

These questions were asked by the I-74 to Spring Street Neighborhood Association.

NOTE: The distribution of this questionnaire should in no way be construed to represent an endorsement of Peter Kobak by the I-74 to Spring Street Neighborhood Association.

1. How do you plan to involve residents in the decision making process in our city?

My campaign has been built on having meaningful conversations with Peorians around the future of our City. When elected, I will continue to ensure I am meeting with and learning from Peorians from across the City, to ensure I do my best to understand our shared challenges and opportunities. In addition to face-to-face interactions, I will continue using the internet and social media as a platform for communication and transparency.

I believe community input must play a big role in the formation of our City's guiding documents: the strategic plan and the budget. The strategic plan, currently formed behind closed doors, must shift to incorporating community feedback. I will advocate for creating opportunities for the community to be a part of its formation, as it will subsequently guide how the City of Peoria crafts a budget to achieve its strategic goals.

2. If elected, what three steps would you take to put our city on a firmer financial footing?

I believe we need systematic change in City Hall to achieve firmer financial footing for Peoria. Here are 3 shifts I will advocate for:

1. Smart Growth - For decades, our elected officials have pushed to annex land further north. In the short term, we saw development in these parts of town, but in the long term, this "growth" increased our liabilities as we took on more infrastructure to maintain. I am an advocate for smart growth: redirecting growth towards density and walkability in our urban core.
2. Economic Reform - We need to address head on the plague of institutional racism and poverty that has led to over 1 in 5 Peorians living in poverty and Peorians of color being left behind. I'm an advocate for raising the minimum wage to a living wage, because it's been shown to lift people out of poverty and would overwhelmingly benefit our most marginalized communities.
3. Performance-based Budgeting - I am an advocate of performance-based budgeting, which is a style of governance and budgeting that allocates resources based on performance outcomes, rather than line-items. This is a rigorously data-driven approach to government.

First, we set set our goals as a City through a strategic planning process. Second, we fund the programs that achieve those goals most effectively, regardless of what department those programs are located in. As an example, a public safety goal might be met with varying efficacy by Community Development (through addressing blighted properties that create space and

opportunities for crime), Public Works (through road diets that reduce vehicle and pedestrian accidents), Economic Development (by increasing quality affordable housing or job opportunities that keep people from resorting to crime to survive), Police (through resident officers that disrupt gang activity by building trust with neighborhood youth), or Fire (through preventing fires by performing residential and commercial inspections). The level of funding a department receives should be related to how we define public safety as a community and the particular public safety goals that we believe are most important for the future of Peoria.

3. In your opinion, what is a positive trait of the North Valley? How would you encourage policy or development to further enhance that trait?

The North Valley is filled with entrepreneurs and small-scale developers, from recent immigrant neighbors to families who have lived in the neighborhood for a century. The neighborhood is investing in itself and building up community one redeveloped house, constructed urban garden, and opened small business at a time.

When I worked at the City of Peoria, I worked to build a culture at City Hall around supporting small-scale development, the incremental work of individuals to reinvest in their neighborhoods not only for a monetary return on their investment, but to build community. Presently, City staff who have deep expertise when it comes to development sometimes don't feel empowered to assist small-scale developers for fear of liability. This leads the City to focus on regulation, rather than support and assistance. As a councilperson, I will advocate for prioritizing the needs of small-scale developers by directing resources their way and encouraging staff to help them "get to yes" without compromising life and safety regulations.

4. If someone came to you with a proposal to build a new piece of public infrastructure in our city (road, bridge, etc.) how would you evaluate whether that project was worth implementing?

Equity and sustainability are primary lenses through which I will evaluate projects, programs, and policies while in elected office.

1. Equity means asking: "Will this project maintain the inequities in our City or will it redress them?" We should take every opportunity we can to ensure projects redress the historical inequities that the City has allowed, through active policy or negligent inaction.
2. Sustainability means asking: "In the long term, will this project be sustainable or will it grow as a liability over time?" Often times, elected officials are lured by projects that might produce positive outcomes during *their* term in office, but place future generations of Peorians in a worse position. I will always be working to ensure that projects continue to benefit our next generation, equitably, financially, and environmentally.

5. On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rank the form used by Peoria City Council members to evaluate their only employee, the Peoria City Manager? Would you

make any changes to this form? Why or why not and what changes would you make?

I have not seen this form, so I can't comment on it specifically. However, I believe that our City Manager must be evaluated by how well they are able to execute on the direction that is provided by City Council. This direction should be articulated in the strategic plan with measurable goals that are revisited yearly in a transparent format, such as a dashboard on the City's website.

6. Should the River Trail TIF be terminated? Why or why not?

I am proponent of equitable development, which is development that takes into account the needs of our City's marginalized communities. If there is an equitable development project within the River Trail TIF that would preserve the precious natural land as well as benefit the disinvested communities that surround the area, I would be in favor of examining whether such a project should receive City support. However, if such a project is not feasible or foreseeable, I believe we should terminate the TIF.

7. What has been your greatest accomplishment in life? Describe the situation and the circumstances and why you think it was such a success?

My greatest accomplishment in life is a work in progress: finding a grounding in purpose that does not rely on a professional title/status, accumulation of material things, or the need for external validation from others. This is a never-ending journey that relies on consistent internal reflection, psychological, emotional, and physical self-care, and striving for authentic and powerful connection with all people in my life.

When this purpose is most clear in my life, I am able to wield optimism, energy, and relationships with others to imagine boundless possibilities for myself and our community.

8. What has been your most significant failure in life? What did you learn from it and what would you do different, if anything?

When I think of failures in my life, I am drawn to consider the inverse of my answer to question #7. No one significant failure comes to mind, but there are plenty of small moments when I have failed to properly take care of myself and my relationships in life, and thus not lived up to my full potential. This might have been when I didn't get enough sleep and felt too tired to attend a community meeting, when I didn't build a relationship with a co-worker and because of that didn't notice one of their struggles, or when I believed my title or formal position prevented me from being able to speak out for what I knew to be right. However, I don't regret these failures, as long as I commit to learning from them.

9. What is the most creative thing you have accomplished? Have others acknowledged your creativity in this accomplishment?

I am very proud of the work that I did as a City employee on the City of Peoria's Innovation Team. From turning a vacant lot into the City's largest urban farm, to hosting a grassroots community planning initiative in an older Peoria neighborhood, to creating a fellowship for City staff to build skills that enable government to be more data-driven, I was closely involved in projects that pushed elected officials, City staff, and community members to reconsider what the role and possibilities of local government are.

I was named an "up-and-coming leader in government" by *Route Fifty* for the work I did to enhance data-driven decision-making at City Hall (<http://bit.ly/kobaknextgeneration>). In addition, many of the current councilmembers - and some of the incumbents running for re-election - often tout the Innovation Team's projects as prime examples of how progressive and innovative City Hall is.

10. Please write any additional comments or information that you would like voters to know about you and your Peoria At-Large City Council candidacy.

Voting is crucial to our civic hygiene and while it's often difficult to become educated on all of the issues, an informed electorate keeps our elected officials accountable. I hope everyone in the I-74 to Spring neighborhood participates in the local election, regardless of whether they vote for me. That being said, I'd like to offer a final appeal as to why I hope to earn your votes:

I'm one of the youngest candidates running for office in this election, which enables me to consider a full lifetime of possibilities: I'm not interested in just tweaking the status quo - I want to reimagine what our City could look and feel like to make all Peorians proud and share in opportunity and community. Despite my age, I bring an array of relevant experiences to the table: I have worked as a community organizer, in small business, and in local government. I earned a master's degree in human rights and democracy, through which I studied the institutions that safeguard these concepts across the world. Perhaps most importantly, I'm grounded in my purpose to ensure that Peoria's best days are still ahead of us, and I won't be shaken by special interests, traditional institutions of power, or a transactional desire to be re-elected in future elections.

A driving belief in my campaign is that you'll hear the same thing from me whether it's in a one-on-one conversation, at a public forum, or on social media. Because public forums and in person meetings often have time limits, social media is a powerful platform for me to expand on my positions, ideas, and background. I hope you consider following me on these platforms to see how I'm living out my purpose in my campaign and how I plan to continue doing so when elected:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/kobakforcouncil

Instagram: www.instagram.com/peterkobak

Twitter: www.twitter.com/peterkobak

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/peterkobak

Website: www.kobakforcouncil.com