

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

**JIM**

**RON**

## FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Jim rubberstamps the city's annual budget each year with little critical oversight by him or the City Council. The budget is allowed to increase annually based on staff recommendation.

I will ask for a full and complete forensic audit of city expenses to identify each source of funding. I will propose increasing funding for essential city services and identify areas to reduce wasteful spending, increase efficiency, and increase economies of scale.

Jim commits future tax dollars to rebate developers in the form of TIF tax increment financing which prevents any new tax revenue from flowing into city coffers for 20 years or more.

I expect tax revenue from new development to generate new revenue for our city coffers that will cover their share of city services and expenses. I will propose a stop to the practice of using of TIF "slush" funds for other city purposes.

Due to Jim's lack of oversight of the city manager and finances over the last two decades, several city owned properties have fallen into disrepair due to poor budget planning, including Centennial Lakes fountains, ADA upgrades to all neighborhood parks, and Braemar Park and Braemar ice arena which recently required a bailout by residents in an emergency sales tax referendum to provide an additional \$39.5 million tax dollars.

I will ask for review of the city budgeting process to include planning for the regular maintenance and redevelopment costs for our parks and other public amenities rather than relying on new taxes such as a sales tax to generate emergency funds.

## SMART DEVELOPMENT

Jim has repeatedly voted to eliminate the current city zoning and create custom PUD zoning for development based on what the developer asks for, not what the city requires.

I will support enforcing current zoning laws, including height transitions between tall buildings and neighborhoods. I will respect the resident-approved comprehensive plan and small area plans for new development.

Jim routinely encourages greater height when new developments are proposed. He was the lone dissenting vote in favor of approving the 26-story high-rise Estelle project in 2017 directly next to the single-family Cornelia neighborhood.

I will protect the building height transitions and character of the residential neighborhoods, as called for in the city's comprehensive plan.

Jim allows developers to buy-out of the affordable housing requirement at a sub-market rate of \$175,000 per housing unit.

I will eliminate any option for the developer to buy out of the city's affordable housing requirements.

Under Jim's watch, city decisions on TIF expenditures are opaque and difficult for residents to know about.

I will propose that the city prepare a line-item TIF report twice a year that includes all city TIF expenditures, amounts paid, and what they were spent on.

## TRANSPARENCY

Jim hasn't held a town hall in years and asks residents to form a walking group in order to discuss issues during his monthly Walks with the Mayor.

I will hold regularly scheduled office hours and neighborhood town halls for the mayor and council members to meet directly with residents to hear their feedback. Residents should not be limited to attending City Council meetings in order to be heard.

Jim claims to use resident feedback from the city's Better Together website. He routinely disregards the results, even when hundreds of residents recently weighed in against a particular proposal. His reason? "It's not about counting noses." He said it was his job to decide what's best for the city.

Any idea for new city initiatives or development proposals outside the scope of the comprehensive plan, will start with polling residents on the need and priority. If there is not enough support, we should not proceed.

Jim and city council members are one and the same members of the Edina Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA).

I will make the city council and HRA separate and distinct bodies to avoid an obvious conflict of interest and include residents as members to get broader resident input and perspectives.

Jim supported a change to the city's written meeting minutes format and provide select summary of the council's actions without discussion included for the sake of brevity.

I will ask for detailed city council discussion points to be included in the published meeting minutes. Residents should not have to go back to watch a tape to understand what transpired during city council meetings.

Jim does not support any term limit for mayor.

I will propose and abide by maximum term limits for the office of mayor.