

Envision Greater Fond du Lac – 2025 City Council Candidate Survey

*Thank you for your willingness to serve our community. Envision Greater Fond du Lac advocates for policies that support economic development, workforce growth, and business-friendly environments. Your responses will help our members better understand your vision for Fond du Lac's future. ***Please keep your responses to 200 words or less****

Economic Development & Business Growth

1. What policies or initiatives would you support to attract and retain businesses in Fond du Lac, particularly in high-growth sectors like manufacturing, healthcare, and technology?

We maintain all the features that make Fond du Lac a good place to live, work and operate a business: Good infrastructure, good public safety, good amenities (like parks) and good schools. We create TID districts, bring sewer, water and roads to new developments. We invest tax dollar in the rehabilitation of blighted areas. In partnership with the county and NEB, there is now a permanent stage at the County fairgrounds.

We need to market our unique advantages; central location, great recreational opportunities, and (still relatively) affordable housing costs. "Sell what you've got, not what you're not"

2. What are the top three issues the City of Fond du Lac faces during the next four years and your plans to address them?

Housing: We continue to build new infrastructure. We've created TIDs to rehabilitate blighted areas into housing.

City employee attraction and retention: Just like private businesses, the City has to compete for talent in the labor market. We will be doing a wage study to make sure our compensation is competitive to attract and retain our workforce.

Child care: The lack of affordable child care prevents potential workers with young families from either moving here or reentering the workforce. My plan is to work with staff and my colleagues to do what we can.

3. What is your vision for fostering a vibrant, business-friendly Fond du Lac?

Continue to do what I discussed in my first answer, but also we are proceeding with the North Main Plan (which includes the Saputo property), and we will start on the Riverfront plan next year. We have supported downtown development through grants and the rehabilitation of historic buildings like Dillingers, which will open this year as a restaurant incubator/food court. We contributed to the rehabilitation of the Brickle building into store fronts and apartments. We created a TID district at the Fives property and hope to announce a partner for that project soon.

Workforce & Talent Development

1. Workforce shortages remain a key challenge for local businesses. How would you work with Envision, educational institutions, and employers to expand workforce training and talent retention efforts?

The city has little it can directly do in terms of workforce training (we do not control schools). Work force retention depends on how well employees are paid and treated by their employer. We are doing a wage study at the City to make sure we have competitive wages and benefits for our employees.

2. Homelessness has been a subject of several City Council meetings in the past year. What do you see as the most effective role the City can play in addressing homelessness in Fond du Lac?

We had a situation where a small number of the homeless were adversely affecting downtown businesses and our library. We acted very quickly to at least move the problems created by that subset of the homeless. But the problem is much larger, unseen and misunderstood by most people. A fundamental problem is the lack of affordable housing and that's where the city can do something.

Housing & Infrastructure

1. The availability of diverse and affordable housing is crucial for economic growth. Currently, demand for housing far outpaces the supply in the City. What solutions do you propose?

New housing creation has traditionally been the job of the private sector. There is strong public opposition and suspicion of government involvement in housing. However, we have supported the creation of new housing through grants, the building of infrastructure and other development tools like the creation of TID districts. We have provided direct investments in projects like the Brooke street projects and the Brickle building. We created a TID district at the Fives site and have committed to over \$3 million in infrastructure investments to support the creation of potentially hundreds of new apartments.

As a result of the Housing study, we are optimizing our plans and operations. For example, we approved ADUs at our last council meeting.

Business-Friendly Policies & Government Efficiency

1. How would you ensure that city policies, regulations, and permitting processes support a pro-business environment while maintaining responsible governance?

We continue to do what we've been doing. The City's finances are in great shape. We continue to provide services to the citizens and despite Covid, high interest rates and inflation, water and sewer rates have not risen. Anytime a suggestion has been made to improve the way things are done, we work on it. I personally was very involved in the rewriting of the Alcohol demerit program last year. We are constantly tweaking zoning, within the constraints of state law, to accommodate business requests.

2. If elected, how will you nurture and maintain a relationship with the local business community?

By continuing to do what I've been doing for the last four years. When a business has contacted me, I have done what I can to answer their questions or when necessary, intercede with City departments on their behalf.

3. What are your top 2 priorities for the City Council and why?

To work cooperatively with my colleagues and staff. We've built the most productive and smooth running relationship between staff and Council in years.

To continue to improve the on-boarding process for new council members.

4. If elected, are you willing to work with Envision Greater Fond du Lac on economic development? How

Yes, We have been working toward an agreement with Envision to perform specific tasks that would be useful to the City.