

City Council District #10 Voter Guide – 2018

Question	Christine Williams, Inc.	Dominic Renteria
<p>1. Tell us about yourself, your background and your interest in the City Council seat.</p>	<p>I attended Fox Valley Lutheran and graduated from Appleton East High School. I began working in office jobs during high school and college. I graduated from Lakeland College with double Bachelor's degrees in Business and Marketing. I was employed for ten years in credit management working for Trek Bicycle, Anchor Foods and C.A. Lawton Company. In my early 30s, I pursued my dream of becoming a police officer and was hired by Town of Menasha Police Department (now Fox Crossing). I served as a police officer for nine years until getting injured on duty and deemed duty disabled. I am involved in the community having volunteered for A Better Chance, Appleton Historical Society, Harbor House, Hearthstone Historical House Museum, Appleton Downtown, Inc., NAMI's Iris Place, Appleton Police Department, Fox Crossing Police Department and others. My husband and I, along with another partner, own and operate Fox River Tours, a riverboat company with boats in De Pere and coming to Appleton in mid-May.</p> <p>I have always had an interest in local politics going back to my years delivering the Milwaukee Sentinel on mornings before school. I would read the paper while walking door-to-door and listening to WHBY on a transistor radio. Serving in local government always seemed like the ultimate way to shape the day to day life in Appleton.</p> <p>I was first elected to City Council District 10 in 2014. I ran unopposed in 2016 and am presently running for my 3rd term. I currently serve on the Safety and Licensing Committee, Board of Review and Community and Economic Development Committee. I have previously served on</p>	<p>I am an Appleton Native who spent much of my childhood growing up in the District I am currently running for.</p> <p>After graduating from Appleton East High School (2001), I convinced my Mother to let me join the US Army in order to pay for my college. As a citizen soldier, I was able to earn my Bachelor's Degree in Finance ('08) and my MBA ('11), both from UW-Oshkosh.</p> <p>I recently retired from the Military after nearly 2 decades of Honorable service that has included leading soldiers through the war torn countries of both Iraq & Afghanistan.</p> <p>My professional experience includes nearly 10 years of Banking & Financial Management. I am also a Certified HR Professional and currently serve as The HR & Recruiting Supervisor for a local telecommunications company.</p> <p>I have lived in our Appleton neighborhood with my Wife, Lindsay, and our two children Vincent & Amelia for almost 10 years.</p>

	Parks and Recreation, Valley Transit and the Health Department.	
2. Explain your views on the proposed multi-use public library at Soldier's Square.	<p>It is too soon in this proposed library process for me to know how I will vote on it. There are many more public listening sessions to attend before enough is known about the nuances of mixed use development that could include the library. Attending a session and listening to another online leaves me with more questions than answers. Often times when someone asks the mayor or the developer a question, the response is that it is too soon to know the answer. That doesn't sit well with me at all, as we need to be as transparent as possible, especially when asking to spend \$30 million dollars knocking down an entire neighborhood of homes and the fate of Soldier's Square, among other things.</p> <p>When I knocked on doors this past month I asked each person I had contact with what they felt about the proposed library project. Overwhelmingly, folks felt a new library wasn't needed, should be remodeled at their existing site, or suggested finding a new spot such as Post Crescent building, Thompson Center or somewhere on Wisconsin Avenue.</p> <p>I voted no for the bluff site the last time the library was proposed. I voted that way based on the responses from my constituents. My top concerns were the distance from the transit center and the traffic configuration in that area.</p>	<p>When I walk through the neighborhood and talk with our neighbors, many agree that Appleton's current Public Library is insufficient for the needs of the community.</p> <p>It's one of the one of the most trafficked libraries in the state and should continue to be as Appleton grows. I recently had a meeting with the Library Director, Colleen Rortvedt, to examine the issue further and during that tour the signs of wear and tear were noticeable throughout the facility. Stained carpets, outdated furniture, and aging technology resources were impossible to ignore. The current proposal for the multi-use Public Library represents an opportunity to address some of these issues while providing some much needed residential space downtown.</p> <p>Although local citizens have expressed concern about the cost, location, and design of the project, I think it's clear the city cannot continue to kick this issue down the road.</p>
3. Which is more important, a new library or fixing the streets (like Linwood)?	<p>Linwood Street is terrible. It is set to be reconstructed in 3-4 years. I also worked with Public Works and Sabee Inc. to repair the horrible train tracks just south of College Avenue on Linwood. This will be completed by Sabee this spring. The answer is both and has to be both. Street repair is funded with the Wheel Tax and only money collected though the</p>	<p>The Public Library is the most talked about and most important issue in the City of Appleton right now. It will continue to be the most important issue until people finally can come together and begin to make decisions on how we are going to address the inadequacies with the existing Public Library.</p>

	<p>wheel tax can be used to repair roads per state statute.</p>	
<p>4. What is your feeling on the effectiveness of the wheel tax and should it be continued?</p>	<p>I voted for the wheel tax a few years ago and I believe it has been very effective. This truly was a group effort of citizens who were overwhelmed by the bills they had received to improve roads in front of their houses. It wasn't uncommon for a family to receive a bill of \$6000 - \$10,000 depending on their frontage on a road or roads.</p> <p>The wheel tax is \$20 per vehicle. All money collected by the DMV has to go to pay for roads. Gone are the days where residents have to save up for or finance improvements to the roads abutting their property.</p>	<p>As someone who received a special assessment for his road the year he bought his first home in Appleton, I can attest to the financial strain it can place on a family.</p> <p>My wife and I were fresh out of college and as if our college debts weren't enough, now we owed the city over \$6,000. Welcome to real life, right?</p> <p>The Wheel Tax will prevent others from having to go through the same type of financial hardship that we experienced and I think that is a good thing.</p>
<p>5. Do we need more police? How will you keep our neighborhoods safe?</p>	<p>Our police officers are top-notch and better trained than most departments in the nation.</p> <p>That said, I would like to see 5-10 additional officers hired. Appleton's population is nearly 75,000 people. With only 111 sworn officers, Appleton Police Department has a ratio of 1.48, making us the lowest number of officers per capita for a city our size in Wisconsin. In 2017, police officer overtime costs were a staggering \$607,300. Hiring additional officers will significantly reduce overtime. Overworked officers are a safety issue both for the officers and our city.</p> <p>I feel I keep District 10 neighborhoods safe by being the neighborhood block captain for the past 16 years. Through the neighborhood watch group I stress looking out for each other, getting to know each other and reminding folks to call their neighbors or the police if they see something unusual.</p> <p>I also personally know Capt. Olson, Capt. Freeman, Capt. Nyman and Chief Thomas. I</p>	<p>The Police Department is short staffed and it shows by the number of overtime that was paid out in 2017 (\$600,000+).</p> <p>Keeping our neighborhoods safe requires leaders on our City Council that can recognize problems before they are at our doorstep.</p> <p>This problem is no secret as it states right in the budget that 60% of our local government employees are eligible to retire in the next 5-10 years. So unless we start electing officials who can proactively navigate these issues, you can expect more of these types of shortcomings in years to come across various departments.</p>

	<p>speak with them frequently about instances in District 10 and other areas of the city.</p> <p>As an alderman, I also work with my constituents resolving issues that need to be reported to police. This would include suspicious activity, noise complaints, traffic and parking enforcement among other things.</p>	
<p>6. There is a loud car and vehicle problem in Appleton. Will you introduce an ordinance and fines for non-standard vehicle devices?</p>	<p>There is already a noise ordinance in the city that can be used for excessive noise coming from a vehicle or anywhere. In some instances it is illegal to have modified devices on a car. A quick example is tinted windows. I don't think additional laws need to be enacted, just enforce the ordinances that are on the books.</p> <p>Unfortunately with the shortage of police officers, officers have very little time to enforce traffic laws. This includes speeding, loud vehicles, running red lights, etc.</p>	<p>There are currently noise ordinances in place within the City. Although I have no intentions of introducing any ordinance or fines for these types of items, I see no reason why these ordinances couldn't be evaluated to assess the impact they are having on the community and insure they are working as intended.</p>
<p>7. Fair districting is on the ballot for Outagamie County. What are your thoughts on this?</p>	<p>This is a state issue. This is a forum on local issues.</p>	<p>I am excited to see this issue finally being addressed. I think any type of manipulation during the districting process is unethical, undesirable, and un-American. We should always strive for Fair processes, not just in districting but in all things in life. Equality is Paramount.</p>
<p>8. There is an upcoming proposal to remove size restrictions on public murals. How would you vote?</p>	<p>I think murals are art and should be removed from sign ordinances. I think having murals only cover 35% of the building surface is outdated and should be allowed to cover 100% of a surface.</p> <p>Appleton has beautiful art, updating the ordinance will only expand that. This goes to council on April 4.</p>	<p>I would not be in support of items that restrict or impede the creativity and artistic nature of our community without just cause. It's the whole reason people choose to live in Appleton. Council members need to keep this in mind when voting on items that impact the culture of our community.</p>
<p>9. What do you feel is the most important issue</p>	<p>Opiate abuse and deaths are a significant problem facing Appleton. It has been going on for years. EMS, fire and police are</p>	<p>The most important issue facing Appleton in short term is undoubtedly the Public Library.</p>

<p>facing Appleton in the short term? In the long term?</p>	<p>spending significant time dealing with overdoses from opiates. This is a problem that is being addressed at the national, state and local level.</p> <p>In the long term, city development away from downtown, e.g. Richmond Street corridor, Wisconsin Avenue corridor, the flats, and West College Avenue. Attention has been paid too much to the downtown leaving areas of the city asking “what about us?”. This is a city problem, however local developers need to step up and find other areas of the city to build and improve. There have been successes, but it is something that needs to be given much more thought.</p>	<p>In the long term, the greatest challenge will be to ensure the City of Appleton retains its reputation as a community that is culturally rich, diverse, and inclusive to people from all walks of life.</p>
<p>10. If you want to reduce or cut spending by the city, what would you cut and by how much?</p>	<p>I don't think we need to reduce or cut spending in the city. The city has been holding taxes at a similar rate for many years. I believe the employees of Appleton do a fine job at finding ways to save the city money. We are also limited by state levies on how much taxes we can impose.</p>	<p>I have read the entire City of Appleton 2018 Budget and Service Plan cover to cover (more than 600 pages) and I can honestly say there is very little fat to trim within many of the City of Appleton departments.</p> <p>If you look at the operating efficiency of the Appleton Fire Department for example, it operates at a per capita cost of \$152.50 which is well below the State of WI average of \$189.02.</p>
<p>11. Has there been any discussion about the parking issues at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center? County employees now park in the ramp and this is causing issues for people attending events at the Exhibition Center and in the downtown as a whole.</p>	<p>Most definitely. I've been asking public works director Paula VandeHey and other alderman have as well. We hear the complaints not only about the exhibition center ramp but the ramp nearest to the PAC, sometimes taking 45-60 minutes to exit the ramp after an event.</p> <p>City staff is aware and working on a solution. Maybe paying upon entrance again is the answer.</p>	<p>This is something to keep an eye on, but I think any action at present would be premature. There current parking situation at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center is currently being impacted by construction at the neighboring County Building. Once construction is completed we can begin to get a more realistic picture of the parking situation and address issues if necessary.</p>

<p>12. How do you feel about dogs in the park?</p>	<p>I voted against dogs in park because I had received a lot of feedback from constituents. They were concerned about irresponsible pet owners not cleaning up after their dogs, allowing pets to run around without leashes and aggressive dogs.</p> <p>This was a very passionate issue, with both sides standing firm.</p> <p>It was eventually compromised to allow leashed dogs on trails and sidewalks only.</p> <p>My hope is that we can look at this issue again and after years of no significant issues, allow dogs to the rest of the parks.</p>	<p>Restricting dogs from our parks is unfair to <u>responsible</u> dog owners. My Wife and I both grew up with Dogs and know that the key to Dogs and People co-existing in our parks is responsible owners.</p> <p>At the same time, being a Parent with 2 small children who frequently visit Linwood Park, I understand the concerns people may have about dogs in the park. The last thing anyone wants is an incident between a child and dog.</p> <p>Although my opponent recently voted against Dogs in in the park, I strongly believe we should strive to find ways to make our parks more inclusive for our dog owners who represent a large portion of households in District 10.</p>
<p>13. What would you like added to quality of life for Appleton residents in general and for your specific district?</p>	<p>A few things I can think of would be police keeping us safe and Parks Department adding to the trail system and improving, as necessary, the parks.</p>	<p>As Appleton continues to expand, it is important to preserve the green spaces that we have within our city and find ways to continue to share the use of outdoor amenities.</p> <p>For example the AASD allows for the community use of the Appleton West High School’s Football Field, Track, and Tennis Courts when not in use by the school. This has created additional recreational spaces beyond Linwood Park for people to enjoy within District 10.</p>
<p>14. What are your thoughts on replacing most or all of the yield signs with stop signs, especially as increased rental properties bring an increase in the number of vehicles per residence?</p>	<p>This would have to be looked at o an intersection by intersection basis. However, for the most part yield signs and stop signs are there for a reason – to manage traffic low.</p> <p>This is also an enforcement issue. With more police officers, officers could spend more time in neighborhoods to enforce yield/stop sign violations.</p>	<p>I think intersections need to be analyzed on a case by case by case basis and when appropriate, changes in traffic controls should be implemented.</p> <p>There are not two intersections within the city that are the same and implementing a “one-size fits all” approach would be an irresponsible and wasteful use of tax payer dollars.</p>

<p>15. A basic service of the city is WATER— treatment of waste water and the water we use. How is Appleton doing? What problems/issues related to Water does Appleton face?</p>	<p>Appleton year after year wins accolades for their great tasting water. Municipalities throughout the Fox Valley purchase water from Appleton.</p> <p>All water treatment facilities must adhere to the rigorous rules of the DNR and Safe Water regulations imposed federally and at the state level.</p> <p>Appleton’s water is expensive, but with excellence comes a price.</p>	<p>The City of Appleton is planning to install a 2nd raw water line in 2020 to meeting growing demand. As part of this process I believe it will be increasingly important as the project draws near to review the current and proposed quality control methods. Ensuring the safety and reliability of our water supply needs to be a critical component of this project.</p>
<p>16. Why should I vote for YOU?</p>	<p>I have called the Downtown West neighborhood home for 26 years. I have raised a family here and there is nowhere else I’d rather live. I have served the residents of District 10 since 2014. I enjoy helping my neighbors – I’ve assisted business and residents with a variety of issues, questions, and problems in a timely manner. I work with department heads and city staff to ensure top-notch service to residents. I enjoy being an alderman and my success is measured on what I’ve contributed to the city and District 10.</p>	<p>As I am writing this, I feel compelled to “sell” myself to you as the voter, to persuade, or convince you to vote for me simply because it is part of the election process.</p> <p>The problem is I didn’t join this race to “sell” you anything. I got involved because I care about the city and our neighborhood.</p> <p>I hope that if you choose to vote for me, it will be because you researched the Opponent, Myself, and through that process came to the conclusion to vote for Dominic Renteria.</p>