

<p>Cole</p> <p>Junk cars and ill-kept cars should be focused on. Those cars are why people gripe about it. It chases good-quality residents away. The city's cleanup project working on now with Franklin College students is a good idea. Need to be sending city officials out to take care of this. Hurts property values and morale of the city. Once Franklin was the top place to live in county; now it seems Greenwood is the top place instead.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>That is up to individuals. City officials cannot go into every neighborhood and monitor. Residents need to be monitoring any problems. A clean city is very important. If there are problems, we have to give warnings and tell people to clean it up. If that does not work, city can come in and take care of it. Usually people are good about it.</p>	<p></p> <p>Is the cleanup of Franklin a top priority? What should the city do to make sure private properties are cleaned up, zoning rules are enforced and the city's eyesores are removed?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Mayor's office already addressed that. City has done a good job getting eyesores cleaned up. Wording in laws might need to be cleaned up to fix definition of parked car. Administration has done a good job cleaning up vehicles that are not parked or tagged correctly. Code enforcement officer has done a good job. It's a full-time job for them to enforce those ordinances. Is not for passing paper ordinances that cannot be enforced.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Ongoing for any city. Would like to see our city look better, especially through-fares. Enforce laws such as residents can only have trash containers out the night before pickup. Issues could be addressed by code enforcement officers.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Would go over the budget with clerk and look at where money is going, what is being wasted or not used. Would do a special budget meeting with the public. They should have a say. Should keep the public involved. As long as we have a surplus, if ever, would like to see go to a balanced budget. If we have a surplus we need to figure out how to send that money. Don't let taxpayers' money go to waste. Make sure we don't waste the money. Balance any deficit. See any excess money be spent and let budget be balanced.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Usually each council member is assigned a department and will go over the department's budget with them. Council members then come back with the budget, and department heads present it. Council must vote to approve each budget. The public is welcome at every meeting. People do come to the meetings, and the council takes all opinions into consideration. In the end, must decide where money is best spent. Parks and recreation department is very important. Must be fair to all departments. Would not change the budget process.</p>	<p></p> <p>The annual budget can be considered the single most important tool the city council has. What steps would you take individually to review the budget? What process should the council use to publicly review the budget? How would you alter the city's budget process?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Usually council members are given certain budgets to review. First will go through the budget top to bottom. Process probably needs to start a little earlier. Start six to nine months out. Maybe look at more budgets in detail. Takes a lot of time, but is willing to do that. Council meetings are open, and public is welcome to attend. Always talk about the budget openly in the meetings. Just don't get that many people there. Can't force people to attend, but they have opportunity to attend.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>City government should run finances the same as spending at home. An occasional exception is with a major purchase. Still, should save for the major purchases. Will fashion a budget city and departments can live with. Must prioritize; maybe look at one department a little special one year and then another department the next year. Tough process, but must make sure city doesn't go out and buy things that are not needed. Always need to be prepared to back up what you say, and that's good. Council members won't always agree. The council starts working on the budget early, which is the best way to do it.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Definitely. City government should always be hands-on when it comes to meeting the people's needs. Should definitely be hands-on with helping attract businesses. Should go and talk to business owners. Should go check out the city and if something doesn't look right, should do something about it. Council should be willing to go out and participate in community. Don't just show up to vote.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Important to provide a pleasant environment for residents. Parks department is part of that. Need to highlight our positives. The council and government should be good ambassadors to city. Important to have clean streets and nice things to do. That's why we do the restoration. The parks department is a big budget item. The city has a department that does programs to clean up and revitalize Franklin, and the council supports them.</p>	<p></p> <p>Is it city government's job to do more than just provide roads and police and fire protection? Is it government's job to improve the quality of life so that the city can attract new residents and businesses and become home to the top managers from those businesses? How does city government do this? What is your role?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Mayor's office has done a good job to connect with Discover Downtown Franklin on ways to enhance and promote downtown. Could look at alternative ways of funding. Need better connectivity with organizations and city when planning events. Born and raised in Franklin, and loves it. Trails and parks system rates as one of the best around. Council works to improve quality of life by approving or disapproving developments and improving police and fire services. Working to revitalize downtown. City has applied for grants. Need to improve street lighting downtown.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Got to provide basic services. City and mayor have been working with the development corporation. Franklin is a great place to live and locate. Would like to see State Road 44 be improved. It's very important for trucks to get to Interstate 74. Trails and parks are important, and the city should use grants for improvements. That work pays off because those are things companies look for. Fortunate to have Franklin College and the improvements on Branigin Boulevard and neighborhoods in that area. Would like to see improvements all the way though town with sidewalks and curbs.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Conflict of interest would be family member being a city employee or board member. Doesn't think he has that right now. If council member has a brother on police department, council member probably would favor the department, and that would be a conflict. A relationship with another city employee would be a conflict. Would not want to see a family member hired so he can avoid any conflicts.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>If on a specific board or committee that is doing something with city, would recuse self. For example, Jeff Eggers recuses himself when the council is dealing with county issues that relate to the city because he is the county attorney.</p>	<p></p> <p>What is a conflict of interest for a city council member? How would you avoid conflicts of interest and the appearances of them?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>If a council member owns a private business and approaches the city for a tax abatement, would need to not vote on issue. Also, if a family member has a business looking for tax break would excuse self from the vote. Common sense goes a long way. All council members recognize that and don't put themselves in situation that would be a conflict.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>In a community like this is not sure of what a conflict would be. If someone owns or is employed at a business that is requesting something from the council, that should be disclosed and that person should refrain from voting. Has never had that come up himself. If had any inkling voting on an issue would be a conflict of interest or involved a friend would back out immediately. Should shun the very appearance of evil.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>One idea would be environmental impact taxes on oil changes. Taxes on tires or auto use that could fund the roads. No more on food or beverage taxes. Could explore other ideas. Hope would be to get extra money from fees so city can cut property taxes. Need to look at past, present and future and look at all needs with the departments. Can't just focus on needs now. More important to look at needs 20 years down the road. Wouldn't like to see taxes raised. Property owners have had enough of it. Would have to raise taxes if the city faces financial problems, but doesn't want that to happen.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>If the state takes away property taxes, then Franklin would have to generate as much money as that makes. Would have to do research. Hopes not to raise any taxes. Taxes will always increase slightly.</p>	<p></p> <p>If state legislators give local government the option to adopt new taxes, what taxes would you support, and how much additional money should be generated? What city services should increase spending? Would you raise any tax, including property, sales or income taxes?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Money must come from somewhere. Experienced huge tax hikes with the school. City rates went up 5 percent from 2006 to 2007. Is open to all thoughts as far as an inn tax or a wheel tax. Have to find out what authority state will give us. Supports Hometown Matters. System is broken with property taxes. Need to start looking at alternative ways to fund government. If more money is generated, would like to see a northside fire station built and staffed properly. Could use another park and expand trails. Money was taken out of the cemetery fund years ago, probably needs to be implemented again. Take care of lighting and add signage downtown.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Hard to get away from property taxes because it's always going to be out there. Go to just income tax and you lose a lot of jobs, the tax base is gone. Needs to be some relief, though. Likes property tax because it's stable. Seen his property taxes go up. It's horrendous now, but that's the way it is. Would raise taxes only to maintain the same level of services. If the city sees a lot of growth would like to see the tax rate cut. Would have to look at the needs and if there was no other way to keep services at same level, would consider tax increase. "It would have to be under dire circumstances."</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Leader is person who is willing not to be the follower. Don't wait for something to come to you. Go find people to build new businesses here. Network with current businesses. Leaders should be the ones going out and doing. Would talk to both sides and allow people to have their say. Going to face opposition, and not everybody is going to be happy. Try to find a middle ground and find what people want. Always will be people who disagree with him. Have to understand people have a right to their opinion. Always two sides of the story, and that's fine.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Good leaders are good listeners. They take in everyone's opinions, and then form a decision from that. Leaders look at the pros and cons. There's nothing wrong with people disagreeing. Wants people to have different opinions.</p>	<p></p> <p>What are the attributes of leadership? How would you work to bring people along and build consensus on an issue? What about people who disagree with you?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Leaders lead by example; give back to community; and earn respect because they give respect. Speaks to a wide variety of people. Talks to people daily in the city on how to improve. Is always listening and taking mental notes. People disagree all the time. It's how a person disagrees. Can debate an issue but don't have to raise voice. Learned since becoming involved with city that a person has to be thick-skinned. It's how the council disagrees so members can talk about things. Ultimate goal is what is best for the people of Franklin.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Being honorable and standing for something. Having no ulterior motive. Serves because he wants to. Wants people that have the same simple outlook on things. Doesn't want people who are focused on a single issue. Wants what is best for the majority of the city and the entire community. Just presents his side of it and why he thinks what he thinks. Tries to explain position, and has been wrong. Sometimes has to settle for what he can settle for; sometimes you have to take what you get.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Revitalization is a good idea. Franklin missed out on developing by the interstate exit to attract people to downtown. If people don't like what they see when they exit, they will get back on the interstate. If it requires taxpayer money, would be willing to use any budget surplus. Would love to see pictures of a 2007 downtown packed with people like back when it was a busy area. Would like to see landscaping in downtown and maybe another downtown revitalization group formed. City should conduct public forums and get people's input.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Revitalization a top priority. Need to make town more attractive to newcomers. Wants managers and their employees to live here. Should present Franklin as a nice, viable community. A lot of funding for revitalization comes through grants. City helps with matching grant money. Part of council's responsibility is to make the city the best it can be. Already trying to put in new street lights. Would be nice to redo sidewalks and benches. Flowers planted by the beautification committee are nice. Wants to give city a historic look.</p>	<p></p> <p>Is revitalization of downtown Franklin a top priority? Why? Should taxpayer dollars be used? What do you propose be done?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Need lighting downtown and signage to give a unique feel. Old lights should have been replaced years ago. City just did some sidewalk work. Need some form of bypass around downtown to eliminate the 18-wheelers through the city on State Road 44. Beautification would include signs, street-lights and benches. Continue work with Discover Downtown Franklin and Franklin Heritage. Success with the strawberry festival and car shows are important part of city. "It's the heartbeat of the city." Need to get more people involved. Revitalization should be a priority.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Won't say it's a top priority, but it's very important. Doesn't know what it should look like. City needs to lead the effort, but not sure a lot of tax money should be poured into it. That's not fair to businesses on U.S. 31. Downtown needs to have a unique flavor. Downtown needs a theme. City needs to create a theme. That's the catch; have got to create a desire for people to visit the area. Is willing to sit and figure that out. Need more things downtown like the Artcraft Theatre.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Didn't support or oppose. Wasn't enough information on it. Indianapolis is growing and understands where they were coming from with the idea. Don't think residents want something to be built without having their opinion heard. If residents don't want it, he doesn't want it either. People didn't want it because they were not informed.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Wasn't really in favor of that specific issue. Couldn't see the real rationale behind the toll road. Didn't understand the whole thing at all. It was going to affect a lot of good land in county, and didn't see the need for the road at this time.</p>	<p></p> <p>Did you support a plan to allow the governor to build a toll road near Franklin and lease it to a private company? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>It's a moot point. Toll road would have been good for long-term. Did not support privatization. Roads in city need to be taken care of. State needs to do a better job with east-west corridor issues. Toll road would have been good in the long term, but not in the short term for people who live south of Franklin. People moved there for a reason. They would have an opportunity to sell, though.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Didn't support it, and wasn't against it. Thinks the big mistake made by the state was drawing the big line where the road could be. More people thought they would be affected than actually would have been.</p>
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<p>Cole</p> <p>Let them be hands-on. Conduct forums. Inform the people. Use advertising to let people know. Invite new residents to these things. Don't alienate them. Franklin is going to have a lot of new folks in the area. Franklin has become different ethnically, and the diversity is something we could utilize. Could have special events to give a culture lesson about the different people who live here.</p>	<p>Gordon</p> <p>Certainly would encourage them to come to council meetings and bring ideas that are unique to them. Think that is really all we can do. Would just encourage people to bring forth new ideas.</p>	<p></p> <p>With the city growing and bringing in more people with professional and managerial backgrounds, as well as numerous nationalities and ethnicities, how would you promote government taking best advantage of the talents, ideas and willingness of residents wanting to participate in public policy matters?</p>	<p>Austin</p> <p>Plenty of opportunities exist for people to come forward and give input at planning, council and board of works meetings. Franklin is growing and no longer a small farm town as in the past. Need to act like a city of 25,000 people. Those issues need to be addressed. Need to be well-rounded when promoting and accepting other backgrounds. Always room for improvement. As Spanish-speaking population increases, city will probably need translator. May need to be addressed.</p>	<p>Barrow</p> <p>Would look for those folks. After they serve with the city for a while, would see if they will run for city council. A lot of talent out there. Would give opportunities to participate.</p>
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