

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON - MAYOR
CANDIDATE: JACKIE GUNDERSON**

BACKGROUND

My name is Jackie Gunderson, and I am running to serve as Bloomington's next Mayor. Before I ever considered running for office, my personal mission has always been to contribute positively to my community, to roll up my sleeves to build it up, and to leave it better than I found it for future generations. I have lived out this mission in my personal and professional life, and now I want to lead with this mission from City Hall. It is time to approach City Hall with a more proactive lens, full of elected officials who communicate with their community, and bring impactful and equitable solutions. I have leadership experience as the Director of The Penguin Project of McLean County, the lead facilitator for a local LGBTQ+ youth group, a small business owner, the Procurement Manager responsible for all construction contracts at ISU, and as a non-profit board member.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

I decided to run for mayor as an average, every day working person, because I believe in transforming our local government to be more transparent and accessible, making our city more welcoming and equitable, and most importantly, in putting people first. One of my guiding principles is the need to always challenge the status quo and think outside the box, especially when it comes to people, the bare minimum should never be good enough. As a leader, I am empathetic, service-centered, inclusive, and results-driven, all key elements of the City of Bloomington's vision and mission. As an active member of this community, I am uniquely positioned to serve and represent Bloomington residents in this capacity, with a focus on putting people first.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

Access to safe and affordable housing continues to be a challenge in Bloomington, and many of our representatives have taken an "out of sight, out of mind" approach. We need to ensure there is mixed income housing available in all parts of the city, instead of just warehousing people in concentrated pockets of poverty and in opportunity. Housing is a human right, and should be prioritized as an investment in uplifting our neighbors because when we all thrive, our community thrives. My entire campaign is focused on putting people first, and addressing the housing affordability challenge is going to require creative systematic changes. The economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic is going to be felt for years to come, and the housing going to worsen.

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON - MAYOR
CANDIDATE: MBOKA MWILAMBWE**

BACKGROUND

I came to this community in 1990 to pursue a college education. I am a graduate of Illinois State University with a Bachelor's in Math and a Master's in Education. I am married to Stacey, whom I met in graduate school. We have four (4) children: Maya, Mariama, Amelie and Jonah, who we all born here and are products of Unit 5. I have been an ISU employee since 1997, where I've worked with student conduct issues, diversity programming, harassment and discrimination complaints. I was appointed as the Alderman for Ward 3 in 2011, elected in 2013 and reelected in 2017. In May of 2019, my fellow council members chose me to serve as Mayor Pro Tem and I've had the opportunity to chair several meetings in the mayor's absence. I am most proud of our prudent fiscal management, increased spending on streets and institutionalizing the celebration of Juneteenth.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

My decision to run for mayor was not based on political opportunity or self-importance. I was encouraged by several community members who have watched my ten years of service on the city council and believe in my ability to provide stability and bring our community together. Like me, many are concerned that Bloomington – like many other cities – has become increasingly polarized due to social unrest, while wrestling with the health and economic challenges created by the pandemic. Bloomington is a community with an unlimited potential that can only be achieved if we are united. So, my vision for the office of Mayor is to be a calming presence and unifying force that will motivate the community to reach for greater heights.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

1. Repairing our infrastructure and facilities (streets, water, sewer, library, O'Neill pool, etc...). I would address this by executing the plans that are in place but also look to increase funding for streets annually as budgets allow.
1. Growing our local economy. I would address this by working with our economic development partners within the City but also at the EDC and CVB to promote Bloomington more aggressively to outside companies (particularly those that require a physical presence) and remote workers but also to continue to help local companies expand.

2. Building community: I would address this by creating larger scale events that give us the opportunity to interact with one another and celebrate the various cultures present in our cities.

**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON - MAYOR
CANDIDATE: MIKE STRAZA**

BACKGROUND

I've been in Bloomington almost 40 years. I went to BHS, where I met my wife, Erin—we've been married nearly 30 years. After earning an economics degree from ISU, I put my passion for business to work as an entrepreneur and consultant, by owning, managing, and launching companies such as Zdi (now Room Ready), Presto Media, Immanuel Health Center, and Primus Trauma Care. I'm honored to have helped provide jobs for hundreds of people, supporting their families and contributing to our local economy. In addition, I've invested in our community, including board service for the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals, the American Red Cross, and the Illinois Small Business Development Center of McLean County. I want to put my skills and expertise to work for the city I've called home for so long by Building Bloomington Together with each resident.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

My vision is to make Bloomington the Entrepreneurial Capital of the Midwest, which includes three priorities: accelerating economic growth, investing in infrastructure, and providing balanced leadership for our diverse community. I've always seen business as an avenue to help people. We all need good jobs, where we can contribute to the well-being of others. We all want a vibrant community, with an excellent quality of life. For me, being mayor is all about serving. I have a strong desire to improve the lives of all Bloomington residents. I want to leave Bloomington better for the next generation. I want to see our city grow and thrive and to make Bloomington an even better place to call home.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE, AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

The biggest challenge is creating economic stability in the wake of COVID. The mayor must be skilled in developing a vision for recovery, collaborating with others to execute the plan, and applying specific know-how to tackle roadblocks. I will work to bring new developments to major locations, like downtown, Eastland Mall, and the West side. It's an investment in the whole city, bringing tax dollars, providing new job opportunities, and enhancing our quality of life. Another pressing issue is providing balanced leadership for the diverse perspectives and priorities in our city. A defining factor of my 25-plus years of business experience is my ability to foster collaboration. I believe every person's ideas and contributions are a valuable part of making the best decisions.



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON - CITY COUNCIL, WARD 5
CANDIDATE: NICK BECKER

BACKGROUND

My wife Kari and I have been married for 30 years and have lived in Bloomington for 15. We have seven children ranging from 8-27 years old including 5 still living in Bloomington. We are active members of Epiphany Parish with Kari teaching at Epiphany as well. My professional experience includes my current role serving as the VP of Worldwide Professional Services for Spectra Logic as well as over 30 years in technology and consulting management. I am active volunteering with the Fatherhood Coalition's Dads Uplifting Dads group, and with various school, church and coaching activities.

My roots are in Central IL, growing up in Peoria and spending the majority of my life between there, Champaign and Bloomington. I received a BS in Computer Science Engineering from the University of IL and Master's degrees in Business Administration and Management Information Systems from IL Benedictine College.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

My vision is that every citizen would find Bloomington as supportive and welcoming as my family and I do. In parallel, I would like to see a healthy economy that promotes the growth of existing businesses, enticement of new business and the creation of jobs and opportunities for all as a part of this growth. Priorities to drive this vision include:

- Removing barriers to economic recovery for both businesses and individuals
- Increasing cooperation between Bloomington, Normal and McLean County to leverage our joint strengths in attracting business growth and serving the community in general.
- Increase infrastructure and public safety investment
- Drive efficiency and prioritization into both budgeting and operations
- Use the above efficiency to reduce spending, debt and taxes while not reducing services

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

I want to focus on what I am hearing from those in my Ward and Bloomington in general. The consistent concerns are:

- 1) Failing infrastructure
- 2) Safety



- 3) Economic development / recovery
- 4) Fiscal responsibility and reduced taxes

Addressing specifics of each is not possible in a short paragraph but the focus on operational efficiency and prioritization of spending is a start for all. Removing barriers to operations and developing consistent incentives across the wider community will be a start for #3 specifically.

In general working to develop teamwork between the council members and city leadership will also have to be foundational. We have many qualified and dedicated folks working to make Bloomington better. We just need to pull in the same direction.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 9
CANDIDATE: TOM CRUMPLER

BACKGROUND

I've called this community home for over 20 years. I chose Bloomington because of the people, the sense of community, and the cultural and educational opportunities. I raised my two sons in this community. Before moving here, I taught high school English in Ohio while working on my doctorate at Ohio State University. I lived in San Diego and taught at California State before I joined the Illinois State University faculty in 1999 in the School of Teaching and Learning. While at ISU, I directed the Borg Literacy Center, which provides literacy programs to children throughout Central Illinois. My wife and I have lived in (and loved) two homes in two unique neighborhoods.

First, we restored a historic home on Franklin Park near downtown Bloomington, winning the 2009 Beautification Award from the city. Then, we built our current home in Ward 9 in 2014. We've loved both Bloomington neighborhoods.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

Serving on City Council provides an opportunity to give back to our city and help improve the quality of life in Bloomington. As Alderman, I will seek the views of voters, community leaders, and those involved in the day-to-day work of running this city. My vision as Alderman is to help our city become a place that people want to move to and stay. An alderman should focus on helping Bloomington grow by welcoming and supporting families; continuing to attract new businesses; supporting local, existing businesses so they can thrive; and expanding cultural and artistic experiences for all residents. This necessitates becoming a team member with city leaders to prioritize what is achievable and imagine what could be possible.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

- Responsible fiscal management of city finances. We remain in uncertain economic times due to the impact of the pandemic. We must be cautious with spending and analyze how projects and services are funded in the next fiscal year and beyond. I am committed to being a good steward of our city's financial resources.
- Support business growth and opportunity I will seek immediate and future opportunities that leverage our strategic location in the state, and use a regional approach to attract new businesses



that diversify and grow our local economy.

- Enhancing cooperation with the Town of Normal and McLean County
I will meet with city, town, and county leaders to identify common goals and develop workable solutions that help us all work more efficiently.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL, WARD 7
CANDIDATE: KELBY CUMPSTON

BACKGROUND

I'm a local with generations of family from right here in McLean County. I specialize in untangling red tape within private-public affordable housing partnerships through my career as a project manager for a general contractor company in the construction industry. My wife and I started the Really Really Free Market over 10 years ago and we founded the McLean County Covid-19 Mutual Aid project last year. I currently sit on the Property Maintenance Review Board where I have worked to bring a balance back to tenant/landlord relations. I am an ISU and Bloomington 101 alum. I am a firm believer in the Strong Towns movement which brings people from across political boundaries together to improve our community. I have a deep passion for historic preservation and developing our future workforce locally. Since high school I've been an advocate/activist for issues of equity for all who live in our beautiful city!

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

I'm running with the People First Coalition because we look at deep roots of equity issues and we want to use that knowledge to find solutions. Our vision for the city includes increasing safe and affordable housing, working to address public safety issues beyond simply policing, and improving our Covid-19 relief and recovery. We also want to take a progressive lens to mundane city responsibilities such as bulk waste and street lighting. My vision for the office is to systematically bring a larger focus and support to the Westside, which has been neglected for decades. I'd also like to increase participation in our local Government by expanding and promoting the My Bloomington App, strengthening the PSCRB, and creating/promoting a minority/women/veteran owned enterprise certification program.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

Homelessness, lack of things for low-income youth to do, food deserts, support for small/new businesses, and crumbling roads/infrastructure are all areas we know the city needs to improve. The People First Coalition is running with the idea that we can work on these issues from multiple fronts. Whether it be reducing water fees for those with low-income, creating more equity-focused incentive packages, or asking staff to seek out state/federal grants for emergency shelters- we can do the work. However, the city cannot do it alone and must work directly with community leaders, non-profits, and other governmental agencies to ensure progress occurs.



This type of collaboration has gotten us through Covid-19 so far, but will remain critical for years to come.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 9

CANDIDATE: JIM FRUIN

BACKGROUND

A lifelong resident of B/N, I am married to my wife of 47 years, with three grown children, and a graduate of Illinois State University. I was a 37 year employee of State Farm in Healthcare and HR, and am currently in my tenth year with Coldwell Banker. I have served on the COB Planning Commission (1989 to 1995), as a COB Council Member and Township Trustee for 18 years (1995 to 2003 serving Ward 3) and (2007 to 2017 serving Ward 9). Currently serving on the McLean County Regional Planning Commission and the Public Building Commission. I have also served on various leadership Boards with Corpus Christi, Central Catholic, and Illinois State University, as well as several years of Volunteer service at OSF St. Joseph, Carle Hospital and Hospice, and the Community Health Care Clinic. These are some of my contributions to the BN Communities.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

One immediate Vision for our City Council is to place an emphasis on long term growth and prosperity across all industries and professions. We need a dedicated effort to develop new business revenue sources. With this would be a complementing focus on financial management, to optimize existing resources in delivering our core City services. An equally important Vision is to accelerate efforts to make our communities more welcoming to all and building on our diversity. An e-mail tag line that I have used for 20 years has been “We are ONE Community”. I believe my past eighteen years of experience on the Council can be of immediate help to offset the limited experience among the City Council members.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

In view of past and continuing challenges that COVID-19 has created, I believe our pressing needs all center around the rebuilding of a healthy financial position. This includes the establishment of sufficient reserves for that possible next unexpected event(s). Some of the competing challenges include (1) honoring financial contributions for Pension funding, (2) an evaluation of where we stand with Deferred Expenses in all departments, (3) a strategic commitment to improving our City streets, (4) the continued decline of State revenues, (5) the continued transfer or financial responsibilities from the State to local governments, and the list goes on. Residents are expecting stable and quality core services and in particular to those of Public Safety and Public Works.



**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 3
CANDIDATE: WILLIE HORTON HALBERT**

BACKGROUND

I'm Willie Holton Halbert and I am running to be your Bloomington City Council Ward 3 representative. I have lived and volunteered in Bloomington for over 40 years. I raised my family here. Retiree from the IL Department of Corrections, where I served as a Counselor, Casework Supervisor & Assistant Superintendent for Southern & Central Region of IL. I managed budgets, developed and implemented programs, and supervised our parole system in the state of IL. I served on the Bloomington Human Relations Commission for 12 years, advocating for the rights of others. I'm one of the original founders of the grass roots organization, Not In Our Town. Currently serving on the board of the Mid Illini Credit Union and 2nd Vice-President to the BL-NL Branch of the NAACP. I have dedicated my life to the service of others because I believe in economic, educational, social and political justice for all.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

I want to serve others and help to make a difference for the betterment of our community. My vision is to ensure all people have a voice, promote growth, safety, and a healthy environment for all. Encourage positive and proactive relations with local police and officials. We can accomplish this by working together with integrity, inspiring all to engage and to invest in our community. My extensive volunteer and work experience allow me to share my knowledge, organizational skills, policy, and program development to accomplish the vision. I plan to start Listening Circles to allow everyone the opportunity to share their concerns, allowing me to better represent our community. I encourage you to go to my website @ electhalbert.com to learn more.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

Pressing issues facing voters today are their ability to keep family healthy and safe. COVID-19 Pandemic continues to be a pressing health issue affecting us all. I recommend we provide additional support to families and local businesses through community partnerships and applying for additional grants. Also, have a method where everyone has access to COVID-19 Testing and the Vaccination shots. In addition, Public Safety is essential; everyone deserves to be safe and secure. Find the right approaches to build relationships between the residents, police, making law enforcement a collaborative effort. Ensure transparency, accountability, diversity in hiring and equity for all. Reallocate or apply for grant funding for mental health



professionals for those appropriate 911 calls and dispatch health professionals or co-partner in those crisis interventions.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 5
CANDIDATE: PATRICK LAWLER

BACKGROUND

Like so many of us, I came to Bloomington-Normal for college and never left. Graduating from ISU in 2006, I've taught social studies at Normal Community High School for the past 15 years. It's been an honor to learn about this community alongside my students. We've visited local Mosques and Synagogues, attended the Evergreen Cemetery Walk every year, learned about social service providers like the YWCA, and pulled weeds together at the Sunnyside Community Garden on the West side.

I'm also married and have two wonderful children, Caden and Emerson. Jenny and I couldn't imagine a better place to raise a family. We've made memories at pretty much every park and playground throughout Bloomington, and we want to make sure that every family can have the same wonderful experience that we've had in this city.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

As a teacher, I offer a much-needed perspective into the struggles of families throughout our community. I've seen the lack of investment in mental health infrastructure affect families as they have to look to surrounding cities to find youth services. Teaching remotely, I've also seen students have to learn in apartments without adequate heat and other basic amenities. I want to make sure that we prioritize the needs of my students' families. I entered this race because I believe that our City should put People First, and prioritize things like accessibility, ensuring safe and affordable housing, COVID relief, and equity.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

We're still in a pandemic, and we need to make sure that we continue to provide, and expand, the financial aid being given to struggling families and small businesses. We also need more public-private partnerships to facilitate the development of more safe, affordable housing options throughout the City. Additionally, I'd like to see us tackle chronic homelessness through an intergovernmental task force where we can create a rapid rehousing program.

And for public safety, we need to actually listen to people asking for increased lighting, a welcoming ordinance, and better mental health services. We need a Council with the



courage to act on these issues, rather than just leaving the police to manage the problems that arise from their inaction.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 3
CANDIDATE: SHEILA MONTNEY

BACKGROUND

Bloomington’s Ward 3 has been my home for 20 years. Originally from rural Arkansas, I lived in 8 states prior to moving to Bloomington. I met my husband here, and we have a 17 year-old son. I am grateful to have found a wonderful community to call home.

I have served in a variety of volunteer positions over the years in the public and private sectors. Currently, I am a member of Bloomington’s Planning Commission, and am on the Executive Board of The Shingo Institute. I am excited to put my experience getting results to work by establishing common goals and engaging people to achieve them ‘For Bloomington’.

- Professional education/experience in infrastructure, technology, operations, and improvement methodologies that will be used to improve our community
- Master’s degree in government from Harvard University
- 30+ years leadership experience

I will bring problem solving skills and a focus on unity to the council.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

My vision is to build on Bloomington’s strengths (safe, family-friendly, well-educated community with a diverse economy) and provide a compelling value proposition to attract future businesses/residents.

Priorities include:

- Sustainable economic policies and public safety
- Lower taxes by running city operations more efficiently
- Enable a local culture where residents recommend Bloomington as a great place to live, work, learn, and play

Bloomington has remained strong economically despite significant challenges faced by our state, but we’re not immune to the economic pressures from the pandemic. Directly engaging our residents for their perspectives is critical – and will result in a better community for all of us. I am objective, thoughtful, and passionate about doing the right thing for the community.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

Themes include concerns about road conditions, high property (and other) taxes, economy/jobs, and public safety. Residents want a safe community with amenities, services, employment, and educational opportunities that enable a great quality of life.

I will address these by casting a wide net for input, advocating for policies aligned with what is important to constituents and are fiscally responsible. This role also requires collaboration with other councilmembers and neighboring communities for the common good.

The people are what make Bloomington special. In conversations with residents there is alignment with what is top of mind in Ward 3: Bloomington is a great place to live and people are passionate about our strengths. There are areas for improvement that need focus grounded in prudence and common sense.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL WARD 1
CANDIDATE: JAMIE MATHEY

Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON – CITY COUNCIL, WARD 7
CANDIDATE: MARY “MOLLIE” WARD

BACKGROUND

I was appointed to the Bloomington City Council in November 2020. I am director of Spiritual Care and co-chair of the Ethics Committee at Carle BroMenn Medical Center and Carle Eureka Hospital. A priest in the Episcopal Church, I am a certified pastoral educator and board-certified chaplain. I am a member of the Not In Our Town Steering Committee, co-chair of the NIOT Faith & Outreach subcommittee, and co-founder of the McLean County Interfaith Alliance. A 20-year resident of Ward 7, I hold a master of divinity degree from Seabury-Western Theological Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Oklahoma. Prior to entering seminary, I worked in journalism covering the international oil markets and the United Nations and before that served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic. My family and I live on North Roosevelt Avenue, and I enjoy weaving, beekeeping, and reading.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AND WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE OFFICE?

I serve on Bloomington City Council because I want to be a voice for the concerns and priorities of all the people of Ward 7 – gathering their ideas, representing their viewpoints on the Council, and connecting them to resources and information. I also see myself as a partner with other officials for the good of the larger Bloomington-Normal community, educating myself on the priorities and needs of other parts of the community and finding common ground. Listening, synthesizing, and connecting are tools that I have honed throughout my life and make me effective as a representative of not only the diverse neighborhood that I call my home but also amid the diverse viewpoints represented on the Bloomington City Council itself.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRESSING ISSUES FACING THE VOTERS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

Health and safety encompass the wellbeing of the whole self – body, mind, and spirit – and touch on many issues, from green space to infrastructure to economic opportunity to social justice to government transparency. Moreover, I see fostering healthy working relationships not only between people who agree but between people who disagree as one of the biggest challenges facing us. Americans have spent a lot of time recently screaming at one another rather than talking with and listening to one another, and, if we are to make progress on the many big and small issues – from pandemic to potholes – that we face, elected officials need to show the kind of leadership that allows us to disagree and debate while still being in relationship as neighbors.



