

**Citizens for a Fair Ferndale  
Candidates Forum  
Sunday, October 23, 2011  
1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Ferndale Public Library**

**Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire**

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**1. Why did you decide to run for Mayor/Council?**

I'd like to continue my work to put Ferndale on solid financial footing and find new way to deliver outstanding services to our residents.

**2. What is your vision for Ferndale? Over the next four years? Over the next ten years?**

In the short term, we need an economic plan that stabilizes our finance and protects our city services. Longer-term, we must begin to set goals to attract new families, businesses and entrepreneurs to our city.

**3. What two (2) things are you going to do that will bring your vision to reality?**

I've already begun implementing budget practices, like our 2-year budget, that will force us to operate with a longer-term vision and anticipate shortfalls sooner. Ultimately, we need to actively pursue collaborations or consolidations with other communities to lower costs and preserve services. I also want to engage the community in setting long-term goals for our city that identify how we will grow and succeed in the future.

**4. Of all the issues facing Ferndale, what two (2) would you give top priority and why?**

Balancing our budget will continue to be our most pressing challenge for the next few year. But the recession won't last forever, and we have to begin planning for the Ferndale of the future by setting goals for what we want our community to become. That planning must begin now, and should include new ways to deliver services, a plan to continue downtown's success and a way to give more support to our neighborhoods and schools.

**5. Ferndale prides itself on an active citizenry. A) What two (2) things would you tell someone who "just wanted to help", or who "just wanted to get involved"? B) Please list and briefly describe three (3) resources (print, electronic, or otherwise) that residents who want to get involved should go to for ideas, background, facts or figures.**

A) Let us know! There's many Mayor- and Council-appointed positions that need volunteers, which is the way I started getting involved when I moved to Ferndale and got appointed to the Senior Citizen Task Force.

B) Ferndale's website lists all the official boards and commissions and how to apply; online resources like the Patch have sections devoted to community activities; and, if all else fails, ask someone who's already involved!

**6. How do you see the council and other city leaders continuing and improving communication between Ferndale and its neighbor cities?**

We're working on a plan to use online tools like our website and social media to provide more timely information to residents. In addition, I've worked to be an accessible and easy-to-reach Mayor that's open to the ideas or concerns of our residents.

**7. Please explain the importance of the city's Master Plan. Is it still relevant in this economic climate? When and how should it be reviewed?**

The Master Plan is a critical planning tool, but it's only as good as the ideas and vision that generate it. A good Plan anticipates future growth and trends and helps direct development policies to meet that vision, but it requires regular attention. The goal setting I described earlier would be linked to the Plan to ensure community buy-in and understanding of our direction.

**8. How can the city help residents who are facing foreclosure?**

While a city can't insert itself in the relationship between a specific lending institution and a homeowner in default, we can work to create a community where rising home values restore the value of properties. This is done in a number of ways, including strong city services, neighborhood enrichment programs, good schools and attractive amenities. Residents in foreclosure should also reach out for help from organizations like Ferndale's office of the Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency.

**9. The state of our schools (perceived or real) is vitally important. What kind of collaboration between the city and the schools do you see happening?**

While the schools and city government are run separately, we have a mutual interest in a strong community. I have met with school leaders to explore how to strengthen our relationship and work together for our common interest. This means more than just occasional joint meetings, but includes joint community goal setting and working collaboratively, like we do now in our lease arrangement with the schools for the Kulick Center.

**10. Did you support the Headlee Override ballot question that was passed in May of this year? If so, explain, in your view, how this millage positively affected our City. If not, explain, in your view, how this millage has negatively affected our City.**

I supported the Headlee Override only after I was convinced all other reasonable steps had been taken to cut spending and reduce waste. Reasonable people can argue over specific projects, but there's no question in my mind passing the millage preserved many police and fire department jobs, and that we're a safer and stronger city as a result.