

# Candidate Questionnaire

## 2020 Primary Election

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The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce strongly encourages engagement between elected officials and chamber members as a way to inform and to be informed on issues of interest and impact to the chamber community. Local non-partisan elections are a great opportunity to deepen our understanding of each other.

**While the Chamber will not be making any candidate endorsements, we seek to inform our members and voters by engaging in dialogue with those interested in serving and representing our community.** We'll offer a number of opportunities to do so in the weeks leading up to election day. The first of these is this candidate questionnaire.

**We're inviting each candidate running for office on the 2020 primary election ballot (opposed or unopposed) to submit their response to the following questions in writing.** These questions have been formed by the Chamber's *Business Advocacy Council*, a diverse group of business and community leaders, through a deliberative process with issues of interest and impact on our business community and our local economy in mind.

**Questions and answers will be published unedited** on the Springfield Chamber's digital news platforms including the chamber website ([www.springfield-chamber.org](http://www.springfield-chamber.org)), the chamber's online news *The Bottom Line* ([www.springfieldbottomline.com](http://www.springfieldbottomline.com)), and in the *Member Connect* a weekly bulletin distributed via email.

If you wish to participate in this opportunity to inform and engage with the chamber community, please **submit your answers in writing no later than Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> to [max@springfield-chamber.org](mailto:max@springfield-chamber.org).**

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### Candidate Information

**Full Name: Kris McAlister**

**Position Running for: Springfield Council, Ward 3**

**Campaign Email: [RootedinSpringfield@gmail.com](mailto:RootedinSpringfield@gmail.com)**

**Campaign Website (if applicable):**

**<https://www.facebook.com/RootedinSpringfield/>**

**Endorsements (if applicable):**

### ***Personal/Background***

- 1. Please provide a brief statement on your personal, professional and service record in service to and support of the business community.**

*I am a life-long Springfield resident who has worked in nonprofits as a manager, and in small business as a laborer. With 20 years in the workforce, and 20 years of board and committee experience, I have been able to explore minimum wages to multi-million dollar budgets; and from position creation to industry engagement, with a Springfield filter, and local lens.*

### ***Business, Economic Development, Community***

- 1. In your view, what is economic development and why is it important to our community?**

*Economic Development is about building ecosystems that maintain, and sustain industry and its supporting agency, for the community. From small businesses to multinational corporations; jobs that work with current material, provide relevant and effective opportunity for workers and distribution, while contributing to the health and wellbeing of the hosting community. Without long term jobs, established supply chains, and adaptive market response, a community can not sustain itself, or support its future.*

- 2. What is your vision for Springfield, and what do you see as the three most significant challenges, opportunities, and solutions to achieving that vision?**

*I see a bustling medium size city, with its destiny in its hand; nurturing traditional trades such as the wood products in innovative way, while being a digital and educational sandbox for entrepreneurial and startup development, and using these paired paths to build out our aging infrastructure in brave and smart ways, such as a new city center, with library, conference center, and museum.*

*Our community has struggled since the 1990s to secure living wages and improve our tax base across the board. By building up locally, with our already present workforce and emerging high school cohorts, we can improve efforts to keep our dollars in our community and engage local production in our community and public institutions.*

**3. What role does/could the Chamber of Commerce play in implementing that vision?**

*The Chamber is the partner to a vision for Springfield that helps support Team Springfield and the economic base of this town. Through continued relationships with the school districts for our workforce preparation, our utilities and park district to promote investment and long term establishment, and the government with its advocacy and assistance in regulations, interfacing, and economic development.*

*A chamber is a very important cog to the timepiece of a community. When it is present and actively working, a community can't help but move forward ideas and growth.*

**4. How do you plan to engage the business community in the city's priority-setting and decision-making process?**

*Town halls, tours and meetups with local owners and workers, would be a basic step to get to know better the intricacies and effects that are currently facing them, to start.*

*I would also seek to have community focus groups on specific topics that had businesses and residents, such as what we did with the accessory dwelling units. Exploring applied experience in technical advisory committees would also allow perspective and priorities to be understood.*

*Public Policy for Investment, Spending, Taxes, and Fees*

**5. What is your affordable housing strategy or policy proposal?**

*I would like to utilize the progressing Accessory Dwelling Unit strategy while taking advantage of developing workers through our Career and Technology Education and vocational skill building tracks, to build out multiple unit and first time owner options in our Urban Growth Boundary, to help give those in those areas options to move up, while freeing up space to build new units or supporting business that provide local jobs to those residents. New infrastructure, maintained and improved residency, and supported community are hand in hand, part of my plan.*

**6. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of any proposed public infrastructure investment? Feel free to offer an example.**

*Is the planning and studying for a proposal costing more than the initial year's rollout, and how does it compare to 5 regional or historically comparable projects? Are there*

*ways that it pays for itself, or reduces a public or community cost, socially or economically?*

- 7. How would you balance new construction with rehabbing, expanding, and better utilizing our existing residential and commercial spaces?**

*I support maintaining buildings that have long time use and tradition in our community with local grants and community involvement, while making new investments in our UGB with supportive dollars from our federal grants and business development efforts. I would like to improve access by having more small scale mixed use areas, such as what has been proposed for Glenwood, north of Franklin/McVeigh.*

- 8. Do you believe major tax and fee increases should be referred to the voters? (some recent examples: safety, payroll, carbon or other emissions/climate tax, corporate activities tax, etc.) Please explain why or why not.**

*I believe that voters should have a say on their taxation, and businesses should be able to weigh in on fee increases. Whether this is through the ballot, or through an inclusive process that weighs the risk and reward from the local level; the people and entities affected deserve their voice and ability to account for their future, in invested or preserved revenues. If a tax is substantially increased, from its original consent, I believe in sending it before the people.*

- 9. What strategies or policies would you support to control government spending that effectively lessens the need to increase taxes, fees, or other charges?**

*I would support expanding the UGB development through incentivized connecting to our community formally, with reduced licensing fees to new businesses starting up there, and supporting neighborhood inclusion into the city limits through annexation packages that would both improve the revenues and rates coming in, but also engage a base of new residents who feel the community cares about them, and be more likely to support levies and necessary increases when they are needed. Spreading the investment in our town, gives all of our community shared ownership in its stewardship. I would like to explore, with city staff, tax breaks for our longer established and living wage businesses as an incentive to keep traditional and supportive employers in our community while developing exploratory zones for new products for older industries that would seek to keep*

**10. What would you do with an unexpected \$1m budget windfall, and why?**

*I would seek to have it put into a fund that would invest in the annexation packages, as a matching contribution sought by other local governments invested in the same areas, to bring in our tax, park, school and utility base dollars in a more predictive and considerate manner.*