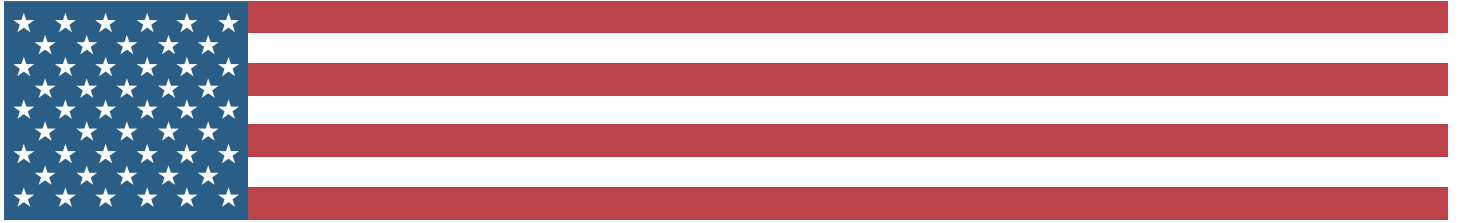


2025



OMAHA MUNICIPAL PRIMARY ELECTION VOTER GUIDE

ELECTION DAY – APRIL 1, 2025

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HOW TO GET STARTED:

1. Print off your sample ballot by visiting your county election commission website:
<https://www.votedouglascounty.com/>
2. Fill out your sample ballot using the voter guide (not every race listed below will be on your ballot)
3. Take your completed sample ballot with you to vote on Tuesday, April 1st

MAYOR

Jean Stothert - Republican (Incumbent)

First elected to the office in 2013. Before serving as Mayor, she worked as a critical care nurse and head of cardiovascular surgery. She has also served on the Millard Public School Board and Omaha City Council.

Streetcar: Supports the development of a streetcar; Believes that the streetcar is an infrastructure investment that generates economic development that will not require a citywide tax increase.

Roads: Allocated increased spending for major and residential street resurfacing in the 2025 budget; Created the city's first comprehensive 20-year master roads plan to have every surface street resurfaced at least once every 15-20 years.

Budget/Taxes: Has reduced Omaha's property tax levy 4 times since 2013, amounting to an 8% decrease (included another property tax rate

reduction in the 2025 budget).

Economic Development: Helped oversee the redevelopment and completion of the Riverfront parks; Supports the development of the new Central Library at 72nd and Dodge; Supports the Eppley Airfield terminal expansion and modernization.

Public Safety: Worked with the Police Chief to see a 17% crime rate reduction in Omaha; Supports the creation of a 6th police precinct and fire station located downtown; Supports the implementation of the Fire Department apparatus replacement plan.

John W. Ewing, Jr. - Democrat

Douglas County Treasurer for the past 18 years. He has 25 years of law enforcement experience and is a former Deputy Chief for the Omaha Police Department.

Streetcar: Opposes the streetcar but feels it is too late to stop the project.

Roads: Wants to engage experts who specialize in concrete mix design for our specific climate; Wants to support Public Works staff by providing them with resources and expertise necessary to effectively maintain streets with a focus on equitable distribution of repairs.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to work closely with government department leaders and staff to ensure taxpayer dollars are used responsibly and efficiently; Wants to ensure that major decisions

impacting the financial future of our city are put to a vote of the people.

Economic Development: Wants to intentionally focus on economic development and job creation in North and South Omaha; Advocates for focusing on programs that create living-wage jobs and reduce poverty.

Public Safety: During his time at the Omaha Police Department he helped double the number of qualified and diverse recruits; Wants to implement comprehensive strategies that focus on community policing, proper officer training, and clear accountability standards.

Terry Brewer - Independent

Founding pastor of New Covenant Church of God in Christ in North Omaha and a U.S. Marine Corps veteran.

Streetcar: Supportive of the idea of the streetcar, but more focused on expanding and modernizing current bus routes and bike lanes to connect workers to jobs in West Omaha.

Roads: Proposes a \$200 million infrastructure plan prioritizing equity.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to create a Mayor's Office of Equity to oversee policies impacting marginalized communities.

Economic Development: Wants to expand small business grants for women, minority, and veteran-owned enterprises; Wants to attract high-tech industries and green energy jobs through tax breaks for companies that hire locally and invest in underserved areas.

Public Safety: Advocates for replacing police response to mental health crises with trained social workers and counselors; Wants to fund violence prevention programs in schools and community centers.

Mike McDonnell - Republican

Former Nebraska State Senator for District 5. He has also previously served as Omaha's Fire Chief. In 2024, he switched his party affiliation from Democrat to Republican after voting for LB 574 which established a 12-week abortion ban and created a ban on gender mutilation surgeries and procedures for minors.

Streetcar: Opposes construction of the streetcar; Wants to stop current progress and send the project to a vote by the people.

Roads: Wants to incorporate smarter and more accountable ways to plan road repairs to increase safety, shorten commutes, and reduce traffic accidents.

Budget/Taxes: Believes city spending is out of control and wants to implement performance-based budgeting; Wants to cut the mayoral salary by 10%

and the mayor's department budget by 50%.

Economic Development: Wants to create more jobs in the city by focusing on the trades and encouraging opportunities for students to work and earn a wage while learning valuable skills.

Public Safety: Wants to implement recruiting measures year-round and increase pay; Advocates for contracting with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office to help with traffic enforcement.

Jasmine L. Harris - Democrat

Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at RISE reentry program and Chair of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Nebraska. She also actively advocated in the legislature to help with the passage of LB20 which restored voting rights for individuals who have completed their felony sentence or probation for a felony.

Streetcar: Feels it is too late to stop the streetcar project; Wants to ensure there is a plan in place to connect all of the various transit systems in the city.

Roads: Advocates for the promotion of green infrastructure such as bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly streets to connect neighborhoods more effectively.

Budget/Taxes: Plans to commit a percentage of the city's budget specifically for the development and maintenance of affordable housing; Wants to

allocate budget toward mixed-use developments that blend housing, retail, and community spaces in underserved areas.

Economic Development: Advocates for community consultation sessions before major developments are approved to ensure alignment with residents' needs.

Public Safety: Wants to host regular town hall meetings with law enforcement and residents to foster communication and understanding.

CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICT 1

Pete Festersen - Democrat (Incumbent)

Elected to City Council in 2009. He is the current Vice President of Strategy and Public Affairs at CHI Health.

Public Safety: Introduced a property crime ordinance that helps slow the sale of stolen items and return those items to their rightful owners; Supports increasing recruitment efforts to help front-line officers.

Budget/Taxes: Has voted 5 times to cut the property tax rate (also offered budget amendments

that would increase these cuts); Wants to continue reinvestment in neighborhoods.

Economic Development: Leads citywide action plans addressing climate change and affordable housing; Active in the redevelopment and renovation of the Benson, Dundee, and Florence Neighborhood Business Districts.

Mark Brannen – Independent

Owner and operator of a local urban farm business. He is also a former board member of the Benson Neighborhood Association.

Public Safety: Wants to implement elements of the city's Vision Zero Action Plan to help make streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

Budget/Taxes: Supports opening a new fire station in Northwest Omaha; Wants to expand the Police

Department's Mental Health Co-Responder Squad.

Economic Development: Wants to revise the zoning code as well as expand and strengthen programs focused on preserving and enhancing the existing housing stock

DISTRICT 2

Juanita Johnson - Democrat (Incumbent)

Elected to the City Council in 2021. She has served as the Chair of the 24th Street Corridor Alliance and a member of the Long School Neighborhood Association.

Public Safety: Wants to expand community policing, youth programs, and crisis intervention; Wants to strengthen transparency to build trust.

Budget/Taxes: Currently serves as the Finance Chair for City Council; Advocates for expanded investment in minority businesses and workforce

development.

Economic Development: Led efforts to restore and enhance Adams Park; Wants to support small businesses, attract industries, and expand workforce training.

LaVonya Goodwin – Democrat

Founder and President of Global Leadership Group Omaha. She is also the founder of the North 24th Street Business Improvement District (BID) and BID Association.

Public Safety: Actively worked with the police department to lower violent crime rates along 24th Street; Helped with the passage of the Disorderly Premise Ordinance to address after-hours activity that often leads to gun violence.

Budget/Taxes: Feels mental health initiatives must be supported in the budget; Advocates for use of

HUD funding to help with homeless site remediation.

Economic Development: Helped raise \$15 million for the North 24th Street Streetscape Master Plan and Facade Improvements; Wants to audit problematic housing organizations and hold them accountable.

William King – Democrat

Currently the CEO of Omaha Community Broadcasting. He is also the founder of Media King Communications, which helps provide affordable internet services.

Public Safety: Advocates for a Citizen Complaint Review Board with subpoena power over police department administration.

Budget/Taxes: Advocates for the creation of a citizen advisory board to oversee funding decisions; Wants to advocate for increased funding for local schools, expanding vocational training and higher

education opportunities, and supporting lifelong learning initiatives.

Economic Development: Advocates for establishing entrepreneurial hubs where residents can access mentorship, training, and resources to start and grow their businesses.

Tyrone Eure – Democrat

Former security supervisor. Ordained Baptist Minister.

Public Safety: Advocates for increased prosecution of officers who have overstepped their power.

Economic Development: Wants expanded bus routes to improve transportation.

Ben Gray – Democrat

Former City Councilman for District 2 (2009 - 2021). He is a former Vietnam veteran and former photojournalist.

Public Safety: Wants to provide incentives for the homeless to gain a hand up, not a hand out; Advocates for a Citizen Complaint Review Board with subpoena power over police department administration.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to continue support for non-profit builders to help provide affordable housing.

Economic Development: Helped bring \$2.5 billion in investments to the community, focusing on economic development, affordable housing, and civil rights; Spearheaded Omaha's LGBTQ Equal Employment Ordinance; Championed the Landlord Registry.

Maurice Jones – Democrat

Owner of a real estate investment and property management business. He is also a former campaign staffer for Dan Osborn's Senate campaign.

Public Safety: Advocates for multi-year initiative to expand pedestrian pathways, public transit, and road access.

Budget/Taxes: Promotes securing funding and sustainability support for Black-led media organizations; Advocates for hiring an

administrative aide for each City Council member.

Economic Development: Wants to attract tech companies, corporate headquarters, and high-paying industries; Plans to create a District 2 Health Action Plan focused on equity in healthcare

Michael A. Lee, Jr. – Democrat

Founder and Director of a political consulting group. He is also a former campaign manager for Sen. Terrell McKinney and Sen. Ashlei Spivey.

Public Safety: Wants to reinstate an Independent Public Safety Auditor; Advocates for the strengthening of the Citizen Complaint Review Board's authority and independence.

Budget/Taxes: Committed to revitalizing neglected neighborhoods; Pushes for investment in robust youth training and workforce development programs; wants to create affordable housing

options for families; Advocates for reducing the police department budget.

Economic Development: Wants equitable, reliable transportation solutions; wants to push for targeted economic development, support for Black-owned businesses, and workforce programs that create sustainable careers.

Anthony Rogers-Wright – Independent

Current climate/racial justice advocate. He has served as a policy advisor and advocate for Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Jay Inslee, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Dr. Cornel West, and Dr. Jill Stein.

Public Safety: Advocates for the reinstatement of a Public Safety Auditor; Wants to increase the number of Mental Health Co-Responders to a minimum of 3 per shift for each city council district.

Budget/Taxes: Advocates for requiring developers applying for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to allocate a portion of their project for affordable

housing; Advocates for reducing police spending and reinvesting those funds to other departments.

Economic Development: Advocates for shutting down OPPD's North Omaha Power Plant and replacing it with renewable energy sources; Advocates for a bus route from Omaha to Lincoln.

Cheryl Weston – Independent

Current community advocate and organizer. She is also a media host. She is the former Director of Lead Safe Omaha Coalition. She currently serves as a board member of Spark Capital and the Nebraska Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Public Safety: Advocates for the closing of the North Omaha OPPD coal plant; Advocates for a more independent Citizen Complaint Review Board with more power to hold police officers accountable.

Budget/Taxes: Advocates for requiring developers applying for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to allocate a portion of their project for affordable housing.

Economic Development: Helped secure funding for the Omaha Lead Superfund Cleanup Site; Helped bring economic opportunities for small local businesses and employment to the people in the community who were most affected by the lead remediation of poisonous lead in the soil created by the ASARCO Lead Refinery.

DISTRICT 3

Danny Begley - Democrat (Incumbent)

First elected to City Council in 2021. He also serves as the Treasurer for the Omaha Federation of Labor. He currently works for OPPD.

Public Safety: Promotes increasing support and funding for law enforcement; supported the hiring of 18 new firefighters.

Budget/Taxes: Committed to reinvesting tax

dollars in neighborhoods, and investing in parks, libraries, and infrastructure.

Economic Development: Wants to lead initiatives for affordable housing action programs.

Michael Pilypaitis - Democrat

Currently, he is a business analyst. He is also a former chief labor union steward for the Communications Workers of America.

Public Safety: Wants to implement proactive tree trimming service to trim hazardous trees to help prevent cable lines from going down in storms.

Budget/Taxes: Advocates for expanding preschool access; Opposes the streetcar and wants to instead use that money to fix roads and expand public transit.

DISTRICT 4

Ron Hug - Democrat (Incumbent)

Appointed to the City Council in 2023 to fill the seat vacated by Vinny Palermo. He is a former member of the Metropolitan Community College Board.

Public Safety: Supportive of adding more officers to the police department; Introduced an ordinance bolstering enforcement of vehicles parked in yards.

Budget/Taxes: Advocates for increasing the number of code inspectors.

Andrew Adams – Democrat

He is a member of the South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance. He also has professional connections to the Omaha Foster Care Review Board.

Public Safety: Supports providing updated equipment, better facilities, and competitive pay for the fire and police departments.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to have 2 uniformed officers per 1,000 residents and wants to add 4 more ambulances.

Economic Development: Wants to reform zoning laws to allow for more diverse housing options; Advocates for waiving certain planning ordinances and removing public hearing requirements to speed up development.

Gilbert Ayala – Republican

Has run for the District 5 legislative seat 3 times and Omaha City Council 2 times. He has worked as a shift supervisor at various food and retail establishments.

Public Safety: Feels crime is a major problem in South Omaha and wants stronger sentences for criminals.

Budget/Taxes: Promises to not vote for any new taxes or increase existing taxes.

Jonathan Flaco Rentería - Democrat

Current line cook at a South Omaha restaurant. He is also a community organizer and advocate. He helped Roger Garcia's campaign for Douglas County Commissioner and advocated for the advancement of Medicaid Expansion in Nebraska.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to expand and subsidize public transportation; Advocates for introducing taxes on medicinal cannabis to generate revenue for public programs; Wants to repeal the Restaurant Tax.

Economic Development: Wants to invest in public spaces that foster community connection and leisure without requiring purchases; Advocates for establishing city health clinics to provide preventative care.

DISTRICT 5

Don Rowe - Republican (Incumbent)

First elected to City Council in 2021. Currently serves as an executive at Millard Lumber.
Running unopposed

DISTRICT 6

Brinker Harding - Republican (Incumbent)

First elected to City Council in 2017. He is the former Chief of Staff for former Omaha Mayor Hal Daub. Currently works as a commercial real estate broker.
Running unopposed

DISTRICT 7

Aimee Melton - Republican (Incumbent)

First elected to City Council in 2013. She currently works as an attorney in private practice. She is a former prosecutor. She was an active volunteer with Omaha Rapid Response and Heartland Hope Mission to help with tornado and flood response.

Public Safety: Supports increasing pay for police officers to help increase recruitment; Supports building a new fire station in West Omaha and a new police precinct downtown.

Budget/Taxes: Supported lowering the tax levy 5

times since 2013.

Economic Development: Advocated for the redevelopment of Tranquility Park, the expansion of North 120th Street, and the construction of a new fire station at 156th and Ida.

Tim Carter - Democrat

Currently owns Chilly Water Consulting LLC. He is also the chairman of the Westgate Westside Athletic Association.

Public Safety: Wants to work with law enforcement to ensure that they have the necessary resources; Wants to ensure that the police department is not used to arrest women and doctors who have and perform abortions.

Budget/Taxes: Wants to prioritize road repairs,

public transit, and walkable neighborhoods.

Economic Development: Will support policies that expand affordable housing options, incentivize responsible development, and protect renters; Wants increased mental health and addiction services as well as expanded transitional housing.