

We invite the 2025 Mount Pleasant Mayoral and Town Council candidates to respond with their views and plans to support a thriving, diverse local economy, back local businesses and entrepreneurs, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Please include your responses below. Responses are due no later than 5pm on Friday, October 17 and will be posted to [Lowcountrylocalfirst.org/news](https://lowcountrylocalfirst.org/news) and shared digitally the week of October 20. Please email Jordan@lowcountrylocalfirst.org with any questions.

1. Supporting Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs

What specific policy or program would you champion to reduce administrative burdens (such as complex permitting processes or restrictive zoning) for new and expanding small, locally-owned businesses and entrepreneurs, especially those creating a more diverse mix of retail and services in Mount Pleasant?

I've seen firsthand as both a business owner and a councilmember how challenging it can be for small, locally-owned businesses to navigate the maze of permits, inspections, and fees. That's why I've already been working closely with staff to streamline the permitting process and give landowners and entrepreneurs more transparency. Under my approach, every permit will include direct stakeholder contact information so that owners and contractors are notified immediately of changes, inspection scheduling, and approvals. By coordinating so inspectors, landowners, and contractors can all be present at the same time, we eliminate wasted hours of waiting, get questions answered quickly, and keep projects moving forward.

Beyond cutting red tape, I've been a consistent champion for local entrepreneurship. I supported the Harbor Entrepreneur Center, which is cultivating innovative ideas and creating jobs here in Mount Pleasant. I helped champion the Park West Farmers Market and Maker's Mark initiative, both of which give local makers and small business owners new opportunities to showcase their products. I also served on the Mount Pleasant Made economic development effort, and today, as part of the Economic Development Committee, I am actively reviewing impact fees to see how we can reduce the burden on small businesses looking to open or expand.

I've also worked hand-in-hand with our Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce, ensuring that local business voices are at the table as we make policy decisions. My goal is always the same: to create a thriving, diverse mix of retail, services, and entrepreneurial opportunities in our community.

Looking forward, I believe Mount Pleasant should establish a **one-stop business portal** where entrepreneurs can track permits, inspections, zoning requirements, and fees in real-time. This would give every small business owner the tools and transparency they need to succeed without being bogged down by bureaucracy.

At the end of the day, I bring not only policy experience but also the perspective of someone who has built businesses from the ground up. I understand the challenges our entrepreneurs face because I've lived them — and I'll continue to fight for solutions that clear the way for them to grow, hire, and innovate right here in Mount Pleasant.

2. Quality of Life for Residents

Mount Pleasant's growth has intensified traffic congestion and contributed to high housing costs. What is your plan to improve the daily quality of life for residents by addressing the intersection of transportation and housing, specifically to enable local workers to afford to live closer to their jobs and reduce reliance on long-distance commutes?

Mount Pleasant's growth has brought incredible opportunity, but it has also created real challenges for traffic and housing affordability. I believe the two issues are deeply connected, and we have to address them together.

On transportation, I've been focused on relieving congestion through smarter infrastructure and better coordination. That means continuing to push for road improvements, synchronizing traffic lights, and making sure new development includes the infrastructure to support it. I also support expanding safe, efficient alternatives like bike lanes, pedestrian paths, and partnerships for regional transit solutions that reduce the number of cars on our roads.

On housing, we must take a balanced approach that allows our workforce—teachers, first responders, hospitality staff, and others—to realistically afford to live closer to their jobs. That means exploring targeted attainable housing policies and partnerships that expand options without overburdening existing neighborhoods or compromising the character of Mount Pleasant.

By bringing transportation and housing policy together, we can reduce long commutes, ease traffic, and improve quality of life. If workers can live closer to their jobs, they'll spend less time on the road, more time with their families, and more money in our local economy. That's the vision I'll continue to push for—a Mount Pleasant where growth is balanced, opportunities are accessible, and our community remains one of the best places to live in the Lowcountry.

3. Maximizing Local Impact of Town Spending

How would you reform the Town of Mount Pleasant's purchasing and procurement policies to prioritize and increase the percentage of municipal contracts and purchases awarded to qualified local businesses and suppliers, thereby recirculating tax dollars within the local economy?

One of the best ways Mount Pleasant can strengthen its economy is by keeping more of our tax dollars circulating locally. I believe we should reform our purchasing and procurement policies to prioritize qualified local businesses and suppliers first, while also recognizing that our economy doesn't stop at the town limits.

Many business owners who live in Mount Pleasant have their headquarters or offices just over the line in Charleston, North Charleston, or elsewhere in the Lowcountry. While we should encourage them to expand here when possible, the reality is that their roots and employees are still part of our community. That's why I believe the right approach is to work with our tri-county partners so we can collectively promote businesses based in the Lowcountry before looking beyond our region.

By doing this, we make sure contracts and purchasing decisions reflect the talent and capacity we already have in our backyard. That means creating procurement policies that:

- Score bids higher when they come from local or regional businesses that invest back into our community.
- Establish a “Lowcountry First” policy, similar to Buy Local campaigns, ensuring municipal dollars stay in the tri-county area whenever possible.
- Expand outreach and education so small local businesses understand how to become qualified vendors and compete for town contracts.

This reform isn’t about shutting out competition—it’s about making sure that when taxpayer dollars are spent, they are reinvested right here in Mount Pleasant and across the Lowcountry, instead of flowing out to corporations in Charlotte, Atlanta, or beyond. A strong tri-county economy makes us all stronger, and I’ll continue to champion policies that put our local businesses at the front of the line.

4. Diversifying the Local Economy

Beyond retail and services, how will you use your elected position to attract and retain high-wage, diversified employment opportunities, such as small-scale manufacturing, technology, or creative industries, ensuring these sectors can afford to operate and grow within Mount Pleasant?

Mount Pleasant doesn’t have the large industrial land base for traditional manufacturing, so our economic development strategy has to focus on technology, innovation, and creative industries. That’s where we can create high-wage, diversified opportunities while protecting the character of our community.

We’re already laying the groundwork. With our new Economic Development position, partnerships with the Harbor Entrepreneur Center, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA), we are positioning Mount Pleasant as a hub for entrepreneurs, technology companies, and creative professionals. These collaborations help us cultivate startups, support small-scale tech and creative businesses, and connect them with the resources they need to grow.

To ensure these sectors can afford to operate here, we must:

- Streamline zoning and permitting to make it easier for technology and creative companies to establish themselves in Mount Pleasant.
- Leverage regional partnerships to attract firms that bring high-paying jobs but fit our community’s footprint and quality-of-life expectations.
- Encourage flexible office and co-working spaces that allow small-scale manufacturers, innovators, and creative professionals to launch and expand without being priced out.
- Promote workforce development by aligning with local schools, colleges, and training programs to ensure our residents are equipped for these higher-paying industries.

By focusing on innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship—and by working with our regional partners—we can attract and retain the kinds of businesses that diversify our economy, create good jobs for residents, and ensure Mount Pleasant remains a place where both families and businesses can thrive.

