

Draft OTOC Questions for Candidates for Mayor and City Council—Draft 04/14/17

Housing and Community Revitalization

Omaha Housing Code Enforcement is complaint-based so the City does not inspect for safety and habitability unless the resident files a complaint. Tenants who are the most vulnerable—those who don't speak English; don't know their rights under the law; are poor and have few alternatives--rarely file a complaint for fear of losing their place to live. These tenants live in slowly deteriorating rental units that are unhealthy for the families and too often are ultimately abandoned and demolished at taxpayer expense.

Will you work with OTOC and other interested parties over the next 12 months to develop a solution to the problem of substandard rental housing in Omaha? Would you be willing to adopt an ordinance which requires that all rental properties be registered with the City of Omaha and periodically inspected to assure they are safe and habitable?

Immigration and Refugees

The Omaha Police Department (OPD) sees its primary mission as reducing crime and the fear of crime. OPD has adopted community policing practices which dictate that local police will NOT take on the role of federal immigration enforcement agents and will not inquire about immigration status or detain people for immigration violations when those persons have not committed a crime.

Do you agree that the Omaha Police Department should continue using their community policing practices when dealing with immigrant communities in Omaha? What would you do to assure that immigrants and refugees feel welcome and safe in Omaha in light of increased anti-immigrant rhetoric over the last year.

Environmental Sustainability

Co-mingling yard waste: *City of Omaha has allowed our waste contractor to co-mingle yard waste with garbage and we are no longer composting and creating the OmaGro product. The contract for waste collection will be renegotiated soon. OTOC believes we should not co-mingle yard waste with garbage and we should compost yard waste. Will you assure that there is an opportunity for the public to provide input on our waste collection system before a Request for Proposal is released for bids? What do you believe should happen with yard waste collection in Omaha?*

PACE: *City Council will vote soon on creating a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) district for commercial properties. While this is a good first step, OTOC wants City Council to provide home-owners with the same opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Once the PACE process is established for commercial properties, will you support extending this opportunity to residential properties?*

Pay Day Lending:

There are 50 Pay Day Lending locations in the Omaha area and they make about 50,000 loans each year. Under current Nebraska law, these locations are allowed to charge interest and fees that total 461% A.P.R. OTOC has worked this Session to pass LB 194 which would limit the total charges permissible to 50% of the total principal over the life of the loan and assure that monthly service fees are no greater than \$25. LB 194 has stalled in the Banking Committee which has 3 Omaha Unicameral members, including the chairman.

Will you work actively with OTOC leaders to convince members of the Unicameral representing Omaha that they should adopt reasonable limits on the interest and fees which Pay Day Lenders can charge? If the Unicameral won't enact Pay Day Lending reform statewide, will you work with OTOC to develop reasonable reforms that substantially reduce the maximum charges these lenders are allowed to charge within the City of Omaha, to the extent permissible under state law?