspectives to agree on everything. And that kind of conflict can actually be a good thing- because it is often through disagreement that we identify potential problems, challenge our assumptions, and come to better solutions. Therefore, bringing people with different experiences and priorities together makes it possible to build something stronger than engaging with any one perspective could produce on its own. For me, collaborating across differences means staying engaged deeply enough and long enough to do that work- and being willing to recognize a good idea when it comes from someone who I don't always agree with.



Donna Dane (R)



CANDIDATE OCCUPATION

Former Business Owner,
Now Retired

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What do you hope to accomplish during your term in office and how will it benefit the business community?

My goal is to be fiscally responsible for how we spend our property tax dollars. I hope to reduce regulations, lower property tax, and encourage free market enterprise. Financially, the Board of Supervisors are responsible for rural roads and bridges and essential services such as Jail, Sherriff's office and emergency management.

I hope to benefit the business community in three ways. 1) Cut back on regulations and red tape to allow free market enterprise so businesses can compete, 2) Build roads and infrastructure. They attract business. 3) Lower property tax (reduce tax levy rates). Achieving these goals will allow capitalism to thrive.

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

I'm ready to listen knowing that we all have different opinions. In the end, it is the final vote that counts. That's why we have the freedom of speech and other freedoms protected by our Constitution. It's called representative government.

Event though we have differences, let's focus on what we can agree together. My approach would be to take all side into consideration and identify fundamental goals we share. We all desire safe communities, reliable infrastructure, and financial integrity.

An example would be addressing local economic growth, and infrastructure. Top down government mandates use regulations while other integrate free market principles. By focusing on what we do agree – we all want Main Street to thrive – we can cut red tape to help entrepreneurs open faster.

Public safety is another concern we share. Some would want to attach regulations in addition to the emergency services needed. Other seek emergency management free from entanglements. The bottom line is to agree on the transparent fact finding needs that are presented that will make those services work best for us.