



presented by the Pullman Chamber Government Affairs Committee

Pullman Chamber of Commerce

Candidate Questionnaire

2023

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What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful mayor?

My leadership experience and community connections will make me a valuable and successful mayor. This includes my experience on Pullman's city council, my long-term involvement in the community, the relationships I have developed with community leaders through working with them on community projects, and my understanding of other Washington communities. I have served 13+ years on Pullman's city council and understand mayoral time commitments along with what is expected and city processes. Heidi and I have lived in Pullman for over 35 years, we raised our family here, started a business, and are very involved in the community. My service as co-chair of Pullman 2040, on the boards/leadership of the Pullman Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, Pullman Community Council on Aging, One Palouse, Town Gown, Downtown Pullman Association and Innovia along with volunteering for many other community organizations gives me broad insight into the community and experience promoting community desires. My service on the board and as president of Association of Washington Cities provided connections and insights into other communities and how Pullman compares. As a result, I have identified areas where Pullman should improve, what connection and resources are needed, and have developed plans to make these improvements.

**FRANCIS BENJAMIN****What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?**

It is important for the city to be actively engaging in and investing in the economic development of the Pullman community. For too long, our downtown's standard has been based on another community. When I was growing up, the roles were reversed, and Pullman set the standard. It is time for Pullman to set the bar once again, not just with our downtown but in all areas of economic development.

The city's involvement needs to include a developed long-term economic development vision and plan which includes the support and involvement of the mayor and staff working to advance the plan, economic development projects, and public private partnerships. In parallel to the economic development plan, there also needs to be continued investment in the underlying supportive infrastructures structures which include multimodal transportation networks able to handle traffic demands, completion of the downtown project to promote downtown vibrancy, development of a transportation by-pass to reduce downtown congestion, and a long-term sustainable water supply. The city should also be actively engaged in and connected with the various entities actively supporting community economic development.

I have already taken leadership in this area through:

Supporting the completion of the Downtown Project

Working to improve Wayfinding

Leading the Pullman Downtown Association's Economic Vitality Committee

Current and past leadership on the Pullman Chamber, One Palouse, Southeast Washington Economic Development Association, Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization, and Be The Entrepreneur Bootcamp

Being a business advisor for Cougar Solutions and High School Students.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

Completion of the downtown project to promote downtown vibrancy

The first phase is on track for implementation during 2024. I will work for downtown businesses to minimize construction impact while keeping the project on track.

Advancing a transportation bypass to reduce downtown congestion

We won't fully solve the downtown issue without advancing a bypass. This will be a significant project similar to the airport. We need to first identify the preferred route, make sure the community supports the route plan, and then focus on funding and implementation.

Identifying and implementing solutions for a long-term sustainable water supply

Right now, the city's community focus is on conservation education and implementation. Conservation won't solve the issue by itself, but an alternative water supply is also needed. The Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee is narrowing down preferred water supply options. As Mayor, I will be actively involved in this process.

Growing our multimodal transportation networks to handle traffic demands

Our community members don't restrict themselves to just driving and our transportation efforts need to ensure we focus on all modes of transportation.

Development of College Hill Safe Routes

I am working with the Town Gown, College Hill Association, and WSU to identify non-vehicular college hill routes. The next step is to evaluate the routes to ensure there is adequate lighting, safety, infrastructure, and then develop a plan to provide the necessary upgrades to these routes. Once College hill is complete, we will then implement a similar process for the rest of the community.

What will you do as mayor to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

We are in a society often divided into opposing groups which at the state and national level do all they can to attack and tear each other down. I don't feel that this should be the norm for our community. For Pullman to thrive we need to get to know our neighbors, appreciate the experiences and value that each person brings to our community, focus on the areas and issues which we have in common, and come together and jointly tackle our community challenges.

Areas which I have already taken leadership to promote community and a welcoming atmosphere include:

Pullman 2040
Pullman 2040 Welcoming Committee
Pullman Young Professional
3 Forks River & Arts Festival
Pullman Hill Parties
Collaborative Civility Research

As mayor, I will also advance community and welcoming through:

Increasing Community Senior and Young Professional Amenities and Activities
Improving the City's Customer Service Orientation
Developing a Downtown Community Gathering Space
Advancing Pullman Rail Banking to Expanding Pedestrian and Bicycle Access, North Parks, and Playfields
Support the community nonprofits who are also working to advance community and welcoming

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

People want to live in a vibrant community with growing businesses which support their shopping, restaurant, entertainment, service, housing, and cultural desires. To achieve this requires community leadership which supports, encourages, and invests in the business community and overall quality of life. You can tell when you are in a supportive community, and I want to grow this for Pullman.

As mayor, I will also focus on:

Increasing Attainable Housing Options
Investment in Business Economic Systems
Development of a Business Support Toolbox
Continue the 3 Forks River & Arts Festival
Develop a Community Creative Arts District
Enhance Public Art and the Performing Arts
Advance a 150th City Anniversary Art Project

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful mayor?

With 38 years as a dedicated schoolteacher, I deeply value each individual, regardless of their background, enriching our collective experience through diversity. My commitment to inclusivity extends beyond the classroom; 13 years of fostering exposed me to diverse realities. I also bring 17 years of successful downtown business ownership, providing insights into unique business concerns. I offer full-time dedication, prioritizing accessibility and responsiveness to represent Pullman effectively at all levels.

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

A thriving community relies on the businesses that make it an attractive place to live. As mayor, in partnership with our city's economic developer, I intend to foster collaboration with key stakeholders like the Pullman Chamber, WSU, the Downtown Pullman Association, and major employers. Our collective goal is to attract businesses that align with our town's culture and meet its specific needs. To ensure the success of our existing businesses and the integration of new ones, our community must rally behind them through various support measures. This includes streamlining and clarifying the regulatory framework to create a welcoming environment for both current and prospective businesses.

I am committed to enhancing Pullman's business-friendly atmosphere, emphasizing accessibility and responsiveness to address concerns promptly. This proactive approach will not only benefit our local businesses but also strengthen our community as a whole.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

A robust city plan must allocate funds for infrastructure growth and maintenance well in advance of population growth. Long-term planning, including the creation and upkeep of roads, sidewalks, water/sewer systems, electricity, transportation, and personnel, is crucial for Pullman's success.

As mayor, I will prioritize population and housing growth, which will inform our plans for a new fire station and the necessary space and staffing for firefighters, EMTs, and police officers. This proactive approach ensures we're prepared for the city's evolving needs.

I am dedicated to accessibility and responsiveness, ensuring that the community's concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

What will you do as mayor to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

A genuinely welcoming community starts at the neighborhood level, and, as mayor, I am committed to fostering this sense of belonging:

1. *Know Your Neighbors:* Do you know your neighbors? Can you count on someone from your core block if you need assistance? It's essential to build these connections.
2. *Engage with Seniors:* Identifying and supporting seniors in your neighborhood is crucial for their well-being and community cohesion.
3. *Welcome Newcomers:* Welcoming WSU students, faculty, and new families to our town is a priority. I will organize city welcoming events to show appreciation for their presence.
4. *Support Local Activities:* I will actively support downtown First Fridays and community-oriented events, being present, accessible, and responsive to community needs.

In all our actions, as individuals, businesses, and as a city, we must express gratitude for people and businesses choosing Pullman. Our community's warmth begins in our neighborhoods. Together, we can genuinely say, "Welcome to Pullman, We're glad you are here!"

I am dedicated to accessibility and responsiveness, ensuring that the community's voice is heard and valued.

**DEB MCNEIL**

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

1. *LIVE*: Addressing traffic concerns on Main and Grand and other traffic issues is a priority. We'll work to make housing more affordable, ensuring that our community remains accessible to all. Our commitment is to develop meaningful and long-lasting welcoming initiatives. We'll plan outreach programs to educate our residents on how city government benefits everyone, encouraging civic engagement.

2. *WORK*: Supporting young professionals returning to Pullman and seeking opportunities to give back is essential. We'll actively advocate with the state legislature, recognizing the unique challenges of being a border city with distinct employment dynamics. We will celebrate the contributions of those who work here, regardless of where they reside.

3. *BUSINESS*: We'll evaluate and improve the process for starting businesses in Pullman, ensuring a welcoming environment where business owners feel respected and supported. Our focus will be on attracting businesses aligned with our community's culture and values, with a particular emphasis on those that use minimal water resources for production.

A thriving community hinges on an accessible and responsive mayor who actively engages with residents' concerns and needs.

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

I have been a council member since January 2016. The experience I have gained during 2 terms has been invaluable and includes learning how the city operates, building positive relationships with our city staff, listening to residents' concerns and working toward resolution by connecting those who can help with those who need it, and understanding how issues like development affect many different areas in our community. Our residents don't always know the limitations or challenges that exist with a project or issue, and it is my job to help them understand the framework in which we need to work. I have experience in decision-making, and I know that decisions made by the council may not please everyone. In reaching these decisions, though, we need to always consider and take seriously the thoughts and opinions of a variety of people. And when we make a decision that is not what someone hoped we would do, we need to try our best to explain why we decided as we did.



**ANN PARKS
WARD 1**

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

I see city government as a partner with business owners, landowners, the Chamber, WSU and the Downtown Pullman Association in economic development. We represent the city's residents and ensure that citizen interests and concerns are considered in the economic development process. All entities involved deserve to be heard, and we have to work together to do what is best for most in our community. During my tenure on Council, the City created an Economic Development position, and this person is instrumental in assessing the current business environment and looking for opportunities to expand and attract businesses to our area. They also work closely with consultants who are hired to gather information which helps guide the decisions that come before the Council. The City is also invested in the Downtown Pullman Association, both financially and with a member of the Council on the DPA board. I presently hold that position. I have always had a strong interest in economic growth and providing opportunity for business, especially small business, so involvement with DPA is particularly meaningful for me. I have worked for large corporations as well as single-proprietor businesses and have a good understanding of the needs of each.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

My priority is to continue to support the infrastructure projects the city currently has as well as future projects. These include, but are not limited to, completion of the airport terminal project as well as future growth if needed, continued support of our police and fire units including future growth and improvement of existing facilities when feasible, supporting our transit operations to ensure service is available to as many residents as possible including our Dial-A-Ride service, and supporting our maintenance and operations staff in their work providing essential services and keeping our infrastructure safe and updating as needed. I believe that 'supporting' infrastructure is not equivalent to always pouring more money into infrastructure. Infrastructure occasionally requires investment, to improve, expand, and repair, and through sound financial planning, we are usually able to address these needs. Otherwise, I believe that infrastructure is best supported by championing its value, educating myself and others about its operations, encouraging outreach by the providers, and being actively engaged in learning about new developments.

What will you do as a council member to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

I believe community events are a great way to bring citizens together and extend greetings to new residents. I have worked the Lentil Parade and Festival for many years and I love connecting with people who I haven't seen in a while and meeting new people who want to know about life in Pullman. I enjoy the Pullman Farmer's Market and I promote it to my friends and co-workers. I am interested in creating additional community events such as the

3 Forks River and Arts Festival that can be held downtown or in one of our beautiful parks. I annually attend the Association of Washington Cities meetings and I like to talk to representatives of other Pullman-sized towns about the events that they stage in their communities. If I am re-elected, I would love to try to develop a few of these ideas for Pullman.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

I will continue to advocate for all our community has to offer. From our library to our Downtown businesses, to employment opportunities throughout our city, our beautiful parks and our excellent school district, I believe in the exemplary quality of life we have here in Pullman. I regularly share information about events in our community, and I enjoy providing information to those who are new to town.



**CARLA MARCELA DELIRA
WARD 2**

No response before deadline

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

I ran for Pullman City Council at 26 and have now served our citizens and community for almost 16 years. I am as excited now as the first day, but a little wiser, having learned from everyone I met over the years. I have served in various leadership roles and volunteered with local, regional and state organizations. I have advocated for economic development, entrepreneur training, science and technology research, education, sustainability, homelessness, poverty assistance, mental health training, and other important issues but my list is too long to include here. I currently serve on the City of Pullman Volunteer Firefighters & Reserve Officers Board, Law Enforcement Officers & Firefighters Disability Board, Palouse Discovery Science Center Board, WSU Institutional Biosafety Committee, member of the Pullman/WSU (Town/Gown) Collaborative Group, Pullman 2040 Steering Committee and Welcoming Committee, Whitman County Suicide Prevention Taskforce (Resilient) and I'm a certified QPR Gatekeeper Instructor, helping to prevent suicide in our region. Other than my volunteering I run a recreational paintball business and a consulting business. I also earned a Bachelor's in Psychology from WSU and Master's in Bioregional Planning and Community Design from the University of Idaho. Pullman is undergoing tremendous change and I look forward to serving during this dynamic period in our community.



NATHAN WELLER
WARD 2

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

The topic of economic development is very extensive and has changed significantly over the years. City governments can assist in retention, recruitment, providing communication and streamlining business requirements for development and regulations. The city can help economic development by providing infrastructure extensions and improvements, zoning, permit and regulatory assistance. I believe working closely and communicating with the business sector is important to determine what practices are preferred or most effective, while looking at other communities for successes.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

Road maintenance cost is currently outpacing our budget and we are actively seeking new funding sources. I have advocated that we need to rate our paved areas and address repairs in a data driven "needs and use based" way, instead of our traditional practice of rotating repairs, thereby avoiding wasting resources on areas where they are not needed. Beyond this, rail lines inside city limits should be converted to trails and emphasis on our waterways will provide additional lifestyle draws for our city. The Downtown core is of utmost importance along with an alternate route for heavy truck traffic to redirect around the downtown area, creating a more walkable and pleasant atmosphere.

What will you do as a council member to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

I have always believed that it's important to attend local events ceremonies, celebrations, and shop local businesses. I enjoy attending events that are often underrepresented or need a little more attention and help. I also seek out some of the groups and organizations that are newer or not as well-known so that I can gain a little more insight into our ever-changing community. As councilmembers we should be sharing this information on social media and in person while answering questions and concerns and providing a positive supportive atmosphere for everyone. It's important for me to encourage, grow and advise new groups and leadership in our city and region, many community members have great ideas but can feel discouraged, left out or forgotten as I have on many occasions. Furthermore, I believe in regional collaboration and working across borders for the

betterment of all of us, we can collaborate and compete at the same time, showcasing all our cities through a regional lens. Lastly, I remain open and available for anyone to contact me at all hours and days.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

Over more than a decade I have often advocated for projects that were a little “before their time” at the city. Some have included advocating for social media communication in 2008 when I was first on Council, or GIS in 2012, or a warming shelter in 2018. I make it a point to find opportunities and successes that we can try here, even if it takes a little longer to find how to make it work for our community. My current priorities include increasing housing options and availability, mental health and QPR training for all, advocating for and creating a VA satellite location in Pullman and utilizing Blue Zone research and the organization to create a healthier retirement, and longer-lived population in Pullman.

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

My experience as a multi-business owner in Pullman for the past decade has given me a deep understanding of the economic and social dynamics of our town. I've seen firsthand the challenges that businesses face, especially when it comes to navigating local regulations and accessing resources. This experience has taught me the importance of a business-friendly environment and the need for proactive support from the local government.

In addition to my business background, my three years of volunteering as an EMT in the Seattle area and my active involvement in the Pullman community have given me insights into public service and community needs. These experiences have honed my ability to work under pressure, collaborate effectively with diverse groups of people, and prioritize the well-being of residents.

My candidacy isn't just about political ambition; it's about using my multifaceted experience to make a tangible and positive impact on Pullman. I bring a unique combination of business acumen, community service, and a deep love for our town to the table, making me well-equipped to serve as a council member.



CJ ROBERT
WARD 3

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

The role of city government in economic development is multifaceted. It involves creating an environment where businesses can thrive while also addressing the needs and aspirations of the community. My vision for Pullman is to ensure that city government plays an active role in economic development by:

Supporting Local Businesses: I believe in providing local businesses with the tools and resources they need to succeed. This includes streamlining permitting processes, reducing unnecessary red tape, and offering incentives for job creation.

Attracting New Industries: Pullman can diversify its economic base by attracting new industries that align with our strengths and resources. I'll work to identify sectors with growth potential and promote Pullman as an attractive destination for these businesses.

Encouraging Entrepreneurship: Nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship is vital. I'll advocate for programs and resources to support startups and small businesses, creating opportunities for innovation and job growth.

Investing in Infrastructure: Economic development requires adequate infrastructure. I'll prioritize investments in roads, utilities, and technology to make Pullman an appealing place for businesses to establish and grow.

Community Engagement: Engaging the community in economic development planning is essential. I'll hold regular public forums and seek input from residents to ensure that our economic strategies align with their values and priorities.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

Pullman's infrastructure is the backbone of our community, and it's essential to maintain and improve it to meet the needs of our growing town. My top infrastructure priorities are:

Roads and Public Transportation: Pullman's roads need upgrades to accommodate increased traffic. I'll work on securing funding for road improvements and explore options for enhanced public transportation to reduce traffic congestion and improve accessibility.

Utility Systems: Ensuring reliable utility services, such as water and electricity, is vital. I'll support infrastructure projects that maintain and upgrade these systems to meet the demands of our community. Including ensuring that careful thought is put into new construction projects in saving & maintaining our precious water resources.

Sustainable Development: Pullman should embrace sustainable development practices. This means investing in green infrastructure, promoting energy efficiency, and exploring renewable energy sources to reduce our environmental footprint and create a more sustainable future.

To address these priorities, I'll collaborate with experts, seek state and federal grants, and work with city staff to develop comprehensive infrastructure plans that align with Pullman's long-term vision.

What will you do as a council member to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

Advancing Pullman's sense of community is about creating an environment where residents feel connected, engaged, and valued. My strategies for achieving this include:

Bridging the Gap: I'll focus on bridging the gap between WSU Pullman and the downtown corridor. By encouraging collaboration and joint initiatives, we can create a seamless connection that benefits both the university and the town.

Cultural Events and Diversity: Promoting cultural events and celebrating diversity enriches our community. I'll support initiatives that highlight Pullman's cultural heritage, engage diverse groups, and promote inclusivity.

Citizen Engagement: Actively involving residents in decision-making through regular town hall meetings, surveys, and digital feedback mechanisms will give them a sense of ownership in our town's future.

Supporting Local Organizations: I'll collaborate with local organizations like the Palouse Choral Society and the Pullman Downtown Promotions Group to foster a vibrant cultural scene that brings our community together.

By implementing these strategies, we can create a sense of belonging and pride in Pullman that strengthens our community bonds.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

To make Pullman a better place to live, work, and do business, I'll focus on key objectives:

Downtown Revitalization: I'll champion downtown revitalization to create a vibrant and attractive city center. This includes improving infrastructure, zeroing in on the infamous bypass, continuing to support local businesses and bring in new ones, and enhancing the overall atmosphere.

Affordable Housing: Addressing housing affordability is crucial. I'll work to incentivize affordable housing development, including looking into tiny home communities, and explore mixed-income neighborhood models to ensure everyone can find suitable housing.

Sustainable Practices: I'll advocate for sustainable practices, such as renewable energy adoption and green infrastructure, to reduce our environmental impact and promote a healthier, more sustainable Pullman.

Economic Growth: To foster economic growth, I'll support local businesses, attract new industries, and encourage entrepreneurship. Job creation and a thriving economy benefit everyone in Pullman.

Community Engagement: Actively involving residents in the decision-making process and keeping them informed about city developments will empower citizens to shape our town's future.

I'm dedicated to working tirelessly to turn these objectives into realities, making Pullman an even more vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous community.

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

I have served on the Pullman City Council since February, 2008 and have been involved in most aspects of municipality governance from zoning changes, human resource management (interviewing and hiring key city positions including City Administrator, Finance Director, Police Chief and Commander, Economic Development Director; reviewing and approving multiple labor contracts) city planning decisions including approval of a revised comprehensive plan; partnering with WSU on a variety of initiatives (Town Gown Collaborative, Downtown Pullman Association, regular meetings with ASWSU, The Gateway Project and New Cougar Orientation) supporting tourism through various Lodging Tax Advisory Commission activities including securing a new service contract with the Pullman Chamber of Commerce; Strong support of Public Safety organizations (Police and Fire); Understanding the many challenges facing Public Works such as snow removal, public transit, street and sidewalk improvement, major projects and how they impact citizens, ecological concerns with storm water management and conservation and lastly, climate awareness; Review of Parks and evaluation of Recreational programs through administration of the Metropolitan Parks District and associated events. I have been involved with many community organizations including serving on the Boards of the Pullman Chamber of Commerce, Innovia Community Foundation, Pullman Regional Hospital Foundation and Auxiliary, Pullman Education Foundation and United Way. All of these activities have broadened my knowledge and experience in working for the benefit of others and evaluating situations that touch people's lives and livelihoods. I will continue to develop and enhance connections and relationships that make Pullman the amazing city that it is.



PAT WRIGHT
WARD 3

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

City government must play an integral role in economic development, and it does so by evaluating key strategies not only for improving a community's business landscape but also by understanding the challenges inherent in attracting and retaining businesses, facilitating business development and assisting existing businesses to realize success. City government through economic development understands the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy and identifies where gaps exist in meeting the needs of the community and how to best close those gaps by offering accurate, up to date and credible information to prospects interested in investing, locating or expanding in a specific area. City government can also provide information on the community needed by local businesses and industries and how to facilitate the critical partnerships between the public and private sectors. Economic development must continually evolve to meet the needs of existing businesses as well as to evaluate the current need in the community. In addition, and more specifically, city government through economic development partnerships ie. Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association, WSU other government agencies and private sector businesses can network existing businesses, conduct business visitations, launch targeted industry studies as well as labor market surveys, track vacant business sites and facilities and initiate and attend meetings with stakeholders.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

1. Completion of the downtown Pullman project which will improve and promote the vibrancy and people centric aspects of the redesign and the master plan. Inherent in this is also the attention to multi modal access supporting the needs of all users whether they choose to walk, bike, use transit or drive...more connections and more choices.
2. Identify a viable bypass to downtown so heavy and long-haul transporters can utilize an alternate route thus creating a safer, more ambient area to provide those people centric locales as referenced above. The right bypass location must be identified and cooperation with partner agencies, ie. Washington Department of Transportation,

Whitman County, Washington State Legislature and commodity groups currently transporting shipments through the downtown corridor developed to maximize efforts to completion.

3. Continue to support current conservation practices through irrigation regulation and compliance as well as to identify alternate sources of water supply that would complement our current source through the Palouse Groundwater basin.

Our partnership with and support of The Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee is critical in evaluating the additional sources available in our region.

4. Evaluate an aging infrastructure of pipes, sewer, waste management disposal and proactively develop a plan for updating and replacing these critical elements.

5. Continued emphasis on paths and trails and enhancement of those gems that are within our purview.

What will you do as a council member to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

First and foremost, it is the responsibility of an elected official to be a role model for the community. It is important that we embrace the sense of community and belonging, and we do this by making sure that we are aligned in what we say we value and what we actually value. Transparency and consistency are critical in providing information (as in regulations-rules need to be administered equally, e.g., building permits and inspections). We must be partners with our constituents and treat them with dignity and respect. Our city staff are our subject matter experts, and it is critical to acknowledge their level of expertise, trust their judgement and again, demonstrate respect even when there may be some level of disagreement. It is important for people to feel valued, and I try to do this whenever I can, and I believe my actions speak for themselves. I take a balanced and even-handed approach in working with people and hope that by doing so, I can instill confidence that I try to do the right thing in evaluating situations and making decisions. In my mind, that is the best thing I can do in instilling a sense of community and welcoming.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

I have served on the Pullman Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors since 1989 and was part of the Board that adopted our mission statement of making Pullman a better place to live, work and do business. I embraced this concept from its inception. Living in Pullman is special, and I attribute that to having a great healthcare system, an exceptional school district and being a safe place to raise a family. I further that by continuing to support those attributes in our city goals and priorities. I can, through support of a vibrant business community, encourage the availability of goods and services (shopping, dining, recreating) and shopping and dining locally to show that support. Pullman is an extremely philanthropic community, and it is in this philanthropy that we promote the welfare of others, contributing to a food bank or making available a warming or cooling shelter when needed. Lastly, we must understand and explore all the challenges of providing affordable housing. This involves reviewing zoning regulations, offering access to alternative and innovative housing solutions such as ADUs and mitigating some of the affects of these changes on existing residents.

Businesses are affected by a community's rules and regulations and how easy (or difficult) it is to work with the municipality. It is incumbent upon us as elected officials to ensure transparency and consistency in our application of those regulations and assisting businesses whether they be contractors, someone opening a store front or providing a service in reaching success.

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

Pullman has been my home for years, and I've had the privilege of being involved in several community initiatives. My role as the Executive Director of United Way of Whitman County was particularly transformative. It was during this tenure that I championed the introduction of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to our region, ensuring that every child 0-5 years old has access to free monthly books. My position at WSU's Financial Aid Office provides a unique perspective, allowing me to understand the complex challenges our students grapple with daily. This experience deepened my resolve to build a more equitable Pullman.

But beyond these official capacities, our campaign stands out for its unwavering commitment to bridging the communication chasm between Pullman's residents and its decision-makers. We've all felt the ripples of disconnect in today's politics, and our campaign is a beacon of change in this landscape. Our bi-weekly community conversations, held over a beer at Ricos or coffee at Neills, are more than just discussions; they're a testament to our dedication to genuine community engagement. And with our citizen-led advocacy panels, we're not just talking about change; we're actively pursuing it. While my experiences have equipped me with valuable insights, I firmly believe that the heart of our campaign is the collective voice of Pullman. Our overarching goal? To ensure every resident not only feels heard but regains ownership over the policies that affect their daily lives.



**ERIC FEJERAN
AT LARGE**

What do you see as the role of city government in economic development?

The role of city government in economic development is multi pronged. At its core, the city council should serve as the voice for businesses and local stakeholders, ensuring that their needs and concerns are at the forefront of policy decisions. Economic growth thrives when there's a strong relationship between the city and its businesses. To foster this relationship, our campaign has formed a business advocacy panel. This panel is designed to bridge the gap between local businesses and the city council, ensuring that decisions made are informed, inclusive, and beneficial for the economic landscape of Pullman. By regularly engaging with this panel, I can tap into the pulse of our business community, understanding their challenges and aspirations.

Furthermore, as members of the city council, we are not just policymakers; we are ambassadors for Pullman. Every interaction, whether within our city or outside, is an opportunity to promote Pullman as a prime location for business, innovation, and growth. We need to champion our city's strengths, from our educational institutions to our vibrant local businesses, ensuring that Pullman is recognized as a hub of opportunity.

What are your top priorities for the city's infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

As Pullman rapidly grows, the spotlight on our infrastructure intensifies. Many of our neighbors have voiced concerns about our roads, walking paths, and overall city infrastructure. Addressing these concerns isn't just a priority—it's a commitment. We need timely upgrades and consistent maintenance to ensure Pullman remains a city where everyone can move safely and efficiently. But infrastructure is more than just roads and buildings. It's about creating an inclusive environment. As we roll out new projects, it's crucial to ensure they cater to everyone, including our residents with disabilities. Everyone should feel confident navigating our city.

Now, let's talk housing. The Pullman Housing Action Plan projects a need for over 10,062 new homes by 2040. That's a significant number! But it also presents an opportunity to innovate. I'm excited about the potential of non-traditional housing options like cottage housing, mixed-use spaces, tiny homes, and accessory dwelling units. These alternatives can provide affordable homeownership opportunities, especially for our low and moderate-income residents.

Additionally, I look forward to being involved in the next steps in Project Downtown Pullman. The reconstruction of Main Street between Spring Street and Grand Avenue, planned for 2024, promises a more "people-centric"

downtown. This project will not only enhance our infrastructure but also create vibrant spaces that draw residents and visitors alike to the heart of Pullman.

What will you do as a council member to advance Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere is what makes our town special. To further nurture this spirit, I've initiated bi-weekly community conversations, which we refer to as 'shop talks.' These gatherings, sometimes over a casual beer at Ricos or a morning coffee at Neills, are designed to foster genuine dialogue and strengthen our community bonds. It's essential that every resident feels they have a platform to share their thoughts and concerns.

Furthermore, our citizen-led advocacy panels play a crucial role in advancing Pullman's sense of inclusivity. These panels, focusing on areas like senior issues, low-income housing, and local business development, ensure that diverse voices are at the forefront of our decision-making process. By bringing together experts and passionate community members, we're creating a holistic approach to address Pullman's challenges and opportunities.

Regardless of the election outcome, my commitment to these initiatives remains unwavering. The advocacy panels and shop talks will continue, ensuring that our community's voice is not just a campaign promise but a lasting legacy. Together we can ensure that Pullman remains a place where everyone feels heard, valued, and truly at home.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

Pullman is more than just a city to me; it's a community of diverse voices, aspirations, and dreams. My journey in Pullman, from my time as Executive Director of United Way of Whitman County to my current role in the WSU Financial Aid Office, has always been about service, understanding, and fostering a sense of belonging.

To make Pullman a better place to live, work, and do business, one of my top priorities is affordable housing. The Pullman Housing Action Plan indicates a significant need for diverse housing options in the coming years. By advocating for non-traditional housing structures, like cottage housing and tiny homes, we can provide affordable homeownership opportunities, especially for low and moderate-income households.

Infrastructure is another pivotal area. With projects like the Downtown Pullman reconstruction on the horizon, it's essential to ensure that our infrastructure is not only modern and efficient but also inclusive. Every resident, regardless of ability, should be able to navigate our city safely and with ease.

Lastly, fostering a sense of community is at the heart of my campaign. Through initiatives like our bi-weekly community conversations and our advocacy panels, we aim to create spaces where every Pullman resident feels heard and valued. Our business advocacy panel, in particular, will ensure that the city council remains attuned to the needs of our local businesses, promoting Pullman's economic growth.

In every aspect of my role as a city council member, I will strive to be both a voice and a face for Pullman, ensuring that our city is not only thriving but also a place where every resident feels at home.

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful council member?

Drawing from my extensive professional background, encompassing project management and my role as the Executive Director of the Main Street Program, I possess a robust foundation for pursuing a position on City Council. During my tenure as Executive Director of the Main Street Program, I gained invaluable insights into our community's needs, aspirations, and potential. This experience deepened my understanding of the challenges facing our city and ignited my commitment to enhance Pullman as a City Council member.

While my past does not include elected office, my career equips me with the skills and expertise necessary for effective service on the City Council. As a seasoned project manager, I excel in analyzing complex issues, making well-informed decisions, and orchestrating successful initiatives. My roles as an executive director and community advocate have afforded me firsthand knowledge of our residents' needs and aspirations. My distinctive perspective, combined with my unwavering dedication to actively listen and learn from our community, positions me adeptly to represent their interests and foster positive change in Pullman.



**HOLLY GREYSTONE
AT LARGE**

What do you see as the role of city government and economic development?

The role of Pullman's city government in economic development is essential for creating an inclusive and thriving community. Our responsibility as leaders is to actively listen to our community, identify its needs, and invest in vital infrastructure like roads, public transit, and utilities to support local businesses and economic growth. We also establish regulations and policies for organized development, simplify processes for business startups and expansions, and consider tax policies and incentives for business attraction and retention. Additionally, we provide resources and support for entrepreneurs, promote Pullman's strengths to attract businesses and visitors, and enhance cultural events for economic activity. Addressing housing affordability is crucial for a diverse workforce. Through all these efforts, our unwavering commitment is to inclusivity. Our aim is to ensure that every community member benefits from economic development initiatives.

As city council members, we have a unique opportunity to champion diversity and inclusion as fundamental values. With dedicated effort, we can create opportunities and promote economic prosperity that benefits all residents, making Pullman a more equitable and vibrant community.

What are your top priorities for cities infrastructure and how would you plan to address them?

My top infrastructure priorities encompass the enhancement of our road networks, sidewalks, trails, water conservation initiatives, the expansion of high-speed broadband access to currently underserved areas, the implementation of smart technologies to optimize city operations and services, and the critical matter of addressing affordable housing. To advance these priorities effectively and efficiently, it is imperative that we maintain and fortify our network of public-private partnerships, seek out grants and funding opportunities, actively engage with our community, and base our decisions on comprehensive data analysis. Moreover, fostering collaboration with neighboring municipalities and regional authorities will be instrumental in successfully navigating the multifaceted challenges associated with our infrastructure projects. I am firmly committed to working closely with the Mayor, City Council members, state representatives, and our dedicated community to achieve these essential objectives.

What will you do as a City Council member to advise Pullman's sense of community and welcoming atmosphere?

As a City Council candidate, I believe it's essential to collaborate closely with organizations like the Pullman

Chamber of Commerce to enhance our sense of community and create a welcoming atmosphere for both residents and visitors. By actively engaging with local businesses and entrepreneurs through the Chamber, we can foster an environment that encourages economic growth. One way to achieve this is by advocating for initiatives that promote local businesses, such as 'Shop Local' campaigns and small business support programs. These efforts not only boost our economy but also strengthen the ties between community members and local establishments.

Incorporating input from the Chamber and other community stakeholders into our decision-making processes is vital. By actively seeking their perspectives on issues like zoning regulations, infrastructure development, and public transportation, we can ensure that our policies align with the interests of our residents and businesses. I see my role as an advocate for a strong sense of community and a welcoming atmosphere in Pullman. By partnering with organizations like the Pullman Chamber of Commerce and listening to the needs and aspirations of our community members, we can create a vibrant, inclusive, and economically prosperous city for all.

What steps will you take to make Pullman a better place to live, work and do business?

I am committed to taking meaningful steps to enhance the quality of life, business environment, and overall appeal of Pullman. My approach includes actively listening to our community, investing in essential infrastructure, streamlining business processes, promoting economic growth, and prioritizing inclusivity. By fostering diversity and inclusion as core values, we will create opportunities and promote prosperity that benefits every resident, making Pullman an even better place to live, work, and do business.



LISA WAANANEN JONES
DIST 2

What experience do you bring to the table to make you a successful school board member?

I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve as a school board member since my life and career has been shaped by public education, and I am now a parent of Pullman School District children. My full-time job is teaching at Washington State University, where I have taken part in shared governance as a member of Faculty Senate, and I'm knowledgeable about state and local government practices because of my role as an educator teaching civic journalism. I'm trained in information-seeking and looking beyond my own experience and opinion to understand complex issues from all sides. More personally, I care a lot about Pullman schools because my family has a long history here. My parents grew up attending Pullman schools, as did my grandfather; my grandmother on the other side was a teacher here in Pullman, and two of my aunts who attended Pullman schools went on to careers as public school teachers.

What are the biggest challenges facing Pullman School District?

I am eager to learn from the current board members, Pullman School District employees, and Pullman families about what challenges they consider the top priorities. Pullman School District faces many of the same challenges as other public schools — such as supporting families in a diverse community and responding to economic and environmental challenges that extend beyond our region — but we are fortunate to have a community that values education and evidence-based approaches to finding solutions.

What do you see is the role of a school board member?

School board members listen and learn, and then make decisions that align with the community's vision for its schools. This is a future-facing role, and the board needs to continually assess what's working and what could be done better, and to keep current on best practices so we can stay competitive with the educational opportunities available to students. It concerned me that no one eligible for this particular position stepped up during the regular filing period earlier this year. It's important that our community is fully represented, especially on behalf of our young people who can't yet vote for the elected officials whose decisions affect their lives.

What is the role of the school board in educational and workforce development in our community?

Pullman has long attracted families and businesses that believe in the value of education for realizing the full potential of our children and community as a whole. That's a real strength for us, and shows how investing in education early in life is a long-term investment in innovation, civic engagement, and meaningful careers. We should welcome partnerships and opportunities that help students connect their K-12 education with future careers and community service. District 2 includes a lot of adults and parents who are also in school continuing their education, often while working multiple jobs, and the school board also needs to support working parents who are balancing a lot of roles that benefit our community.

How do you see yourself supporting teachers, staff and administrators in our school district?

Education relies on teachers, staff and administrators who have the support they need to make use of their experience and professional expertise. All of this is really about the day-to-day interactions that happen in our schools, and teachers and staff are the experts there. We should support their efforts in professional development and innovation with smart investments in resources and staffing.

Serving in the community has been a value that my Mom and Dad instilled in us since childhood, by participating in paper drives and raising money for school supplies early on. This was further fortified by being enrolled in FFA throughout my high school years, and learning the value of working together for a common goal; by treating all with humility, compassion, kindness, and civility. Following high school, I served in the United States Navy (1962-68) during the Viet Nam conflict.

After an honorable discharge from the Navy, I attended college, and began serving our church through meals on wheels, assisting neighbors through St. Francis Guild and St. Vincent DePaul food and clothing drives. I have continued to serve in these volunteer positions my entire life.

I have resided in Pullman for over 47 years. Maureen and I have raised our four children here, and we have continued to participate by supporting our PTA and booster club. I have served on the PHS football chain gang (yard markers) for many years.

While at the College of Veterinary Medicine at WSU, I served on the Academic Affairs committee for the university, reviewing curriculum changes, overseeing disciplinary actions, and reviews of college programming. During my academic career, which spanned 46 years, I also served on several USDA grant review panels, as well as, review panels within the College of Veterinary Medicine.

I was first appointed to the Pullman School District (PSD) Board of Directors in 2007, and have served diligently since that time. I consider the School Board to be an intricate part of the community, and we, as members, take an oath to serve the People of Pullman, Whitman County and the State of Washington with the utmost care – There is nothing more valuable than a youth's education.

The challenges facing the school district are: Those pertaining to student access to state-of-the-art academic curriculums; assuring quality teaching; continued monitoring of school safety; academic assessments; those involving new technology, such as artificial intelligence; and providing the resources (classrooms, buildings, etc.) required for our schools to work for the students, and the community, at a high level.

Challenges can either be viewed as obstacles, or as opportunities. I, and those School Board members I serve with currently, and with those I served with in the past, have always viewed them as opportunities. This helps immeasurably, as the School Board listens, weighs the impact upon the school district, does its homework and after input from our community constituents, takes action by approving, disapproving, or modifying the recommendations presented to us by the administration.

The role of a School Board member is to first, and foremost, be an advocate for all the students on their learning journey; this is followed closely by being supportive of the teachers, the parents, the PSD staff, and the community they represent. Initially, this advocacy and support can be daunting, but with experience, a supportive Board team, and policies and procedures that provide guidance, the School Board member shifts from promoting individual agendas to governance via the Board team.

Each year the School Board of Directors reviews and signs a document entitled "Operating Principals/Board Protocol (Policy 1101, Procedure 1101F), which are in place to enhance teamwork amongst the members, and between the School Board and the Superintendent. Copies of these documents are available upon request (jim.evermann@gmail.com).



JIM EVERMANN
Dist 3

The School Board has a responsibility to represent the community in its mandate to provide a quality education for all students. The Board becomes a vital link between all six schools and the community, by maintaining an active and ongoing connection with members of the community. This is accomplished by listening to community voices, concerns and expectations, and then, reflecting upon expressed values, concerns, and expectations in making board decisions. The School Board member must be engaged in the community by participating in the day-to-day activities of the schools. This may be done by being part of PTA/PTO's, contributing informative dialogue at meetings, and writing articles for the Pullman Community Update – See August, 2023 issue for article, “Life changing experiences through Career and Technical Education (CTE).”

We are very fortunate to have within our community, businesses and institutions that provide for post-secondary pathways for students interested in careers and civic engagement. I had chosen the military route after high school, then college afterwards. For some students, careers in computer-digital applications; agricultural sciences – business, medical-dental fields; and electrical-mechanical-hydrodynamics-metals trades are always in search of curious students. The pathways our students seek are vast, and the jobs within our community and beyond are diverse and in need. Career exploration for our students is available through course offerings, school counselors and teachers.

Opening educational opportunities, that transition into career and work force opportunities are manifested through the imaginations of our children and grandchildren, the remarkable skills of our teachers, and the encouragement of parents and grandparents.

I have been fortunate to have served as a Board member for the PSD for the past 16+ years. This experience has taught me that change within the educational field is very dynamic. Keeping ahead and responding to these changes requires continual refining of our Board skills to keep pace, and to maintain a vision for the future needs for optimum student learning, teacher engagement and proficiency, and administrative leadership.

In order for me to be supportive of our teachers, staff and administrators, I must understand what changes they are undergoing in terms of curricular changes, the student's emotional and social well-being, the current and proposed budgetary projections, and the state-of-the school districts' facilities to create a safe learning – teaching environment. This knowledge is facilitated by the Board's experience, their ability to work together, their participation in periodic work sessions, and the annual meeting of the Washington State School Directors Association.

Something I have personally tried to do while on the school board is to treat all teachers, staff and administrators with dignity, respect, and a sincere attitude, that I, through my efforts on the board, will help to address the challenges and changes aforementioned.

In summary, I see my role on the school board as one who tries to listen and clarify issues as early as possible; to be consistent in my support of all whom I serve; and to embrace the challenge of serving the Community through being a School Board member of the Pullman School District. If any questions arise, please contact me at jim.evermann@gmail.com, or call/text me at 509-339-3607.

AARON CARTER
DIST 1

CRAIG NELSON
DIST 3

No responses before deadline

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the members of the Pullman Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee for their insight and feedback as we prepared these candidate questionnaires.

**THANK YOU TO SEL, INC. AND THE EVENT CENTER
STAFF FOR HOSTING THE CHAMBER'S GOVERNMENT
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETINGS EACH MONTH.**

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