

Candidate Information

Name of candidate: Paul Metzger

Office sought: Denton City Council Member, District 3

Political party (if applicable): _____

Mailing address: 1914 W. Oak Street, Denton TX 76201

Phone number: _____ Mobile number: 940-220-2027

Email address: pmetzger33@gmail.com

Website: www.paulfor4all.com

Facebook: Paul Metzger for District 3

Twitter: @PaulFor4all

Why are you running for office?

As a former Mayor Pro Tem and two-term at-large Council Member, I have the ample experience needed to get to work for District 3. I'm running to ensure our district has a council member dedicated to keeping Denton a unique and attractive community, even as it grows. We need to build on our distinctive strengths to become an even better

What are your three top priority issues?

- 1) Balancing our need for greenspace, parkland and trees as the city grows. ² place to live, work, and play.
- 2) Maximizing downtown development potential.
- 3) Affordable housing.

Briefly describe any current or previous community engagement or service you have done.

2 terms Denton City Council. President, Rotary Club of Denton. Meals on Wheels. Previous: Thin Line Fest VP, United Way volunteer - numerous.

Campaign Information

How much do you expect to spend in this race? _____ We consider this strategic and proprietary information which we will report on schedule.

How much have you raised so far? _____

Campaign manager: Jordan Villareal

Campaign treasurer: Dr. Rodolfo Rodriguez

Campaign consultant(s): _____

Professional fundraiser: _____

Campaign Information, cont.

Please briefly describe your plan to win this election, including your plans for fundraising, communicating, and identifying/turning out your voters.

Pretty simple -- I plan to knock on doors and engage with residents of the district as well as reach them by direct mail.

What is your prior professional or community engagement with local REALTORS®?

I've purchased two properties in Denton with the help of local REALTORS.

If the <Local Association> decides to support your campaign, would you accept funds from our Texas Association of REALTORS® Political Action Committee (TREPAC)?

Answer:

Yes

No

Additional Comments:

HOWEVER -- I would publicly applaud a donation to Habitat for Humanity in lieu of a campaign contribution.

REALTORS® are committed to our communities, our clients, and the public. We work to ensure private property rights are protected, and that Texans can buy, sell, lease, and enjoy real property. To accomplish those goals, we monitor and advocate on a wide variety of local, state, and federal policy issues. The following questions seek to understand your position as a candidate and potential lawmaker on issues that will impact housing and real estate within your jurisdiction.

Issue: Rental Registration

Background: Several cities across Texas have undertaken excessively restrictive measures on rental property in their communities in an effort to monitor landlords and generate local fee-driven revenues through rental property. Some of these actions are registration of rental property and the inspection of rental property, with permitting and other subsequent fees associated with these measures.

Question 1: Would you support or oppose proposals to enact a rental registration or rental property inspection fee?

Answer: **Support**

Oppose

Explanation of Position:

I'm not opposed in principle but feel the bureaucratic overhead required to administer such a program would be a challenge for a city our size, I'd like to discuss an idea with the group for a voluntary program,

Issue: Short-term Rentals

Background: Short-term rentals, or vacation rentals, are typically defined as those rented for less than 30 consecutive days. These are typically single-family homes in neighborhoods of cities that are desirable to visitors.

Some cities have banned short-term rental use in their local development or zoning codes and others have limited the use under specific parameters or guidelines. Registration programs may be required for all short-term-rental owners or may be limited to those owners who exclusively rent their properties as an investment.

Question 2: Would you support or oppose banning short-term rental use in your city?

Answer: Support

Oppose

Explanation of Position:

Short-term rentals are very much the wave of the present and can support Denton's appeal as a regional tourism destination. Registration and standards help ensure compatibility with neighbors.

Question 3: Would you support or oppose requiring a registration process for owners of these properties?

Answer:

Support

Oppose

Explanation of Position:

There are invariably issues with parking, hours, etc. so clear communication of expectations up front can help maintain peace.

Issue: Property Taxes

Background: Creating a budget and adopting a property tax rate to support that budget are major functions of locally elected officials in Texas.

In simple terms, the Texas property tax system is based on an equation that multiplies a property's appraised value by locally adopted tax rates. In recent years, Texans have seen skyrocketing property tax bills due to rapid increases in appraised value and little or no change in their tax rates. In addition, over the last decade, many local taxing jurisdictions have seen their budgets increase over 60%, far outpacing the rate of inflation and population growth.

When appraisal values increase, taxing jurisdictions can hold the line by adopting a tax rate that guarantees no new revenue will be realized from existing properties, instead relying on new or improved properties to generate new revenue. (Formerly known as the "effective tax rate," new property tax laws resulting from Senate Bill 2 from the 86th Texas Legislature will rename this the "no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate.")

Some taxing entities assert that if they do not change or even lower tax rates, but taxpayers' overall bills go up due to an increase in the appraised value of the property, this does not constitute a property tax increase.

Question 4: If a property owner's tax bill goes up, does that constitute a tax increase?

Answer: Yes No

Explanation of Position:

I have long advocated for explicitly expressing the tax rate in terms of impact on the median tax bill. I reject the perennial Shim-Starr of elected officials taking credit for lowering the rate when they already know the new appraised values and therefore the impact on bills.

Question 5: Do you support increased transparency measures, including (but not limited to) better notifications and explanations of terms, to ensure property owners fully understand why their property tax bill increases or decreases, and would you work to implement such changes in your city?

Answer: Yes No

Explanation of Position:

It's a challenge to undo years of deception but I will continue to advocate for ways to puncture the misperception that property taxes must go up if appraised values rise on properties that haven't been further improved.

Question 6: While considering the relationship between local taxing jurisdictions (city, county, or school district) and the Central Appraisal District, what role do you feel the Chief Appraiser/Central Appraisal District should play in the budgeting process for your city?

The current role is right if it can be done efficiently and on time -- that is, to provide a neutral assessment of value for use as a basis for determining tax rates.

Issue: Local Homestead Exemption

Question 7: Currently, local taxing jurisdictions have the ability to grant local property owners an exemption for their homesteads. Do you favor the local homestead exemption for your taxing jurisdiction as a way of providing property tax relief?

Answer:

Yes

No

Explanation of Position:

I do because it targets lower value homes disproportionately, helping those who are most likely to need it. I've looked at increases in the exemption in the past and am open to looking at it again, weighing the significance of the tax break against the impact on city services.

Issue: Appraisal Caps

Background: Currently, Texas has a 10% cap on the increase in assessed values for residential homesteads. Several proposals in the Texas Legislature would artificially cap property appraisals at 3% or 5% annually or extend the appraisal cap to commercial and industrial property. Further, some of these proposals would allow local-option elections that would allow for appraisal caps on a local level.

Question 8: Would you support efforts to lower the appraisal cap at the local level and/or extend the appraisal cap to commercial and industrial property?

Answer:

Yes

No

Explanation of Position:

This feeds the myth that appraisal changes drive tax bills, not policy makers. The appraisals should approximate market value as closely as possible, period.

Issue: Eminent Domain

Question 9: What is your opinion on the use of eminent domain and in what instances should a local government utilize the power of eminent domain?

It should be a last resort and only for essential public requirements.

Issue: Taxes and the Economy

Question 10: In times of economic downturn, what measures do you propose for your city (i.e., tax rate increase, specific cuts in services, etc.)?

I served during the COVID lockdown period and saw the City Managers very effectively reduce middle management without sacrificing resident-facing city services. This was done largely through a voluntary separation plan that preserved morale. It was a great learning experience for me and an example I would look to.

Issue: Energy-Efficiency Standards at Point of Sale

Background: Some city councils have proposed to mandate certain energy-efficiency upgrades in residential properties which must be completed and certified prior to the sale of the property. These mandates would require all properties to be retrofitted to meet the standards of the mandates, costing sellers thousands of dollars.

Question 11: If elected, would you support efforts to impose mandatory energy-efficiency upgrades in existing housing?

Answer: Yes

No

Explanation of Position:

As a member of the Sustainability Framework Advisory Committee, ~~we~~ I can tell you we're much more focused on subsidies in those areas targeted to low income homeowners. Intrinsic value and market appeal can drive a lot of reinvigorating activity, with good public communication and support.

Candidate Comments

Please use the space below to provide any other comments you would like the local REALTOR® community to know about you, your campaign, priorities, and/or positions on important issues.

We appreciate your willingness to serve our city and your participation in this process.

Denton has a unique set of opportunities to build long-term value because it has a unique identity in the region. This was identified in the city's adopted Economic Development Strategy. Rather than compete directly against the cookie cutter landscape of other North Texas suburbs, we have the mix of local small business, arts and music, and reputation for inclusiveness and commitment to sustainability that can stand out and specifically appeal to companies and new homeowners that value those attributes in their quality of life.

So, for instance, when we look at opportunities to reduce pressure on property tax, we can see that the square is a dynamic success story even though so much of it is dead and not contributing, and the commercially viable footprint is so constrained due to surrounding flood plain. I see tremendous opportunity, potentially including public-private partnerships, in developing the performance venues, filling in the gaps, and expanding the walkable footprint of our unique downtown.

This, along with a regional standout network of connected trails, are some of the elements that can make the bigger Denton truly a better Denton.