

1. The City is a large and complex organization; tell us about your experience and how it has prepared you to successfully oversee city operations.

Lincoln has not been immune to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some residents have lost their businesses, others lost jobs or childcare, and sadly some have succumbed to the virus. Lincoln needs strong, experienced leadership so that we can recover from the pandemic, continue to move the city forward and improve our quality of life.

During my eight years of service on the city council, I have worked through multiple budget cycles and countless issues big and small, served with more than a dozen different council members and two different mayors and their staffs. In addition, my experience as a small business owner responsible for customer care, marketing, and meeting a payroll as well as my time in the U.S. Army has exposed me to organizations small and large. I understand how the decisions we make at city hall impact the individuals, families, businesses, churches and non-profits that call Lincoln home.



Roy Christensen

As the longest serving member of the council, and with a majority of the council having served less than two years, I bring a degree of institutional knowledge and history on city issues that provides an important perspective for our growing and changing city.

2. Lincoln is a growing and vibrant community with citizens engaged in varied interests and pursuits; how will you bring disparate groups together to build consensus? How will you set a standard for civility?

Mayor Chris Beutler and I worked for about 18 months to craft a consensus on a sales tax to fund streets. What began as a conversation in the Mayor's conference room expanded into a city wide discussion involving many community groups including the Chamber of Commerce. Many compromises were discussed and some were agreed upon. In the end it was Mayor Beutler and I making a final compromise over lunch. That final compromise for the ¼ cent sales was then presented to the voters and ultimately approved. This is the single biggest consensus building issue that I have been centrally involved in from beginning to end. I'm proud of the work that went into it and the end result.

Another consensus building measure was my introduction and implementation of PACE to city ordinance. I will address that further in another response. Although individuals and groups may disagree on a number of issues, it is important to remember that we all want the same thing: for Lincoln to thrive.

Consensus can best be achieved when all sides are heard and listened to. Intensive and transparent public comment, discussions, and community engagement is necessary to build consensus. The people of Lincoln, regardless of their political affiliations or policy beliefs, do not lack civility. As long as the community is brought together in a fair and respectful way, and leaders objectively listen to both sides to strive for a solution, consensus is not only possible, but likely.

3. The Citizen's Transportation Coalition recommended and voters approved an increase in the local option sales tax to help finance Lincoln's streets infrastructure needs. Are you supportive of the quarter-cent sales tax and Advisory Committee on Transportation?

Yes, I am supportive of the quarter-cent sales tax and the Advisory Committee on Transportation. I am proud that Mayor Chris Beutler and I were the architects of the quarter-cent sales tax. It is an effective way to generate funding needed to maintain Lincoln's roads.

Roads help fuel our city's growth and quality of life. We need to ensure that our roads and transportation infrastructure are properly maintained, and new roads are built, in order to sustain Lincoln's growth. Damaged roads deteriorate further over time if left without repair, and the cost of repair will only continue to rise while quality of life slips. Repairing roads in a timely manner decreases the overall costs of upkeep and allows the city to invest in additional maintenance each year.

4. What strategies would you pursue to keep the city affordable to live in?

Lincoln's quality of life is our postcard to the world. One of the things that makes our community so attractive to long-time residents and newcomers alike is affordability.

First we have to keep the city's tax burden low by setting spending priorities. Smart investments today in infrastructure and priority city services including public safety, will lessen the need for more costly expenditures later.

Second we must examine all city permit and inspection processes as well as fees to ensure the city is delivering necessary services efficiently and effectively at the lowest reasonable cost.

Next not only do we need affordable housing options, but we just plain need housing options. We have to explore opportunities to work with developers to reduce land costs, lower housing infrastructure costs, and make sure the city is a partner and not an impediment to housing development.

5. Lincoln is expected to receive additional revenue from casino gambling revenue. What should the City of Lincoln do with the additional revenues?

In the wake of voter approval of initiatives 429, 430 and 431 last November, Lincoln will host a casino and will collect increased tax revenue from its operations. A small portion of the revenues should be used annually to study the social impacts of casino gambling. The study should look at crime, addiction, domestic violence, etc. Results would then be used to direct allocation of dollars toward identified needs. The balance of the revenue should be used to address public safety priorities including adding more police, raising wages and benefits for police to help with retention, and replacing outdated fire equipment.

6. What do you see as the City's role in retaining incumbent businesses and attracting new businesses and employees?

As a business owner myself, I understand the challenges and choices the business community faces every day. If re-elected, I will continue to support local businesses and continue to be a strong voice on the city council for our hundreds of small businesses. City Hall has to make our existing businesses feel wanted and prospective businesses feel welcome. Leadership from city hall must be working with our business leaders and owners, at their places of business seeing and hearing about their challenges and opportunities for the future. The city has to be an aggressive partner with the business community because it's the right thing to do and because it's what other communities are doing. We have to compete regionally, nationally and globally to keep existing employers and attract new job creators. Without a strong partnership neither the city nor our business community will meet their potential.

7. What will you do to drive innovation in the Lincoln community?

Lincoln is home to manufacturing, transportation, financial services and other companies that have been part of our community for decades and they've all had to innovate and evolve over time. Add to that the tech companies and start-ups that have sprouted in the last few decades. We are doing a lot of good things as a community but we can always do better.

First, city hall has to be a front and center partner with the private sector and education, leading the parade when that is what is needed and wanted. Second, when the city just needs to get out of the way or deliver on a street improvement or approve a time-sensitive permit then that's what we need to do.

Our city needs to be forward-thinking about programs and incentives we can offer to encourage innovation, investment and job creation. In 2018, I introduced Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing to Lincoln, a bi-partisan measure which allows a special privately-funded financing mechanism to pay for the energy efficiency components of commercial construction projects. Over \$12.7 million in PACE projects have been approved in Lincoln, supporting job creation and investment while promoting energy efficiency.