

VOTER GUIDE

Find out what key issues that impact Naperville this candidate supports or opposes in the Naperville City Council Election 2025.



Ian Holzhauser

Naperville City Council Candidate

Candidate Status: Incumbent

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KEY QUESTIONS

Do you support or oppose the Grocery Tax Proposal?

Do you support or oppose the creation of new tax incentives?

Do you support or oppose plans to build the Nichols Library Parking Garage?

Do you support or oppose the redevelopment of the 5th avenue area?

Do you support using city resources to help small businesses recover and stay competitive in Naperville?

	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	ABSTAIN
Do you support or oppose the Grocery Tax Proposal?		✓	
Do you support or oppose the creation of new tax incentives?		✓	
Do you support or oppose plans to build the Nichols Library Parking Garage?	✓		
Do you support or oppose the redevelopment of the 5th avenue area?	✓		
Do you support using city resources to help small businesses recover and stay competitive in Naperville?	✓		



Candidate Biography and Priorities

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CURRENT OCCUPATION

I am a partner with Campbell/Holzhauer Concierge Law, serving businesses and families with proactive strategies and preferred access on wills, estates, business and tax laws, and liability law, among others. Previously, I was an attorney with the Naperville firm Nagle & Obarski where I assisted local business clients with comprehensive legal services across various sectors and assisted individuals with estate planning, trusts, and probate matters. I was elected to the Naperville City Council in 2021, championing business interests while also advocating for residents by ensuring that economic growth benefits the entire community. I previously served as board chair for the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce, helping guide it through its greatest period of financial challenge during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I graduated in 2007 with a J.D. from Georgetown Law School, magna cum laude. I received a B.A. in History, summa cum laude, in 2004 from the University of Florida on a full academic scholarship. I am an Air Force veteran and from 2007 to 2014, I had the great honor of serving as a uniformed attorney in the United States Air Force. I am also a proud graduate of Naperville North High School.

RELEVANT BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

As an attorney (and owner of my own law firm), I have represented numerous businesses and have worked on several dozen business purchases, sales or mergers. Other practice areas include assisting with employment law questions, commercial real estate leases, purchases, and sales, and shareholder agreements. In addition to serving as Board Chair of the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce, I have overseen budgets of Naperville Community Television Channel 17 and First Congregational United Church of Christ. As an employer myself and an advisor for my business clients, I am familiar with the challenges facing many small businesses, and also the value of entrepreneurs to our community.



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ELABORATE ON YOUR POSITION FOR THE ABOVE KEY QUESTIONS.

Support: Fifth Avenue Station Development.

The Fifth Avenue Station area represents a tremendous opportunity to drive economic growth while enhancing one of Naperville’s key gateways. Although previous redevelopment efforts stalled before the City Council, we now have the momentum to move this project forward in a way that benefits both businesses and residents.

As a vital transit hub connecting our city to Chicago and the suburbs, the current state of the Fifth Avenue railway station—marked by aging parking lots and a lack of amenities—does not reflect the best of Naperville. We have a chance to transform this area into a thriving, mixed-use, transit-oriented development that supports local businesses, attracts new investment, and improves the commuter experience.

To ensure a thoughtful and strategic approach, I proposed that City Staff engage the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to conduct an independent study of potential uses for the site. The City Council agreed and ultimately commissioned ULI to lead this effort, incorporating community input and benchmarking against best practices in comparable communities nationwide. By beginning with a transparent, research-driven plan from a nonprofit with no financial stake in the project, we can build consensus among all parties and create a development that is both economically sustainable and aligned with Naperville’s long-term vision. Your collaboration and support as business leaders will be critical in making this a success.

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES FACING NAPERVILLE’S BUSINESS COMMUNITY?

Naperville has long been a model for economic success, with a thriving business community, a highly skilled workforce, and a high quality of life. However, we are facing key challenges that will require strategic solutions to ensure long-term growth and stability.

One major concern is the increasing vacancy of office space along the I-88 corridor. As remote and hybrid work arrangements become the norm, older office buildings—many of which were designed for a different era of business—struggle to attract tenants. This not only impacts property values but also the surrounding businesses that rely on office workers.

At the same time, we are navigating a tight labor market. Many experienced workers are retiring, and the incoming workforce is smaller. Additionally, more individuals are choosing to stay out of the labor force altogether. Fortunately, Naperville has bucked some of these national trends due to our strong schools and universities, vibrant economy, and high quality of life, which make us an attractive place to live and work. However, to remain competitive, we must continue supporting workforce development initiatives, ensuring businesses have access to the skilled employees they need.

Financially, Naperville has enjoyed several years of strong tax revenues, bolstered by a strong real estate market and programs like ARPA. However, we will likely have to tighten our belts, particularly if these trends do not continue.



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WHAT IS YOUR ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH?

To ensure Naperville remains a thriving business hub while maintaining our high quality of life, we must take a proactive approach to economic development. This action plan outlines key initiatives to address current challenges:

1. Revitalizing the I-88 Corridor

I plan to advocate for a comprehensive I-88 redevelopment plan, incorporating recommendations from the Naperville Development Partnership, and to explore opportunities for repurposing vacant office space, including unique and innovative uses.

2. Maintaining Quality of Life & Workforce Competitiveness

Naperville's high quality of life is a key factor in attracting and retaining top talent. To sustain this we need to continue investing in our businesses, infrastructure, workforce development initiatives and fostering collaboration with our local schools and universities.

3. Keeping Naperville a Competitive Business Destination

To keep Naperville competitive, I believe in holding the line on sale taxes, ensuring that Naperville remains an attractive destination for businesses and consumers. Additionally, I favor more programs to keep small businesses thriving in Naperville.

4. Expanding Commercial Development in South Naperville

A balanced approach to development will strengthen the city's overall economy and equalize tax liability between District 203 and 204 residents. This will require not losing focus on the need to support commercial development in D204.

HOW WILL YOU COLLABORATE WITH THE NAPERVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

As a City Council member, it is important that we actively collaborate with the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce to foster a pro-business environment and drive economic growth. Some ways to continue our successes over the next four years are through leveraging the expertise of the Chamber and the Naperville Development Partnership on key projects/issues such as revitalizing the I-88 corridor and redevelopment of the Fifth Avenue Station and others. As I have in my first term, I will continue to maintain a close relationship with Chamber CEO Kaylin Risvold - she has my number and I'm always happy to take her call.

The Chamber of Commerce is an integral partner in keeping Naperville and its economy strong. By staying connected and through open dialogue, we can ensure that city priorities are aligned with the needs of our business community. As a City Council member, I will continue to work alongside the Chamber, its board and businesses to make sure that Naperville continues to be a top destination for families and businesses.



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WHAT ARE YOUR BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESSES?

As a City Council member, I am committed to balancing Naperville's budget through fiscal responsibility, strategic investment, and policies that support business growth without overburdening taxpayers. A strong economic environment depends on a balance of well-maintained infrastructure, efficient public services, and a competitive business climate. Investing in infrastructure is crucial, such as maintaining roads, utilities, and transportation, revitalizing and redeveloping underutilized areas and attracting new businesses. All will serve to increase property values and keep our economic machine strong. I firmly oppose raising sales taxes and instead believe we can and should expand the commercial tax base through responsible development, particularly in underutilized areas like south Naperville. Seeking efficiencies in city operations is also key as well as leveraging public-private partnerships to help fund key projects. By focusing on smart growth and responsible budgeting, we can ensure Naperville remains a thriving economic hub for years to come.

WHAT ARE YOUR REVENUE AND TAX STRATEGIES?

As a City Council member, I am committed to ensuring Naperville's economic growth while avoiding policies that overburden our businesses, particularly small businesses. The goal should be increasing economic growth to increase the tax base, not increasing tax rates. I firmly oppose increasing sales taxes, as doing so would make Naperville less competitive and could hinder local businesses and consumer spending. Small businesses are the backbone of our community. While programs like tax districts and rebates have been effective in attracting large businesses, I believe we must do more to support our small business owners. This could include targeted incentives, lowering barriers to entry, and more accessible financial support to help these businesses grow and thrive in Naperville. By fostering a pro-business environment through thoughtful, balanced tax policies, we can ensure our city remains a vibrant, prosperous place for businesses of all sizes. This will broaden the tax base, rather than simply imposing more of a burden on the existing tax base.



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HOW WILL YOU HELP BUILD A STRONG WORKFORCE PIPELINE FOR NAPERVILLE'S EMPLOYERS?

As a City Council member, I advocate for building a strong workforce pipeline, which is essential to ensuring Naperville remains a thriving business hub. To meet the current and future needs of employers, I will continue to collaborate with local educational institutions, including Naperville's schools, colleges, and vocational programs, as well as business leaders. By working together, we can align educational curricula with the skills and training businesses need today and in the future. This includes expanding internship programs, apprenticeships, and mentorship opportunities that provide real-world experience to students and help businesses access a skilled talent pool. I will also continue to advocate for workforce development initiatives that focus on areas with high demand, such as technology, healthcare, and skilled trades, as well as push the city to hire from local employers that leverage these initiatives. Through these partnerships, we can create a seamless pipeline from education to employment.

HOW WOULD YOU HELP BUSINESSES ADAPT TO ECONOMIC CHANGES, NEW TECHNOLOGIES, AND WORKFORCE CHALLENGES?

In a rapidly changing economy, it is crucial we support businesses in adapting to new technologies, market demands, and workforce challenges. As a business owner, I have heavily utilized local school district internship programs both in technology and the legal field. If re-elected, I would prioritize expanding these public-private partnerships, particularly as our youth are exceptionally well-suited to assist businesses in navigating the new frontier of AI. By creating a collaborative environment between businesses, educational institutions, the city, NDP and the Chamber we can help companies adapt and thrive in a constantly evolving economy.



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HOW WOULD YOU RATE NAPERVILLE'S BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE, AND WHAT PROJECTS WOULD YOU PRIORITIZE FOR GROWTH?

I would rate Naperville's current infrastructure as an 8 out of 10 in terms of supporting business operations. Our city has a very strong foundation, including state-of-the-art underground utilities, well maintained roads, and excellent public safety resources, all of which help support business activity. However, there are always areas where we can improve, especially as businesses face new challenges and opportunities.

To ensure businesses continue to thrive, I would prioritize the following infrastructure projects: First, upgrading and modernizing key commercial corridors, like the I-88 corridor, which has a large volume of unused office space, to attract new businesses. Second, I would focus on revitalizing underdeveloped or aging commercial areas, particularly in south Naperville.

Additionally, supporting sustainable infrastructure projects that align with green technologies and eco-friendly building standards will not only improve our city's infrastructure but also make it more appealing to forward-thinking businesses.

By prioritizing these projects, we can ensure that Naperville remains an ideal location for both new businesses and those looking to expand.

HOW HAVE YOUR ACTIONS BENEFITED NAPERVILLE'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY, AND WHAT'S NEXT IF RE-ELECTED?

I have consistently supported initiatives that enhance Naperville's downtown, ensuring it remains a vibrant and attractive destination for both residents and visitors. One of the key investments I championed was the downtown streetscape and Riverwalk improvements, which are essential for keeping our downtown area appealing to shoppers and businesses alike. These upgrades improve pedestrian accessibility, beautify public spaces, and create an inviting atmosphere that encourages people to spend time, dine and shop in our establishments. This passion for investing in our core public attractions will continue to be a priority.

As mentioned before, I have worked with the Naperville Development Partnership (NDP) and their consultant to provide input on a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the I-88 corridor, our regional economic engine. Most recently, I sided with the Downtown Naperville Alliance in maintaining the retail character of the first floor of buildings in the downtown area. This was a crucial decision, as keeping first-floor retail is essential for maintaining a vibrant, walkable, active downtown. Active storefronts attract foot traffic contribute to safety by creating a sense of activity and surveillance and fosters economic growth and protects the unique character of Naperville's downtown, which is one of our city's most cherished assets.