

124 SW Adams, Ste. 300  
Peoria, Illinois 61602-1388  
P: 309.676.0755  
F: 309.676.7534

## PROGRESSIVE PEORIA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE CANDIDATE SURVEY

### Peoria City Council at large survey

Name: Gary V. Sandberg

Occupation: Sole Proprietor Gary Sandberg, Architecture

Address: 1810 N. Bigelow

Phone: Yes

Email: Yes

Please include a resume and any campaign literature that you would like to share with the Progressive Peoria PAC.

### What are your top three priorities if elected?

- 1 Providing Basic Essential Services for Taxes in the most cost effective, efficient manner
- 2 Encourage business and residential investment thru delivery of municipal core services and programs that add value while being respective of revenue sources i.e., tax rates
- 3 Build trust between the electorate, business community and the City so that the responsibilities of each is mutually respected and major initiatives can be undertaken to grow this community in a reasoned, financially sound and progressive manner.

### What are the key business issues in the city and what will you do to address these issues?

1. Keeping business opportunities competitive within City of Peoria with respect to surrounding communities. I feel the City should not add levels of regulation and/or processes that make doing business more difficult. Recently I opposed additional processes for downtown business requiring additional review. Additionally I supported the ordinance to allow local businesses to determine whether they are "Smoke Free" in lieu of enacting City wide BANS that surrounding communities do NOT have.
2. Making sure that the business community has access to the basic infrastructural needs of roads, rail, water, air, and municipal services. Providing the basic building blocks that are under the responsibilities of local municipal government has always been my highest concern. I have supported and will continue to support good land use practices, investment in road systems and have been the sole voice to seek shared

124 SW Adams, Ste. 300  
Peoria, Illinois 61602-1388  
P: 309.676.0755  
F: 309.676.7534

usage of the Kellar Branch Rail line to assure competitive rail service to Pioneer Park and Averyville Industrial area. With recent Surface Transportation Board's decision to accept the withdrawal of the Petition to Discontinue Service (rail service) on the Kellar Branch, it is imperative that the Kellar Branch asset be maximized as soon as possible to maintain and expand quality rail service to Industrial users and areas.

### **What will you do to make Peoria city government more effective?**

1. Get out of the programs, services that are not the core responsibility of local municipal government or are better and more cost effectively provided by the private sector.
2. Bring to light bidding irregularities as I have done in the past that has saved the City of Peoria hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, such as the recent change in allowing competitive equal products to be specified and provided in road resurfacing projects. Because of my initiative, local business, Keystone recycled slag, is being used in our resurfacing program, saving considerable money and providing for a sound re-use of local manufacturing by product.
3. Hold City administration to delivery of programs and services essential to the City of Peoria

### **What do you believe needs to be done to make Peoria City Hall more business friendly and how will you accomplish it?**

1. Better trained, experienced and directed staff
2. Adoption of flexible results orientated laws, regulations, and ordinances that reflect the challenges of a community split between sprawling corn field development and existing urban development / redevelopment

As to which comes first, both are closely related, but until the adoption of flexible results orientated laws are completed, staff needs to have a better understanding of how their regulatory processes inter-relate with the private sector and make changes in the public sector processes wherever possible. Staff must understand, accept and relate to the fact that the public sector drives the system, not visa versa. As such, by having experienced administrators that have solid experience in the private fields and the needs of the private sector, even with existing laws our processes can be enhanced.

Then the adoption of regulations respective of the broad diversity that exists within the community must be accomplished and then after adoption, training of staff as to the results expected in lieu of the "letter of the law" will be necessary.

124 SW Adams, Ste. 300  
Peoria, Illinois 61602-1388  
P: 309.676.0755  
F: 309.676.7534

**What do you see as key budget issues facing the City of Peoria? Would you consider alternate sources of revenue other than a real estate tax increase? If so, what alternative source do you prefer?**

1. Spending resources on duplicative, redundant services/programs that are responsibility of other units of government or the private sector.

Before any alternative source is considered, we need to focus on the spending of current programs and services that should be provided by other. Only after bringing spending priorities in line with core City business expectations, should the revenues, alternative or existing be considered.

I have long been an advocate of Land Value Taxation principals that are legal and permitted in some states. The difficulty of our current real estate tax system is in the manifestly unfair evaluations that continue to exist as well as punishing thru higher taxation investment (highest and best use) and lower taxation associated with disinvestment

The best revenue sources should be progressive in nature, and/or user fee dependant.

2. City providing services that could better are outsourced to the private sector. As an example of this, I would point to the City Radio Shop which especially in the wake of GASB needs to be outsourced to private sector providers.

**How will you work to develop and maintain a cooperative intergovernmental relationship with other local units of government, particularly that of Peoria County and Peoria Public Schools?**

Because every resident in Peoria is also a resident of Peoria County and each business owner or operator in Peoria is also a business owner in Peoria County, it is essential that the City and County provide the services and programs for our shared constituencies in the most cost effective, efficient, and non duplicative manner as possible. By facilitating clear lines of communication, both formally, informally, and socially, clear definable opportunities to provide public services n the most efficient and manner can be accomplished. Breaking down Administrative barriers and / or organizational barriers need also be encouraged to provide best practice initiatives for public services for both units serving the same constituency.

The relationship with the various Public Schools Districts is somewhat different because of the multiple schools districts. Again, effective communication and listening to the differing needs and priorities between the various Schools Districts is essential. Our relationship with the largest School District. 150, and the unique relationship that 150 provides in the future success

124 SW Adams, Ste. 300  
Peoria, Illinois 61602-1388  
P: 309.676.0755  
F: 309.676.7534

of the Central City neighborhoods has to have an additional level of communication as to the interrelationship between the viability of our older neighborhoods and the programs and direction of 150. The City has to communicate and disseminate our goals and planning initiatives clearly with 150 and be willing to help financially on common projects. Likewise, if the School District is venturing in areas inconsistent with City goals or plans, it is imperative that the City communicate those goals and plans and then work to assure coordinated compliancy with the broader community needs.

**What is your opinion on the Heart of Peoria Commission's proposed form based code for targeted areas of the City?**

I have been very supportive of the concept of the form based code as it, if properly developed could provide the flexible regulations that are necessary to develop/redevelop/invest in the targeted areas. I have also championed the conversion of one way streets to two way streets and the reduction of un-necessary roadway lanes in these targeted areas to enhance the commercial viability of those areas.

**What do you believe the City should do to attract and retain businesses in the City?**

Offer and deliver municipal services in the most effective, cost effective manner to all businesses.

I do not believe the City should micro-manage the economy by offering tax supported inducements or subsidies to certain businesses at the expense of competition or ability to provide basic essential services.

**What is your position on the use of cumulative voting for the at-large council positions?**

I was elected three terms as a District representative without cumulative voting and twice as At Large with cumulative voting so I do not see that cumulative voting is the issue as much as the number of Council members that are elected by the entire City in lieu of districts. With 5 At Larges plus the Mayor, a majority of the Council is elected by the entire Community and loses the focused direction of a constituency that District Council members have. The initial Plaintiffs did NOT seek or want the 5 At Large members elected cumulatively, The Plaintiffs wanted all District representatives. It was the then sitting Council with 3 At Larges that felt the At Large representation was extremely necessary that the current system was agreed to. Cumulative voting has provided for minority leverage and election of at least one in each At Large election, so therefore I guess the desired effect has been met, but at the expense of now having the majority of the Council without a true definable constituency.

124 SW Adams, Ste. 300  
Peoria, Illinois 61602-1388  
P: 309.676.0755  
F: 309.676.7534

In short, cumulative voting doesn't matter one way or the other when the discussion should revolve around ratio of District to At Large or whether At Large representation is really beneficial or would the initial Plaintiff's demand better serve the City

**What is your position on City funding for the Economic Development Council of Central Illinois?**

Funding a "private based organization" is consistent with my philosophy of outsourcing services, programs, activities that are not core essential services. Economic development has to be approached on a regional basis and scale therefore a "Council of Central Illinois" is advantageous over a secular operation, in my opinion.

The devil is always in the details as to who pays for what and how much when surrounding areas generally contribute lesser amounts than the core City. The City always picks up a disproportionate share of the social costs of both the disenfranchised as well as the wealthy, i.e. Single Room Occupancy support and Civic Center Hotel support. As such, surrounding areas and communities often realize a greater gain for a minimal investment than the City. With a clear contract of roles and responsibilities as well as measurable performance goals, a regional based, regional funded Economic Development programs is much better than individualized attempts or organizations.

Lastly, the most inefficient system is the system we currently have with duplication both by funding EDC and developing an in-house Department level within the organization having that responsibility. In my opinion, each and every employee within the municipal organization should be educated in the vital role they have in economic development in the exercise of their job responsibilities. To fund the EDC and structure a department level organization creates the very atmosphere where individual line employees are not connected to the economic development initiatives and thereby become beuaracratc and business unfriendly