

Stop the Outer Loop Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name

Christopher Castlen

The Outer Loop has been tabled for now. What is your stance on the Outer Loop proposal and any future bypass that may be proposed?

I am opposed to the Outer Loop because it creates more suburban sprawl and would use our precious farm land. We need to remember that farm land is not replaceable once it is developed, and one of Daviess County's many great assets is our farms.

What is your stance on Highway 56 improvements and what do you propose?

I'm not familiar with any improvements for Hwy 56 to go on within the next 20 years, but would like to discuss once I am made aware of them.

As county lands continue to be developed, what is your stand on future annexations of county lands into the city of Owensboro?

Annexation creates a lot of unintended consequences. It incentivizes the loss of farmland, and it creates pockets where public safety can become compromised. It is also a financial drain that is not in the interest of local government. It expands infrastructure where it is not sustainable in the long term and will eventually result in taxes being raised.

Do you think that Daviess County government should provide or pay for ditch cleaning of major waterways on private property?

Effective drainage doesn't stop at property lines and county government needs to be a part of the solution. The farm owners/landowners I have discussed this topic with have informed me they used to have a partnership with the current Fiscal Court to mitigate the problem, but they are not getting the help they used to. They have advised of roadblocks that have come up which might require a change in state laws in order to be able to do what needs to be done. I have not confirmed this information, but if it requires a change in laws, I will work with our community and state representatives to make the necessary changes. Flooded homes and farms effect Daviess County financially in many ways. We either work together to mitigate the problem, or we all lose the revenue created by the crops lost. It also creates the issue of residents in these areas having to drive miles out of the way to reach their destination, including school buses having to increase debt for fuel and cause students to spend more time on the bus.

What are some areas of the current county budget that could be cut to lower taxes?

I am a fiscal conservative and I am always going to look for ways to save our taxpayers money.

Do you see our Planning and Zoning process as an impediment to business growth? How could it work better?

Spending my career in law enforcement, I have not had a lot of exposure to planning and zoning. I am still learning about the planning and zoning process and look forward to learning more about it.

Serious crime seems to be way up in Daviess County. How will you work toward protecting residents and their properties?

As a retired police officer, Marine, and the only Fiscal Court candidate that has received the endorsement of the Fraternal Order of Police, I have shown protecting citizens and property in our community is a priority. It takes the effort not only of the Sheriff's office and Detention Center, but the effort of our Fiscal Court. Fiscal Court must do better with helping these agencies for what they need in recruiting and retaining those men and women that have a desire and ambition to serve and protect our community. We also must do better with training and equipping the deputies for both of these agencies to do the job they love to do, and to keep them safe in the process. To do this, Fiscal Court needs to better understand the operations of the those agencies, and must work with them to meet their needs.

Solving crime takes a relationship of trust and communication between the community, law enforcement, and frequently requires relationships with other agencies. We need to increase the opportunities for our deputies to be involved with groups in our community that might not already have a strong trust for law enforcement. We need to also provide opportunities for our deputies to strengthen already existing relationships within the community.

Protecting residents and property does not stop with law enforcement, but it is also within our fire departments; full time and volunteer. We must continue to work with these agencies to get the training and equipment needed so our basic community services are met.

Do you agree with the current occupational tax structure? Do you think current tax rates are fair? If not, how would you work to change it?

We need to ensure that our county can provide the basic services we all expect as taxpayers. Are we and our property safe and are our first responders being taken care of? Do we have safe and good roads and bridges so that we can move goods and products to market? Is our drainage efficient and effective so that flooding is not an issue. All of these things require tax dollars.

Most of our tax structure is dictated by state law and I do believe we need more local control.