

## Chamber Questionnaire: Joe Lee City Council District 1

1. If elected, what are your top 3 priorities as a City Council member? (200 words)

1. Civility! Bloomington is suffering from the national epidemic of insult instead of reasoned argument, name-calling instead of compromise, walls constructed instead of consensus. Natural allies are treated as enemies because they don't conform to the "pure" viewpoint. The city administration battles the county. Some members of the city council are intractable because they have the "correct" answer to issues and will allow for no other. We deserve and need a government that WORKS TOGETHER. I will "Listen to all, learn from all, lead with all."
2. In the past Bloomington was not only the seat of a great Midwestern University, and a major medical manufacturer, but a solid blue-collar employer. Otis, RCA, Westinghouse, ... provided solid, well-paid jobs to semi-skilled labor. Many of those workers and their families have lost those jobs and the security they offered - all to devastating consequences. We must find ways to bring these folks back into a thriving economy.
3. IU sits at the center of our town and is a major driver of our prosperity, but some of our most persistent issues. Each year IU increases enrollment but is inadequate in housing its students. IU must become part of the housing solution.

2. What concerns do you have about the business community and economic development in Bloomington? (125 words)

Bloomington must once again build a thriving economy for the blue collar and semi-skilled workforce. With our changing environment many have been left behind to terrible consequences. Without decent incomes every issue is multiplied – housing, medical insurance, transportation, and on and on. A generation or two, or more, are forced into subsistence living where one injury, one accident, can plunge an individual or family into homelessness, the desperation of addiction and into despair.

Our city has tipped over into a tiered system which becomes harder and harder to level. We are a microcosm of the economic inequities of our national economy. For an educated, enlightened, compassionate community we have failed a growing number of our citizens. We must endeavor to secure economic equity.

3. What solutions would you propose to address these concerns? Specifically, what would you do to promote a positive business climate? (125 words)

Bloomington must become intentional in policies and not bow to rigid ideology. The world is transitioning to a new green economy not just because it is wise, but because we must. We must search out those opportunities that will arise in this new manufacturing economy – opportunities that will help employ our currently unemployed and under-employed workforce.

But paramount to securing these new industries, we must protect our fragile and aging city infrastructure. We have a one source water system that is in constant danger from development on the shores of Lake Monroe and the runoff from agriculture, city neighborhoods established years ago without storm drains and sidewalks, and on and on. We also must never forget our most precious infrastructure – the people who live here.

4. What do you think is our community's biggest opportunity? What is its biggest threat? (125 words)

Bloomington is an enlightened, educated, and compassionate small city with an unusual demographic – half of our population is a transient student population. The current top-down city administration seems to be locked into a municipal model that bears little resemblance to the lived experience of most of the city's residents. Unfortunately, some of the current city council have followed this skewed vision and not the interests and expertise of their diverse and involved constituents. We have become factions instead of workmates and the good that can be done and must be done gets lost in this ideological battlefield. Bloomington has incredible assets, great goodwill, and a genuine interest in becoming our best, but only if we listen to ALL, learn from ALL, and LEAD with ALL.