

Dominic Thompson, Democratic Candidate for Monroe County Council
Responses to questions from the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
For the June 2, 2020 Primary Election

1. Monroe County government will be significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. What are your top concerns for county government in that regard, and how do you propose to address those concerns?

Coronavirus has significantly impacted our everyday lives on a national and local level. A part of that impact is showing us the pitfalls every level of government has found itself in since the beginning of this epidemic. The first issue is increasing public faith in our county government. Throughout this pandemic, we have seen a severe distrust of public officials and their responses to protecting citizens. As a county councilmember, it will be my responsibility to continue outreach to all citizens through town halls. The second key issue the county government must resolve is working closely with the state to secure a greater amount of testing kits for whenever the virus is expected to make a return this fall. Finally, the county government must focus on expanding access and knowledge of medical services available to individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19.

2. The council is responsible for appropriating county funds. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, what will be your funding priorities for the county? What projects or departmental budgets, if any, do you expect will see funding cuts?

Based on current models, COVID-19 could last until 2022 depending on how states continue enforcing social distancing guidelines. As a member of the county council, I will focus on apportioning funds towards protective gear for county employees and buildings. Furthermore, funds must be apportioned towards created stockpiles of resources, such as gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer that can be dispursed to nursing homes, hospitals, and the general community in preparation for any resurgence of COVID-19. If budget cuts are necessary for these apportionments, I would prioritize cutting from budgets of departments with services that are not in use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Other than the current crisis, what will be your top 3 priorities on the county council?

As a member of the Monroe County Council, I will focus on making the county affordable, sustainable, and accessible. Affordable housing will be my first priority. I will work to create a Housing Trust Fund with Bloomington, Ellettsville, and the state. This fund will contribute funds to housing developers within the county who create rental housing for households with an income 50% below the median family income adjusted for household size. This will bring down the costs of creating affordable housing, and over time, lower the cost of rental properties within the county. Sustainability will be another priority during my term on the

council. By working with IU to discover ways to be more sustainable, creating greater biking infrastructure, and committing to reforestation throughout the county, we can make our community more sustainable. My third priority on the council will be making public transportation more accessible. This can be done by creating a categorical grant to allow for a higher frequency of bus services through Bloomington and creating an intercity travel system between Bloomington and Ellettsville.