

Written Campaign Platform

When I initially ran for the city council, I did not run on a platform that focused on a specific issue(s), but simply on the idea that I wanted to make decisions that would positively impact our community. The same holds true for my re-election efforts this year. In 2016 the city council set aside time to discuss issues that were most important to Decatur. These conversations yielded a framework for the development of a strategic plan or priority goals that reflected a majority of our citizens' values, ideas, and dreams. Over the years this document has been updated and currently includes 6 goals: 1- Neighborhood Revitalization; 2- Workforce Development; 3- Improvements to Downtown Decatur; 4- Organizational Efficiencies for Citizens through Enhanced Technology; 5- City Financial Security; 6-Increased Intergovernmental Collaborations. These are the priority goals that will guide my future work on council.

Why I am running for Decatur City Council.

It has been both an honor and a significant responsibility to serve Decatur citizens. I believe my values and priorities align well with many of our citizens and like them, I want to live in a community that is safe, efficiently run, and provides fair, sustainable economic opportunities for everyone.

I am an experienced and proven leader with over twenty-five years of demonstrated professional experience across several areas including: higher education; health care; finance; federal, state, and municipal government. My functional areas of experience include public relations, government affairs, strategic planning, project management, and communications. I have been fortunate to have a great career with notable professional achievements that include: passage of legislation that created ICash, a program that returns unclaimed assets to the original owner or their heirs; Bright Start, a 529 College Savings Plan; and the Illinois Community Health Center Act. In addition, I have secured over \$12 million in federal and state funding for federally qualified health centers (such as Crossing Healthcare) and over \$5 million for higher education (Richland Community College).

As a councilwoman I have supported completion of millions in local infrastructure needs. These projects include sanitary and storm water sewer upgrades; community street improvements; fire station safety upgrades and new construction; and support of the Northeast Connector and the Decatur Beltway Project. I have championed Decatur's fiber optic network that connects multiple government agencies, Decatur Public Schools and Millikin University.

I have the proven ability to make tough decisions and understand how strategic investments can lead to improvements in Decatur. I have worked hard to maintain a balanced budget.

The decision to seek re-election did not come easily. While I have been grateful for the sound advice and positive support I received, what drives my desire to seek re-election is the ability to work with citizens to address their community concerns while making Decatur a great place to work and play. This is truly the most rewarding aspect of my Council work. I hope that my past efforts and decisions will once again justify the citizens' trust in me on election day.

Do you have any specific policy or budget goals?

My priorities will include focusing on 3 of the issues included in the councils' priority goals: neighborhood revitalization; workforce development; and improving downtown Decatur.

Neighborhood Revitalization: It is not enough to demolish houses and expect neighborhoods to change. During this next term I would like to focus on the implementation of more aggressive code enforcement, property inspections, and other enforcement strategies to improve our housing stock. In addition, neighborhoods will need “catalyst” projects that are large and visible enough to spur improvements. Two catalyst projects already in the implementation stage include the Jasper Street Corridor and the Garfield School / Park projects.

Workforce Development: There is an urgent need to develop a more effective approach for preparing and enlarging the local workforce to meet regional workforce requirements and ensure that the energy, manufacturing, transportation, healthcare and other sectors are able to employ the workers they need. While Decatur is fortunate to have Richland Community College, Millikin University, and Workforce Investment Solutions, as well as others, our available and ready workforce numbers still fall short. In the fall of 2022, the city commissioned Key Strategic Group to conduct a Workforce Development Systems Assessment and Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decatur and Macon County. One of the key findings of that report was that our workforce development initiatives tend to be unintentionally disconnected and operate without a collective community-wide strategy or equity plan. Decatur is fortunate to have all the entities needed for workforce development, but we need to connect the dots and ensure that they are all working together. Finding the right champion among this group will be key to coordinating our workforce initiatives.

Downtown Decatur: We have a beautiful downtown that includes great restaurants and unique boutiques anchored by Central Park. There is still much work that can be done to improve our downtown, but first we need a written plan. That plan should incorporate five pillars that, I think if developed, could take downtown to the next level. Those pillars include: a market analysis; zoning and code enforcement unique to a downtown; design elements; tourism and promotion; and economic vitality. I know there are federal and state grants available specific to downtown enhancements, but without a plan it is difficult to secure those dollars.

Website and/or facebook page

Reed- This is coming soon. May I send it to you when ready?

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