

2019 CANDIDATE PROFILE GUIDE

OVERLAND PARK CITY COUNCILMEMBER CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name: Derek Puzzuoli

Candidate for Ward #: 2

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Candidate's Occupation:

Work History – Last Five Years (25 word limit):

Active Duty Coast Guard Officer: 2011-2016 Intermodal Transportation Logistics: 2016-present

Most Recent Political/Community Experience (25 word limit):

I have been an active member in Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church and involved with their numerous community service opportunities including with the American Red Cross.

Are you, or have you been, affiliated with a local or state chamber of commerce? If yes, please list chamber(s) and any leadership positions you have held (25 word limit):

No

Are you, or have you been, affiliated with any other business organization(s)? If yes, please list organization(s) (25 word limit):

No

As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues (25 words per line):

1. Public safety: ensuring first responders have all of the resources they need to protect people and property
2. Principles: fostering connections between the schools and the community with educational and meaningful events
3. Prosper: guaranteeing every tax dollar is used wisely, encouraging new development, fixing aging infrastructure

At 13.566 mills, Overland Park's tax rate is approximately half of our neighboring communities and remains the lowest of any first-class city in Kansas. Do you believe Overland Park citizens receive quality services and value for their tax dollars? What improvements, if any, would you make to the existing City budget?

I do believe the citizens receive quality services and value for their tax dollar which is why Overland Park is one of the best places to live in America. With that being said, there are always improvements that can be made. Many residents have expressed concerns to me regarding the chip seal treatments used on roads. If residents do not want chip seal I will work with the other council members to find solutions to pay for alternative road treatments.

What changes, if any, would you propose to the current City budget?

I know there are alternative opportunities to pay for park improvements without spending taxpayer money. I'm sure with some simple canvassing we could find many residents who would be willing to volunteer their time and talents to fix and improve hiking and biking trails in our beautiful parks. After reviewing the proposed 2020 budget this could save tens of thousands of dollars that could be used for other infrastructure improvements such as fixing potholes.

What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to Overland Park?

The City needs to provide a safe area with the infrastructure needed to continue to bring jobs and capital investment. This means having well funded and well trained first responders. The City also needs to make sure that every tax dollar is used wisely and plans to improve infrastructure are evaluated thoroughly before being implemented. There are always costs that can be saved while still achieving superb results.

What is your philosophy regarding the appropriate mix of residential, commercial and green space in development and redevelopment projects and the use of incentives for these projects?

Tax incentive financing is a controversial issue that many residents are concerned over. There are times when giving tax dollars to developers may be beneficial to revitalize areas and encourage new development especially when competing with neighboring cities. However, I do not believe that TIF should be used for every new development project. There is a delicate balance between keeping taxes low and encouraging new development that must be evaluated on a case by case basis with multiple studies and input from the public.

What do you think the three greatest opportunities are for Overland Park's economy in the next ten years and how would you capitalize on them?

1. Encourage new businesses to move here 2. Improve aging infrastructure 3. Keep housing affordable

What specific elements of Forward OP's Action Agenda do you consider to be among the highest priorities for implementation?

Living: This initiative area is focused on programs, policies and projects that address housing affordability and housing choice within the community. If you want people to live and work in Overland Park the City needs to make sure that the cost of new apartments do not discourage the people who work in Overland Park from living in Overland Park.

As the second largest city in the metro, what is your philosophy on the role Overland Park should play in terms of metro-area issues?

Ensuring the metro area remains an attractive place for people to work and live is a collective effort between local and state entities. Overland Park needs to set the example for other cities and towns to follow when it comes to spending tax dollars, government transparency and promoting citizen involvement.

Why are you seeking public office? What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race, making you best suited to serve?

Quite simply I miss public service since leaving the Coast Guard. I have experience working with foreign, state and local government agencies as well as in logistics in the private sector. I have been responsible for managing multi million dollar budgets and equipment valued at millions of dollars. The role of

government officials are to serve their constituents and not their own self interests which is exactly what I would do if given the privilege to be a council member.