

# City of Knoxville Mayor Candidates:

**Michael Andrews – Did not respond**

**Fletcher Burkhardt**



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** I believe we should begin to market Knoxville better. We live in one of the greatest cities in the country and need to do better with letting others know. If we can begin to attract more people off the interstate on their way to and from a destination, companies will take notice. Meaning if there are people spending money in Knoxville, companies will want to be here. This means jobs will be created. Also, we need better public transit, we need to get rid of our entertainment tax and begin to offer more than just bars. These are just a few things.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** I think this location should be used for a mental health facility and affordable housing units. I do not support the police station proposal.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** We must market Knoxville. We are located on the intersection of three of the biggest interstates in the country and we need get people to stop here to spend money. We have to get rid of our entertainment tax and bring back events like Boomsday and Sundown in the City. I have proposed bringing back Boomsday and turning it into a weekend long music festival like Lola or Music Midtown. Both of these events generate huge revenue for their cities. In Tennessee alone the music industry is a 4.9 billion dollar industry that supports over 61,000 jobs and over 5,500 businesses. Knoxville can do better in the entertainment field. Obviously I do not believe this is the only way, but I know it is one of the best.

## Indya Kincannon



**Website:** <http://kincannonformayor.com>

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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** To attract new high quality jobs to Knoxville we must have a well-educated work-force and a high quality of life. A well-educated work-force means schools that prepare students for jobs in every sector, whether medicine, teaching, or plumbing. As Mayor I will connect people to post high school apprenticeship opportunities and elevate career paths in trades such as electricians, HVAC repair and welding. These are high-skilled, well-paid jobs that cannot be bought on-line or shipped overseas. During my 10 years on the School Board we strengthened our magnet and Project GRAD Schools and started the L&N STEM Academy, Career Magnet Academy, and the International Baccalaureate program. I was an early and ardent supporter of Community Schools, which helps schools address social and health issues, so teachers can concentrate on academics. A high quality of life means a city that values diversity and inclusiveness, a city where every person can reach his or her full potential.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** Since Tennova chose to shut down this hospital my priority would be to make sure the property is converted to a positive re-use as soon as possible so we avoid blight. I support Mayor Rogero's plan to use part of the property for a new KPD headquarters, with a small area for KFD and a newly constructed space for our city courts. Our first responders' current facilities are woefully out-dated, and the St. Mary's site fits their needs as far as space, parking, central location and security. For the remaining office tower and historic hospital building I would discuss ideas with the community, issue an RFP guided by that input and see what proposals surface. A nursing school in the tower would connect well to Fulton's school of Health Sciences. There's a pressing need for affordable housing, especially for seniors and people with disabilities. Given the location so close to downtown II could envision a mixed use space for residential, office and retail.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** The best ways to generate increased revenue are redeveloping blighted and under-utilized properties, and creating a city that attracts new businesses and encourages existing businesses to expand. This requires a city that unleashes the entrepreneurial spirit of our people, a city that is run efficiently and transparently, a city that supports the arts, a city that is sustainable and resilient, in economic and human terms. To catalyze redevelopment efforts we will make sure our infrastructure investments are aligned towards the greatest need, so underserved areas start to attract more private investment. Streetscapes and facade improvement initiatives are part of this approach, along with making sure current and prospective developers know about the tax advantages available via federal Opportunity Zones.

## Eddie Mannis



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** Quality of life is important to attracting new companies to Knoxville. From my perspective, we have a great quality of life here but we need to do a better job on promoting. We must demonstrate that we are an open, welcoming and inclusive city. We have a ways to go but our administration must never lose sight of this goal. We also must work on making Knoxville a city that is easier to do business with. Our practices in the past of not represented this to be true. We must also work toward keeping some of the bright minds from UT and the Anderson School of Entrepreneurship and encourage and put incentives in place to keep them in Knoxville to nurture their ideas, grow their products and start their companies here. We must also work to retain more of the companies that we here by asking the question.....what can we do better? As Mayor, I will work with our partners to actively recruit new companies and listen to the concerns of our existing companies on ways we can improve.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** The Tennova site is one of the last amazing sites in our city. I would work with the community to make sure that we find the best use for the site so that it could continue to be an asset. My goal would be for it not to be consumed by a central large police headquarters. I would prefer that we put precincts locations within our communities and leave the Tennova site for a smaller administrative building. The admin building could also be located on many other sites as well. This site could be developed as a mixed use development that could include office space, possibly workforce or market rate housing. I am also a huge advocate for working with LMU and possibly put their school of Dentistry and/or nursing on this site. It could also have housing for law students. There are many opportunities but most importantly working with the community every step of the way will be important.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** We must work on increasing tourism within our city. The former commissioner of tourism and I had a conversation several months ago. The State estimates that over 60% of the 12 million visitors to Sevier County go up and down 40, right through Knoxville. When asked what % stopped in Knoxville, he said it was VERY low. We need a mechanism to attract these tourists to stop in Knoxville. In my opinion, we need something that will do for Knoxville what the Aquarium has done for Chattanooga.

## Calvin Skinner



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** The qualities of an attractive is not only an emphasis around diversity, but A greater emphasis upon inclusion. Diversity speaks to our differences (culture, gender, etc.) and inclusion assures all groups have access to all available opportunities to thrive — Representation matters! Therefore, I am always intentional to engage all communities. My life’s work reflects this as well as my mayoral campaign. We have every background working with us to embrace the call of One Knoxville, One Vision. This is the posture I will maintain as mayor.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary’s Hospital campus?*

**A:** I am a proponent of community input as they may know best what could be useful. Additionally, this is an opportunity to have community involvement, providing ownership and pride for the community and the city. There are examples where community input for redevelopment projects offered creative uses of spaces that paid dividends. Such an example is a shared work space offering small businesses offering affordable rates to use the facility.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** The best ways to generate increased revenue is through cultural preservation and live events. My experience in live event logistics have exposed me to this growing industry. Through Knoxville, and East Tennessee’s, rich culture, there is great potential to capitalize on delivering high quality events.

## Marshall Stair



**Website:** <http://marshallstair.com>

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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** I have three priorities that are critical in attracting quality jobs. First, we must focus on creating a great quality of life for all citizens. Investments in arts and culture and parks and trails, are important to improving the lives of Knoxvilleans, but these amenities are critical in recruiting and retaining talent and businesses. Second, we must embrace a culture of creativity, technology, and innovation. We can do this by expanding the Entrepreneur Center and creating an International Business Council. In addition, I would fund a feasibility study for broadband to improve the quality and access to high speed internet. Lastly, we must be intentional about our diversity and inclusion efforts. Diversity and inclusion are not only morally right, they are necessary to attracting top talent and good paying jobs. I would create the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to achieve these goals.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** I have been supportive of the plan to locate the new public safety building at the former St. Mary's site. One of the reasons I support this plan is because the site would likely be left vacant and blighted for years if left to the private market. I have toured the current facility and we need a new one as KPD leadership has been advocating for this for decades. This centrally-located headquarters will allow KPD and KFD to have a state of the art facility to more efficiently respond to calls, and provide better services for the city of Knoxville. In addition, we help stabilize a fragile neighborhood by bringing in city employees. In addition, I would work to partner with other organizations, such as the LMU School of Nursing to fill out the campus with quality development. Lastly, I am excited about the potential relationship between Fulton and KPD to help address our recruitment challenges and improve police and community relations.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** The city's primary revenue comes from property and sales taxes. My goal would be to continue the city's current momentum by recruiting businesses, restaurants, residents, arts, and culture to the city, which will help grow the tax base. Most importantly, we must grow sustainably, and the growth must improve the lives of all Knoxvilleans.

# Knoxville City Council at Large Seat A Candidates:

**Lynne Fugate**



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** The most critical thing that a city needs to attract well-paying jobs is a workforce with the skills those companies require. I know from my years on the Board of Education that excellent schools are the first step in meeting that requirement. Therefore the city must continue to work with the Board of Education to make sure that our public schools are the best in the Southeast. We are fortunate to have several wonderful post-secondary educational opportunities in our community. These institutions allow our citizens to continue their education and improve their skills so that they have options for employment. Another factor considered in corporate relocations is a community's quality of life. Quality of life issues typically include; a thriving downtown, low cost of living, affordable housing, public safety, access to healthcare, access to recreational areas such as parks, greenways, and other public spaces, and a vibrant arts community.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** City Council has already approved the purchase of the site and is moving ahead with the relocation of the Police Department, Fire Department, and City Court. Therefore what is left to be developed is the historic hospital site and adjacent property. At this time, LMU is already using some of the hospital for its nursing school so I think that should stay and perhaps other health science programs could be added there. The expansion of post-secondary healthcare programs would be good for the area since there is typically a shortage of trained healthcare workers. This also would complement nicely the School of Health Science that is at Fulton High School today. The city should work closely with the area neighborhoods, as the city has said it would, to see what types of businesses and services residents would like to see on the adjacent property.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** The two major sources of revenue for the City are property taxes and sales taxes. The best way to increase property tax is to put more property on the tax role. One way to do that is for the city to continue its efforts to reclaim blighted property and get it in the hands of someone who will rehabilitate the property and make it more valuable. I would also like to see the City look at using current incentive tools and look for new ways to stimulate commercial and mixed use development on the corridors leading from downtown; Magnolia Ave, Chapman Hwy, Broadway, and Kingston Pike. This would also increase the property tax base. The creation of new businesses in the city along these corridors and elsewhere will also create more sales tax revenue. The city must grow its tax base especially because the Hall Income Tax is being totally phased out within the next couple of years. Any loss of revenue needs to be replaced or the services the city provides can be affected

## Charles Lomax



**Website:** <http://www.electlomax.com>

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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** Of the qualities desirable to attract new businesses, I believe affordability and great schools are two of the most important components that need to be considered. Corporations and businesses of every type are concerned about their bottom line. Relocation has to be financially feasible for the organization itself, as well as for its employees. Employees also want to work and live in areas that have a quality education system for their children. Matters of connectivity and a sustainable infrastructure also should be taken into consideration, especially if the relocating businesses are hauling or moving freight. Additionally, a city that does not have amenities such as parks, greenspace, and diversity of culture are often overlooked by businesses looking to expand into other locations.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** I believe the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus would be a hospital. Tennova's decision to vacate the area left a noticeable gap in emergency medical coverage in East Knox County, and as a result, lives are potentially placed in jeopardy. Because we cannot undo what has been done, I support efforts to convert the campus into the new home for our police officers and firefighters. The location is convenient, and the neighborhood appears supportive of the endeavor. With the additional space, I would potentially like to see another place, similar to the Change Center, for youth in the community or an area promoting entrepreneurship for members of the community.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** First, I think you have to investigate wasteful spending (if there be any) to see where we might be able to save funds in that way. As far as generating revenue, it can be generated by minimizing the number of blighted properties and getting them back on the books. There are a number of properties throughout the city that are not meeting their maximum potential and as a result are costing the city money. Also, I believe that we have to be more judicious in the disbursement of PILOTs and TIFs so that those entities who can still proceed without them are still moving forth.

# Knoxville City Council at Large Seat B Candidates:

David Hayes



Website: <http://votedavidhayes.com>

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**Q:** All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?

**A:** First and foremost, the city must prioritize the needs of its residents, communities, unions, environment, and local businesses, putting people over profit. The city of Knoxville must be intentional about the out of town businesses it attracts, and cease being a place where corporations come to pay low wages, low taxes, and pollute our environment. The city should prioritize businesses who are willing to sign community benefits agreements with unions and community organizations so development can benefit all residents. Furthermore, the city must take an active role in building a sustainable local economy that poor and working class, Black, Brown, and all people benefit from and participate in.

**Q:** What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?

**A:** A hospital was the best use of St. Mary's Hospital campus and it's unfortunate that local governments did not do more to prevent the hospital from leaving. Currently, there is no proof or data to confirm that renovating St. Mary's Hospital campus into a police/fire headquarters is cheaper than renovating the current police station. Furthermore, moving the city courthouse from its location in the current police station (which is a block away from the bus station) to St. Mary's is an unnecessary hardship on bus riders. The city must have a larger imagination when it comes to the use of St. Mary's and involve the surrounding community and the students, families, teachers, and staff at Fulton High School to identify the best use of the space. Personally, I would like to see the ownership of the land transferred to a community land trust, with social services, healthcare, cooperatives, and/or small businesses using the space.

**Q:** What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?

**A:** Uplifting the poor and working class must become a central way we build our tax base as a city. Having properly funded social services, community resources, and housing are investments into people that will allow our tax base and revenue to grow while also ensuring that our city works for everyone. Poor and working class Knoxville residents currently pay too much of their income in taxes due to our high sales taxes while wealthy corporations and large businesses pay low wages to their employees and low taxes. It's time for wealthy institutions to pay their fair share and properly contribute to our communities.



## Janet Testerman



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** During my time at Scripps Networks, we had this discussion often as we looked to recruit talent to Knoxville. As happened with companies like Scripps, Whittle and Regal Entertainment, once people choose Knoxville for a career opportunity, they establish roots because of the quality of life Knoxville provides. In recruiting, however, I maintain a city needs a 360 experience that includes a vibrant downtown, arts and culture, culinary experiences, outdoor recreation, which includes transportation options and walkability, along with quality schools and safe neighborhoods. On the flip side, companies looking to relocate look for a skilled workforce, and I feel Knoxville offers that, especially as we invest more on vocational skills education and training. Affordability is also key, and Knoxville is attractive because of our low taxes and has been on multiple best-places-to-live lists, which companies seek by looking at accolades a city has received as part of their decision-making process.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** The city has already acquired the former St. Mary's Hospital campus and is in the process of site planning for the Knoxville Police Department and Knoxville Fire Department. That said, I have met with the leadership of KPD and KFD who are all excited about the move to a new location, which will grant them more space but also help streamline the resources of our top first-responder agencies along with the city municipal court system. In addition, spending time with members of the 5th District, I have heard nothing but an overwhelming response from residents in favor of the relocation and will be committed to working with the neighborhood on the use of the old hospital and its grounds. I know there is conversation as well with members of the private sector to lease any additional space that would likely result in shared responsibility with certain overhead expenses.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** Discovery, Regal and Gannett/KNS are divesting/transitioning in Knoxville, and with the investment of Berkshire Hathaway in Pilot/Flying J and Clayton, the long-term presence of these companies remains unclear. With so much transition among our largest employers, we need to leverage our city for opportunities that create jobs as well as build/expand our tax base to, in turn, provide, support and fund much-needed social services. The new Chamber leader is also a critical role for business development and selling our city to prospective employers looking to relocate to Knoxville. Another revenue generator is finding solutions for vacant properties. Blight isn't an option, so let's promote new business and local entrepreneurs to get these properties back on the tax rolls and generating income. Having been a small business owner, I know the blood, sweat and tears a start-up takes, but getting the doors open is not enough. We need to be self-sustaining and set them up for long-term success.

# Knoxville City Council at Large Seat C Candidates:

**Amy Midis**



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** (1) City staff and administration needs to be a resource for new industries and businesses wanting to operate in Knoxville. We are economic partners and our success as a city is dependent on their financial success. (2) A trained and skilled workforce is essential especially in the current tight labor market. Their success as a business is directly linked to the skilled level of workforce they employ. (3) An attractive and vibrant community that appeals to the many generations wanting to make Knoxville their home. As individuals age, their priorities change. While job opportunities may incentivize employees to move to Knoxville, we need to continually respond to the changing needs of our residents.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** I support the relocation of the safety building and city courts to the former St. Mary's Hospital campus. I would like to see extensive outreach with the Oakwood Lincoln Park neighborhood before city administration and city council decides on the future of the remaining parcel. The neighborhood has a history of being directly affected by businesses being located within their boundaries: beginning with the C.B. Atkin Furniture Manufacturing firm and the Southern Railway, and most recently the Fort Loudon Recycling Facility. I would advocate that the citizens of that community be directly engaged regarding any future development within its borders.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** Property taxes is the city budget's largest revenue stream. Additional property tax revenues could be best generated by re-purposing vacant or underutilized buildings along our corridors into new commercial spaces or new residential housing. Generational changes in the aging baby boomer population as well as the younger Millennial and Gen Z age groups are creating a new demand for urban living. The current and previous administrations have incentivizing economic development of downtown properties with PILOTS and TIFS as well as expanding opportunity zones to increase capital reinvestment in the underserved areas of town. I would continue this type of stimulus, but would more aggressively support economic development that naturally stimulates the demand for these types of sustainable developments, eventually leading to greater economic opportunities for the residents of Knoxville.

## Amelia Parker



**Website:** <http://VoteAmeliaParker.com>

**Campaign Phone:** (865) 851-8561

**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** Knoxville is a beautiful city with some of the friendliest, most laid back folks you'll ever meet. It is also a transportation hub, with interstate 40 and 75 running through our city, and 81 just down the road. Knoxville is also within a day's drive of half of the continental U.S. Our city is truly a gem that is ripe for businesses to locate. To attract businesses that pay their employees well, we must be a city that reflects the values of ensuring the well-being of our residents. A company that pays a living wage to their employees would not want to relocate to a city that does not prioritize taking care of the most vulnerable in our city or addressing growing wage gaps and poverty in our city. Knoxville must exhibit a commitment to the well-being of all of our residents by making greater investments in social services, addressing our affordable housing crisis, and promoting economic development among our lowest wage earners to attract businesses that value paying their employees well

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** The absence of a healthcare facility in various parts of our community has compounding effects on our residents, effects that have already begun with the closing of the former St. Mary's/Tennova North campus. Recently, I learned that the Walgreens Pharmacy on Broadway is no longer 24 hours. Therefore, those living in the area who experience a prescription-related health scare in the middle of the night must now travel farther to reach a pharmacy or drugstore. In thinking about what should go in the former St. Mary's, the city must promote healthy neighborhoods by helping secure the services needed in each part of our city. With the closing of Baptist Hospital and now the Tennova North campus, much of our health services within the city limits are now concentrated in West Knox. Long term, this could lead to poorer health outcomes for our residents living in other parts of the city. Consideration of an urgent care facility at that location in partnership with the county should continue.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** A city with a high rate of poverty like Knoxville is in need of increasing our workforce so that we have a larger population participating in our local economy. Vacant buildings in our city can be put to good use for residential and commercial purposes with tax incentives and low interest/no interest loans offered by the city. The city should prioritize those parts of the city and members of our community experiencing the highest rates of poverty. We can also increase revenue by applying a small tax to new amenities that come to town, such as the electric scooters, so that perhaps a dollar of each purpose goes directly back to the city and could be used to fund a city priority such as making our sidewalks compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act by adding curb cuts throughout the city.

## Hubert Smith



**Campaign Phone:** (865) 414-8557

**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** One attraction is a well-educated workforce from which to choose when hiring. Consequently, good schools for their families providing they have children. The absence of a state income tax is an attraction. Moderate to low property tax is also incentive. A very active and supportive chamber of commerce. Good housing choices. Opportunities for family recreation and entertainment.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** Assuming the decision remains, my job is to do everything within my power to make it work for the Knoxville Police and Fire departments, Municipal Court, Civil Service and any other departments that may relocate. The remaining part of the campus is an unknown. I don't have the answers for best use. It's possible that offers will be made to make the decision easy. It's also possible that the surrounding neighborhoods will have a role to play in the decision-making.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** Growth is an easy one. Particularly business growth, but tourism growth is the cleaner way. Lodging benefits, which generates sales tax to the city. Residential growth helps all the way around.

## Bob Thomas



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**Campaign Phone:** (865) 309-4364

**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** Our government needs leaders with ideas, not people who just react to whatever situation pops up. That's one of the reasons I presented the Downtown Tram idea with no taxpayer funding - to get people thinking about the future of our city and what it could be. If we want a growing, thriving city of the future, the city will have to attract young families. I believe people want a city that is looking toward its future. We will need a good quality of life, good education, mobility and fast internet just to mention a few things. My experience in broadcasting, working on dozens of community boards for decades, serving this community in many capacities and as a business owner, give me an edge on how to move our city into the future and attract the types of businesses that will ensure quality jobs for our citizens.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** A hospital layout may provide a good transitional building for the homeless or victims of domestic abuse in need of temporary shelter. There are also meeting rooms there that could be beneficial for counseling, class rooms and various gatherings. A police precinct could also be located there. Moving all the safety departments and police department to that building may be expensive for all of the improvements needed. Plus, access in and out of the building does not seem to lend itself for a constant flow of police vehicles. First and foremost I would get more public input.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** First, the city needs to become more business friendly. Too many times I have heard investors and business owners saying that it is much easier to do business in other cities rather than Knoxville. I would like to see the city take stock in itself with a survey of businesses that have moved into our city and find out what we can do better. Second, I would seek out new ideas that are on the forefront of technology and business today and bring those ideas and qualities to our city. Attract entrepreneurs by turning empty buildings into "think tanks" for startups. Third, but not last, the city needs to maintain a high quality of life and educational possibilities that everyone wants for their families.

## David Williams



**Website:** <http://Dawill64@yahoo.com>

**Campaign Phone:** (865) 256-1828

**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** The quality of our people attracts new residents, visitors, and jobs. Warm, friendly, hardworking, and caring describe Knoxville. A sense of community history and pride prevails. We are quick to help a neighbor. We don't wait on government to act. We the people organize then act. We help those who can not help themselves. We promote free enterprise not more government. We apply common sense and wonder why the government doesn't. We are open and free to speak our minds. We respect neighborhoods and honor the unique qualities of each. We prefer to let our actions speak for us. We cherish the knowledge we are all God's children!

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** The best use is what the neighborhood wants! Restoring and preserving unique buildings showcase our history and pride. The neighborhood is echoing this feeling. I believe we should involve young people. Let a senior architect class at UT show their prospective. Top priority is getting good cost estimates. Those who have good track records in restoration should be consulted. Let the project tell the story of what makes us Knoxville!

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** Promote free enterprise! Promote neighborhood friendly businesses! Those that enhance characteristics, values, and history of their communities will thrive. That is how you build the tax base. I have worked with businesses in Pond Gap with this same concept. It works! It can work citywide! Eliminate red tape and be forthcoming and open and honest! Allow people to succeed and don't force bad projects on them. Those that know best are those folks in each neighborhood.

# Knoxville City Council District 5 Candidates:

## Charles Al-Bawi



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** A city should have two main qualities to attract businesses that offer living wages and benefits. The first and most obvious quality is a big pool of educated and happy workers. Second, the city should offer logistics that will enable the businesses to find and supply their customer base. Knoxville has both of those qualities. First, we are blessed to have quality educational institutions such as TCAT, Pellissippi, LMU, and the University of Tennessee. These institutions recruit and train a workforce capable of performing in any field. Second, Knoxville is at the junction of I-40 and I-75. We connect North to South and East to West in the United States. We are a one day drive from fifty percent of the population in the United States. We are also right beside one of the most visited National Parks in the Country. Our location provides businesses a remarkable advantage that other cities cannot. Our labor force and logistics provide an advantage that should attract any business.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** I believe that our City needs two main resources that the St. Mary's site can provide. The first is affordable housing. The site is large enough to provide a substantial source of affordable housing. That could mean creating a future KCDC apartment complex, an apartment complex aimed at working class individuals who want to live in a conveniently located neighborhood, or a cooperative apartment complex that provides a mix of affordable and affluent apartments. The second option would be to use the area to establish the in-patient mental health care facility that this city needs. These options could be created instead of the Public Safety Complex or in conjunction with it.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** First, we can increase our tax base by actively addressing our housing needs. We would look at restoring blighted properties. We can work to expand our many housing programs that would improve access to housing for those who would not otherwise be able to afford it. We can also work with property owners to improve the quality of their current residence. All three of these would increase the City's revenue from property taxes by expanding our tax base and by increasing property values throughout the City. Second, we can increase revenue from our sales tax. We can bring in new businesses that are unique to this region that encourage customers to spend in Knoxville. We can also increase the disposable income of our residents by bringing in high paying jobs and by making the City more affordable to the poor and working class. To achieve this we can expand many programs that already exist such as our summer programs for children that essentially offer reduced cost childcare to our residents

## Charles Thomas



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**Q:** *All cities want to attract new businesses that will provide its residents with well paying jobs. What qualities do you think a city should have to attract these kinds of businesses?*

**A:** Knoxville has made great strides in recent years in amenities which make it an attractive place to both live and locate a business. As a city, we should continue our efforts in correcting urban blight, becoming more pedestrian and bike friendly, improving bus and trolley service, protecting our historic buildings and unique architecture, encouraging the arts, and highlighting our rich history. The expansion of linear parks and greenways that connect neighborhoods and the development of the Urban Wilderness has attracted people here both as visitors and residents. Calculated investments in these areas not only attract outside talent and businesses, but also encourage local talent and businesses to remain here. I want to help continue that progress.

**Q:** *What is the best use of the former St. Mary's Hospital campus?*

**A:** City Council has voted for this abandoned site to be the new headquarters for the KPD, Fire Department, and City Court. Considering the likelihood that the area otherwise would be vacant indefinitely and deteriorate, this appears to be the best available option, and I support it. As this will involve roughly only half the area, the remaining approximately 4 acres would be available for other uses. Lincoln Memorial University is interested in an existing office tower as a facility for their nursing program, and I would encourage that. The remaining area has great positive potential for the surrounding area, and an open process involving all stakeholders and the surrounding residents and neighborhoods is essential. A variety of options including possible mixed-use commercial, affordable housing and greenspace are among options that can be considered, with the possibility that more than one could be incorporated. Public input is of utmost importance.

**Q:** *What do you think are the best ways for the city to generate increased revenue?*

**A:** Knoxville still has a great deal of blighted property, vacant lots, and surface parking which could be reclaimed, restored and put back on the tax rolls. This would provide more opportunities for both businesses and affordable housing. The City should continue a close dialogue with the business community, and mutually beneficial public/private partnerships should be explored and encouraged. Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) and tax incremental financing (TIF) are among the tools that can be used, and when carefully and judiciously applied, can produce beneficial outcomes that enable a business to solidify itself at the outset with the City receiving an opportunity for increased revenue from a lower tax-generating site.