

Brett Heinisch (R-District 3) Responses to Heading Home Candidate Survey for the May 2, 2023 Bloomington Council Primary Election

1. What do you see as the most effective strategies to strengthen housing security in our community, ensuring that everyone has a safe, stable place to live?

I believe the main way to improve housing security is to prioritize homes over temporary housing. People are more likely to stay in areas where they can own property and maintain it. Reviewing housing development proposals would increase the number of people being able to afford homes and improve investment in our community.

The city must also make sure its buildings are up to code, well built, and safe to live. For that reason, it is important to make sure our buildings are free of mold and other issues following their creation. I will make sure, if elected, our contractors and employees are making sure the buildings are maintained and safe for residents.

We must also make sure our community is safe for the region and this will require expanded law enforcement. If elected, I will work with our police and first responders to reduce crime and protect our citizens so that they have a pleasant environment in which to live. This will help promote security.

Houses can also only be afforded if we have good and stable jobs in the area attracting workers. One of my priorities will be to make sure that we are attracting high quality jobs that will improve wages so that people can afford good homes. Admittedly, with the economy currently being where it is and layoffs happening at our biggest employees, this will be trickier to accomplish. Still, our ability to prioritize jobs that will grow our economy will improve opportunities for home ownership.

2. What are your top 3 council legislative priorities to address the scarcity of low-income housing in Bloomington?]

These are my following 3 priorities:

a. My goal is to expand our relationship with the county council to find good territory for the building of houses. I have had a conversation with a member of the city council and I know there is good territory and land to build houses for those moving into the area.

So I will be prioritizing a collaborative approach with different government institutions in the county to find good areas to build good homes.

b. I believe there are many private and non-profit institutions that could also work to expand our opportunities to provide affordable housing. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity help provide housing for those who have a need for it without being able to afford it. The city government should prioritize its expansion of working with nonprofits

to building housing that will attract individuals into the area to help improve our community.

c. As previously stated, we need to prioritize improving the jobs in the area so that individuals can afford homes. A lot of current priorities are on student housing and our economy is focused on IU. If we want people to move into the area to raise families and engage into the community, we need to build jobs that will help improve the likelihood of long term workers coming into the area.

3. What actions should the City of Bloomington take to reduce homelessness, and what would you do on council to implement those actions?

There are a variety of actions the city can do to address homelessness. One way to do so is to build a facility for drug addicts to recover while working to both pay off their time at said facility and make an income. This will help keep addicts off the street which would reduce crime. Such a facility has been proposed by State Rep. Dave Hall and based on a similar facility in Jackson County. If brought to Bloomington, it would help us address the homelessness crisis.

Another option is to increase patrols and policing by the city government. If we keep our areas safe for tourists, students, and full time residents, we will increase security and reduce interactions like the bus stabbing earlier this year. For this reason, we must make sure that we have enough police and patrols to keep the city secure.

There must also be greater work with nonprofits to address issues facing the homeless to make sure that their needs are being met. There are a variety of institutions like the Community Kitchen and the Shalom Community Center that can address their needs. We must work with these institutions to make sure the issues facing the homeless are being addressed and that they are moving to a more stable living situation.