

## Kevin Skipper

1. What role, if any, do you feel the city council has in supporting business enterprise in Carlton?

Carlton's business owners are the backbone of our local and regional economy. I think city council has the ability to play a vital role in supporting business enterprise in Carlton, but it requires a deliberate effort. Through comprehensive planning, infrastructure investment and more, the decisions made at the city level can either facilitate business enterprise and economic development or impede it. It is imperative that city council always consider how its decisions will impact the business community in Carlton and proactively seek to support a healthy, diverse local economy.

2. Our city has a diverse mix of businesses. Often, in an effort to survive, these industries clash with one another. As a council member how would you ensure the voices of all businesses are recognized and heard equally?

I've witnessed firsthand the changes Carlton has faced throughout the years and how those changes impact local residents. Today, I'm thrilled to see new store fronts and businesses operate alongside businesses that have been here for decades. A thriving, diverse local economy is important to Carlton's success and equally important to me. There will always be competing interests in the business community, but we should never allow one industry to thrive at the expense of others because one side has a larger platform or more resources. It's council's job to support every industry and business owner, not just a select few. If elected, I'll work with Carlton's business community to better understand how the city can help facilitate their continued success, and strive to ensure no small business owner is left behind.

3. Our business community is facing difficulties with growth due to the following factors: limited commercial space, zoning restrictions, outdated infrastructure, and limited parking. How do you feel Carlton could address these issues?

Each of these factors causing difficulty for our business community are related and preventable with proper comprehensive planning. Growth can benefit our community in countless ways, but it must be managed responsibly and planned for accordingly. We need to repair our infrastructure immediately and develop plans to ensure those investments by our taxpayers are maintained effectively. It's important that the planning process solicit and incorporate feedback from residents and business owners to help prioritize what impacts their everyday life. As a town we need to come together to find solutions, address problems/concerns, and identify and develop sound plans and solutions. I believe listening to all voices is how we make the best decisions for Carlton in the years to come.

3. Recently, the city council voted to approve a re-route of highway 47 in Carlton. As a council member, how would you support the businesses (either along the newly formed highway or along Main St) who may be negatively impacted by the construction?

The highway that runs through our town isn't a new challenge we are facing. I wish there was an easy decision for HWY 47 that would make everyone happy. However, now that the current city council has made its decision, I would focus on mitigating the impacts of ODOT's projects and construction to our residents and business community. Council must work with ODOT officials as strong advocates for Carlton's business community. As a council member, I would organize listening sessions with residents, business owners and ODOT officials to ensure their immediate and longterm concerns are considered by ODOT as these projects move forward.

5. As a city council candidate, what would you like the businesses of Carlton to know about you?

I was raised in Carlton and am proud to raise my family here. I am a staunch advocate of our local business community and believe they are vital to the livability and charm of our town. As a council member, I would champion ways to ensure that businesses in Carlton are promoted and supported by the city in ways that help them to continue to thrive and prosper. We are in some unprecedented times, and many of our businesses are uncertain and nervous about the challenges that lie ahead. We need to make sure that the business community has the full support from the council and the City of Carlton. If I earn your vote, I promise to bring a new perspective, fresh ideas, and transparency to city council.