

**Greater Pensacola Chamber**  
**2020 Candidate Questionnaire**

**County Commission**

**Business Climate / Regulations Issues**

1. Rate the regulatory climate for business in Escambia County. Is it Good/Fair/Bad? Explain your answer.
  
2. Please provide any examples of how regulations have affected the life of county residents in a positive or negative way.
  
3. Name the top 3 specific county ordinances/regulations you would like to see eliminated. Explain why they should be eliminated.
  
4. What is your strategy to leverage the county's interest in regards to state and federal funding opportunities?

**Operations / Infrastructure Issues**

1. Do you see any overlap or duplication of services between the county and the city? If so, what services, and how could these services be consolidated?
  
2. There have been a number of joint government meetings over the past few years. What is your opinion of these meetings? What types of cooperative meetings would you like to see moving forward?
  
3. Do you believe the county allocates sufficient resources for infrastructure projects? How would you prioritize these projects and fund them?

4. What is your opinion of the beach congestion plans that have been proposed? What is your vision for solving this problem?
5. There is a proposal for a new sports/meeting facility. Do you approve of this project and how would you propose to pay for this type of facility?
6. What would your Five Year Plan for Escambia County look like?
7. Name the three top infrastructure needs in Escambia County or The City?
8. What are your plans to increase affordable housing opportunities for county residents?

### **Economic Development Issues**

1. What role should county government take in attracting new businesses to the area? What types of jobs would you like to see growing in Escambia County? Be specific.
2. What is your vision for the various commerce parks or potential sites throughout Escambia County?
3. What should the county do with excess properties that it owns? Be specific.
4. Tourism is an integral part of Escambia County's economy. In what ways can the county commission rebuild tourism post COVID-19?
5. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, what do you believe the county did well and what could they have done better? Please be specific.

6. What types of Triumph/RESTORE projects would you like to see funded?  
Be specific.

## Pensacola City Council

### Business Climate / Regulations Issues

1. Rate the regulatory climate for business in Pensacola. Is it Good/Fair/Bad? Explain. **Good**
2. Provide any examples of how regulations have affected the life of city residents or businesses in a positive or negative way.
  - **The rezoning to accommodate plans for the West Main Master Plan**
  - **The regulations regarding the use of medical marijuana/cannabis; proliferation of medical marijuana clinics/dispensaries**
  - **The regulations that have made the city ripe for a housing boom in terms of building homes at various price points**
3. Name the top 3 specific city ordinances/regulations you would like to see eliminated. Explain why they should be eliminated.
  - **Disallowing food trucks between Palafox and Main Street - in larger cities, food trucks are major draws to certain areas. Their presence could increase local and visitor foot-traffic; increase revenues for businesses in the area.**
  - **776.02 The Police Use of Force Law - permits the use of lethal force without fear of penalty; this level of force should only be applied in cases where there is suspicion that a forcible felony has been committed.**
5. What can the city do to facilitate a more livable downtown environment that also attracts and caters to the interests of visitors?
  - **Allow food trucks to lineup daily in specific locations that are easily accessed by visitors, workers and residents of downtown.**
  - **Present more varied entertainment lineups and athletic events at venues that are funded by taxpayers.**
  - **Provide faster free Wi-fi service citywide; become a tech hub.**
6. What is your strategy to leverage the county's interest in regards to state and federal funding opportunities? **Using Community Service, Social Service and Community Development Block Grants to: offset costs associated**

**with providing improved/continued law enforcement training; assist the homeless with finding suitable shelter (short and long-term); assist the mentally ill who are unable to afford appropriate help; assist low-to-moderate income persons afford to purchase home; assist women and minorities with the start of a business.**

### **Economic Development Issues**

1. What role should city government take in attracting new businesses to the city? **The city government should ensure that a number of truly DIVERSE/INCLUSIVE boards inform the mayor and council as to their findings regarding these matters. These boards should be equipped to actively mine for new business prospects by using a myriad of approved strategies.**
2. Which industries should the City of Pensacola should concentrate its business development/growth efforts? Be specific.
  - **Healthcare**
  - **Technology/STEM**
  - **Manufacturing**
  - **Residential Development**
3. What should the city do with excess properties that it owns? Which properties should take priority? Do you believe certain city parks could be considered excess property? **First, allow for the department under which the property falls to present facts about the amount of use vs the cost of upkeep to the public, mayor and council. Then, allow for public input. If it is forecasted to be more of a savings or benefit to the City to use the property by a different department therein, then it should be re-designated. If a cost-benefit analysis indicates that it is better to sell as surplus for a purpose that meets the current zoning criteria (e.g. residential or commercial), then it can be sold.**
4. What is your vision for Pensacola's waterfront properties (i.e. Port of Pensacola, Community Maritime Park, Bruce Beach, Bayview Park)?  
**I like the West Main Master Plan as long as a number of included businesses are owned by a minority either solely or who has a majority**

**share; no single person, company etc owns the majority of the businesses included.**

5. Tourism is an integral part of Pensacola's economy. What are the top 3 ways that the city can add value for the Pensacola business community with respect to rebuilding tourism and nurturing a positive tourist experience in Pensacola post COVID-19? **The business community will need to be creative and patient until the concerns about COVID-19 abate or a reliable vaccination is availed. To offer bang-for-the-buck:**

- **Businesses should team up to offer packages at various price points that showcase the area's entertainment, shopping and food scene. Tourists should be able to choose from options to customize a package or select a package that is ready-made.**
- **The City should identify travelers who typically spend at a certain level aka "whales" and provide incentives ("loss leaders") for them to visit Pensacola; or work with a specific airline carrier to designate a number of seats at a low cost to entice tourists to the area.**
- **The City should work to bring a wider range of top-tier performers to the area; bid to host events like those held in Austin, TX.**

6. What is your vision for the various commerce parks or potential sites throughout our community?

**There should be no additional commerce parks built unless there is a proven need for the businesses that are slated to occupy said site. To risk having these locales either partially or completely empty for an extended period only works to make the city appear economically depressed.**

7. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, what do you believe the city did well and what could they have done better? Please be specific.

**I believe that city officials worked well with other area leaders to provide up-to-date information. I do, however, believe that a citywide mandate for the use of masks worn into all public establishments was needed because of the increasing number of infected persons in our area. I believe that civil citations issued to those who disobeyed would have been the appropriate level of response. The exception would be**

those who can reasonably show where the masks present an immediate hardship or medical danger.

### Operations / Infrastructure Issues

1. What do you consider to be the number one infrastructure concern for the City of Pensacola going forward, and how do you propose to address that concern? **Healing the riff that exists between a significant segment of the community and law enforcement. This riff can be diminished by holding honest open regular community meetings with law enforcement officials; having officers who live in specific areas also police those areas; establish “ambassadors” (facilitators/mediators) who are citizens in the community who can be trained and called upon to help resolve issues that are important but do not require a law enforcement response.**
2. Do you believe the city allocates sufficient resources for infrastructure projects? How would you prioritize these projects and fund them? **I believe that ensuring that flooding does not occur in heavily traveled residential or commercial routes by investing in a drainage system is paramount. Next, taxpayer money should NOT be spent on the upkeep of any park or monument that bears the name of a confederate soldier. Lastly, ensuring that buildings that are abandoned or are not up to code receive the proper attention is a must. This could include working with owners to identify potential new uses or find sources of funding for rehabilitation.**
3. Do you see any overlap or duplication of services between the county and the city? If so, what services, and how could these services be consolidated? **There should be no duplication in sanitation services. ECUA should take over garbage pickup in the city, if they can/will do so at a cost savings to the city.**
4. There have been a number of joint government meetings over the past few years. What is your opinion of these meetings? What types of cooperative meetings would you like to see moving forward? **I am in favor of joint government meetings because they can bring more in depth information**

**forward; provide more transparency and allow for a more streamlined process.**

5. What would you change about the relationship between the Mayor's Office and City Council (i.e. should the Mayor attend all city council meetings, etc.)? **I think that the Mayor's Office and the City Council should behave as a system of checks and balances. It does not need to be unnecessarily contentious. The Mayor should attend city council meetings to better explain his office's position on matters or to help articulate what the input from stakeholders has been to his office.**
6. What would your Five-Year Plan for the City of Pensacola look like?
  - **Increase stakeholder satisfaction by 10% per annum for 5 years - Survey stakeholder satisfaction in key areas**
  - **Eliminate 80% of drainage/flooding issues in downtown area**
  - **Reduce homelessness (especially amongst those age 15 - 21) by 50%**
  - **Reduce panhandling on major streets/thoroughfares by 50%**
  - **Procure nonemergency fleet vehicles that are hybrid or electric**
  - **To provide free hi-speed Wi-Fi to all areas of Pensacola (starting with the areas deemed socio-economically depressed)**
  - **Ensure that ALL city police officers are evaluated quarterly for fitness for duty based on anonymous peer-reviews, panel review and psychological evaluation in addition to standard training**
  - **Identify and assist owners of distressed properties in the city limits with locating appropriate assistance to bring the property up to code or up to the standard of the surrounding area**
  - **Position city as Technology Hub**
  - **Improve race relations between law enforcement and community**
  - **Ensure that applicants and appointees to city positions, including volunteer, are treated without discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin, gender identification or age**
7. What are your plans to increase affordable housing opportunities for city residents?



- **Mandate that a specific number of units built by each developer (in each new development) be designated as affordable housing and actually be affordable to someone who earns just above the poverty level.**
- **Advocate for the proliferation of tiny homes, container homes and other alternative housing types that provide adequate and appropriate shelter than also fits into the area in which it is located.**
- **Push for the City to match state, federal and other grants to assist low-income earners to purchase houses.**
- **Utilize Block Grants**
- **Encouraging builders and property owners to construct or modify properties, respectively, to make them green/bio-friendly structures.**

### **Sheriff's Race**

1. What would you say is the biggest public safety concern in Escambia County?
2. Do you feel the crime rate has increased or decreased in Escambia County? Why or Why not?
3. What new safety measures could be implemented to make Escambia County a safer place to live? Be specific.

### **School Board**

1. Do you feel the quality of education is increasing or decreasing in the Escambia County Public Schools? Why or Why Not?

2. Do you feel students have adequate access to resources and educational assistance in Escambia County? If no, what can be done to ensure they do?
3. What have we learned during the COVID-19 educational transition that we can take forward to provide high quality education from a distance?
4. What needs to be done to ensure every family is connected to their student's educational experience?
5. What do you consider to be the number one educational concern for the County going forward, and how do you propose to address that concern?
6. What are the top three or four qualities or characteristics you are looking for in the appointed superintendent?

### **ECUA**

1. How would you rate the water quality in Escambia County?  
Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor
2. What can be done to improve the water quality in Escambia County?
3. What is your vision for recycling?