

## Stop the Outer Loop Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name

Dianne Burns Mackey

### **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?**

This is a bogus question since it is tabled. I can't hardly believe the State Transportation Department would spend the money for such a study, without consulting local county officials, when a simple caution light is needed on Hwy 54, 142, & Foster Road.

Traffic counts are always sought when deciding where to locate future business store fronts. Taking traffic away from business areas is not a profitable endeavor for tax-paying businesses or government.

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

This is a State Highway; therefore, the county government would only be involved if consulted. According to the state transportation department, it takes care of two digit and three digit numbered highways.

However, when the state widened the road in front of our store, I was there and convinced them not to change our entrance so completely. They actually seemed to be making it more difficult to get into our store, probably not intentionally, but our 20 years of experience there and the state -certified engineer who designed it certainly believed it to be adequate and safe.

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

The residents of the areas must give consent/approval. Most areas are developed and settled in the county due to lower tax costs and availability of land. However as of 2020, the school tax part of the property tax has increased from \$610.00 in 2013 to \$720.00 in 2020 per \$100,000 property value, while city school taxes have only increased \$20.00 from \$820.00 to \$840.00 per \$100,000, value. That, of course, is the largest expenditure in the county's budget. Residents still tend to move where cost of living is less. If the county continually increases the cost, residents may move into neighboring counties.

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

If the waterway is a major ditch, it seems unlikely it will be on private property? Since one of my main issues is flooding of the ditches and diligent cleaning/ clearing of Panther Creek, it is probably a consistent job of county government to manage. When there is a discrepancy in ownership, it surely can be worked out with the owner. Farmers in my area are very willing to help out with cleaning etc. Many farmers/residents actually mow public property that is adjacent to their properties.

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

Only a present county official could intelligently recommend a particular cut. I feel this fiscal court has exceedingly tried to keep county taxes at a low level. As communities ask more from their governments, it is mighty hard, to cut services. It's easier not to start new expenses.

Again the largest expenditure in the county's budget is the county public school system, over which the fiscal court has no control. I wondered if an office rental of \$42,000, might be eliminated? County Commissioner's salaries could be reduced or at least kept the same, (definitely not allowing an increase). A teacher's salary is comparable, (21 years with a Master's Degree \$61,977.00).

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

As a local business owner and speaking with other owners, planning and zoning has become a burden to operating a business, as well as to many residents. When we built our first store 44 years ago, we had no trouble complying with the regulations. Ten years later it became increasingly burdensome and expensive. I realize some of this paperwork is passed down from the State with new changes in legislation, however, there needs to be some measure of compromise.

I am aware of a business owner who tried to add a new bathroom for his employees, not for customers, with a projected expense of \$2500.00. By the time Planning and Zoning was through, it was costing him \$25,000.00. Needless to say, his employees didn't get their new restroom.

Another instance occurred next door to us in Masonville, where there had been Masonville Elementary and a Beacon High School (w approximately 300 to 500 students). When a church purchased the school, they reopened it, after some renovation. Then Planning Zoning shut them down and it took them approximately 2 years to comply.

That is why Reagan and Trump were so popular. They tried to cut "Red Tape".

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

We are super fortunate to have the great, efficient trained sheriff's department in our county. I have requested help and supervision for some of my properties and they have willingly helped. They also solved break-ins and robberies in our stores. Thank you

A few of the deputies are my former students. I am tremendously proud they chose that service to our community. Continued funding, as much as possible, should be a priority of local governments. As we have witnessed in some metropolitan areas, "defund the police" has not proved to be beneficial to law abiding citizens.

### **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?**

Of course, no occupational tax, would be preferable. It actually hurts the employee, since the employer withholds what would be more "take home" pay for the worker. In addition, when you have few employees, the paperwork is extra work and/or costs for the employer

more than the actual tax. Every extra cost is passed ultimately to the consumer.  
However, the tax percentage is lower in the county than the city, which is most likely fairer.