

VOTER GUIDE

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



Meghna Bansal

Naperville City Council Candidate

Candidate Status: Returning Candidate

Campaign Website: meghnaforcouncil.com

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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

Vice President Finance at Q1 Technologies, Inc. overseeing global accounting and finances.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

BS and MBA in Business and Finance

RELEVANT BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

As a Finance Executive at a global company and elected Township Trustee, I have expertise in fiscal discipline and responsible budgeting. As a member of the Naperville Planning & Zoning Commission, I have first-hand experience securing investments to secure jobs and economic opportunities for Naperville. As a member of the Downtown Advisory Commission, I have been involved in working with businesses and downtown. As an elected member of White Eagle Homeowners board for 8 years, I have been involved with infrastructure, safety and governance. As a member of several non profits including KidsMatter, Indian Community Outreach, etc. I am connected with the causes of our community.



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ELABORATE ON YOUR POSITION FOR THE ABOVE KEY QUESTIONS.

With the changing buying trend, local businesses are more in pressure and do need help. I support creating programs and incentives that specifically help small businesses recover from economic challenges and remain competitive. City can help advertise and promote Shop Local initiative, organize and facilitate local hubs, keep taxes under control and promote entrepreneurship. This will not only help build more employment but will also help build stronger economy.

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

Following are the key issues and challenges being faced by Naperville's business community:

1. Youth and Talent Retention
2. Shift to online shopping and retention of businesses
3. Traffic and Infrastructure Concerns
4. Growing unreported retail theft

All the above have a vital impact on cities economic success and will need to be addressed for maintaining viability in coming years.



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WHAT IS YOUR ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH?

Create an environment and opportunities for the youth to stay in Naperville. Fifth Avenue is one of the ideal places to develop for youths. Building incubation centers will help.

Shop local must be promoted and encouraged, businesses need to be incentivized to stay competitive.

Infrastructure projects have to be better timed and managed as these can have significant impact on the businesses. Washington Bridge is a classic example.

Safety and security has to be enhanced for the businesses. We need our businesses to report such incidents. Addressing this issue through proactive security measures, employee training, and clear reporting systems can help minimize losses and improve overall store safety. Public safety and security including cyber crimes will be the most serious issues that the community will face in the coming years.

HOW WILL YOU COLLABORATE WITH THE NAPERVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

My background is in business and finance, and I have been instrumental in building my business here from Naperville. I am a PZC commissioner and have served as an Elected Trustee for Wheatland Township and understand the importance of enacting good public policies. One of my core platforms is to bring meaningful economic development to Naperville as that is the gateway for making any city a better place. I intend to work very closely with NACC and will be a big advocate in the council as NACC's goal of 'cultivate commerce for building a better future' is aligned with my goals for the city. I intend to work closely with NACC's Businesses Works Committee and attend / participate in each meeting. This would be an opportunity for me to strengthen my relationship with NACC. This would also help me give insight into current events and relevant policy issues.

Being a Businesswomen and a former elected official, I can play an active role with NACC's Women in Business committees on agenda items that may be important to them.

Lastly, I will work to be a trusted partner & counterpart for NACC through open dialogue with the CEO, Chairman, and current board members on any new policy implementation.



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WHAT ARE YOUR BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESSES?

Naperville has been growing and has become the second largest economy of our state with a proposed budget of over \$641.14 mn. Though the city has managed to keep its budget balanced, I am concerned about numerous short terms and long-term expenses on the horizon pertaining to infrastructure, safety, health & wellness, and federal/state mandated projects. On top of these, growing inflation and unknown natural calamities must be accounted for.

We will continue to find funding for these without increasing the property or sales taxes for our residents/businesses. We will have to make sure that we continue to maintain the AAA bond rating so are at lowest risk of default. Economic development is key, but without compromising residents' safety and City's fabric. We will have to work hard to attract new businesses so we can increase our revenue base while generating more employment. We also have to work extensively on forensic audit of our expenses to save any unnecessary spending. With my extensive finance background, I will be working very closely on this matter.

Supporting smart, affordable housing options that continue to diversify our tax base, while preserving our sense of community.

We also have to continue to work on finding feasible businesses to fill in voids left due to retail businesses moving to ecommerce. Also, more of residents begin to drive electric vehicles, city will see a decline in gas-tax revenue. We must work to find a solution that will mitigate this loss.

WHAT ARE YOUR REVENUE AND TAX STRATEGIES?

We are on the cusp of significant changes for a community of our size. The decisions we make today are going to significantly impact the livability of Naperville for generations to come. While the city needs funds for development, we cannot afford to increase taxes and burden our businesses and consumers. While this is a very broad subject, at the onset I believe we can work on adjustments such as providing property tax relief for businesses, tax credits for hiring and workforce development, real estate and economic development tax incentives, etc.



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

A good and trained workforce is indeed one of the most critical factors for the success of businesses. Given my background where my business extensively relies on a well trained workforce, I will work with educational institutes to promote more vocational training as well as encourage businesses to build internship and training programs to prepare our workforce pipeline for the years to come.

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

It is imperative that Naperville remains the top choice for new businesses to open and existing businesses to operate. A strong economy is one of the pillars of our city. Our community has benefited from development projects that occurred 20-30 years ago. Within that time, shopping trends have drastically changed.

A good example of Naperville's "pro-business" mindset and our evolving community is the recent approval of the Block 59 project along with the new Heinen's grocery store. Working with Indian Community Outreach, city was able to bring large businesses like Patel Brothers to occupy old Menards space and Mall of India to occupy old Walmart. In both scenarios city officials created a Business District that would be put towards the redevelopment of properties. We need to encourage such policies and encourage such organizations to build such growth in Naperville

In addition to our evolving business community, we will be faced with the decision on how to develop the BP campus, north of I-88. We have the luxury and good fortune to be patient and find the right partner for this project. Instead pursuing the east choice of filling this spot with a distribution facility, we should be searching for a partner that would attract high-paying jobs.

To attract new businesses, we need strong work force. While Naperville is considered as one of the best cities for schooling, we don't see many youths coming back. We need to have facilities to attract these youths affordable living



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

There are many projects in Naperville that need attention. Washington Street Bridge is an important project that needs to be completed soon. Widening of North Aurora Road, and a few other identified streets requires immediate attention due to high traffic volumes. Fifth avenue development is on the horizon, which will prove fruitful for retention of the younger workforce. Infrastructure needs to be developed to tackle new age crimes and cyber crimes.

AFTER YOUR PREVIOUS CAMPAIGN, WHAT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNED, AND HOW WILL YOU BETTER SERVE LOCAL BUSINESSES?

I am a returning candidate. After losing my last election by an extremely narrow margin, I dedicated myself extensively working with local businesses, City government and the Naperville community. I have been attending every city council meeting to stay informed and engaged. As a Returning Candidate I realized it is extremely crucial for businesses to engage with the local community and residents. They can participate through local events, sponsorships, or just being present at local gatherings. Many businesses are either small or owned by women entrepreneurs. These businesses are usually flexible and provide very personalised services. But the challenge was to get enough support from the local government and approachability.

Economic development is a necessity for any community as not only it brings jobs and vibrancy, but it also helps ease our tax burden on the residents. I believe it leads towards creating more revenues to the system, brings innovative ideas, creates more jobs, higher wealth, labor support and better quality of life for the residents, kids, and generations to come. We need to focus on unbalanced areas especially south Naperville where residential to business ratio is 95:5. I will work with NACC, NDP and business focused organizations for these goals.