

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?

It's time to look at impact fees, whether we still need them, and if so, if they should be modified. We also need to look at the real-life impacts and unintended consequences of regulations, including the amount of Town resources required to comply with them and how many days/weeks it takes to complete any permitting process.

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?

We are working on it, and we need to do more. There has been a lot of talk of late of the wage study for police and fire employees in the Town, but the recent study also discussed other incentives, like a housing stipend as a retention effort, that should be considered. My daughter is a freshman in college and currently plans to return to Mount Pleasant after graduation. I want her, and all our young residents, to be able to do that – to have career options and housing options and be able to enjoy the natural environment here that they love.

The primary reason for all of Mount Pleasant's traffic is we have one person in one car driving the same direction the same time of day. When the Wando bridge broke in 2018, we had no choice but to get creative. Employers changed shift times, folks worked remotely, and we increased public transportation and carpool. I would like to work with CARTA on a Mount Pleasant Loop route similar to the Charleston DASH. We also need to review specific pinchpoint intersections that are gateways for visitors and residents and plan improvements comprehensively.

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?

Mount Pleasant should absolutely look for ways to keep more of our tax dollars working locally. I would support reforms to our purchasing and procurement policies that give qualified local businesses every fair opportunity to compete for Town contracts, without sacrificing transparency, cost-effectiveness, or quality. This could include stronger local vendor preferences, more proactive outreach to small and minority-owned businesses, and breaking large contracts into smaller bid packages when appropriate so that local suppliers can participate. Supporting local business strengthens our economy, builds community pride, and keeps those dollars recirculating here in Town.

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?

A thriving economy depends on more than retail and restaurants; it requires a diverse mix of employers that provide high-quality jobs and long-term stability. Mount Pleasant can attract and retain these opportunities by focusing on what those businesses value most: a strong quality of life, reliable infrastructure, and a supportive local government that moves efficiently. I would advocate for policies that make it easier for small-scale manufacturing, tech, and creative companies to operate here, such as modernizing zoning, investing in broadband and workspace infrastructure, and expanding partnerships with schools and workforce programs. We should also highlight our growing creative economy through assets like the new Community Arts Center, which can serve as both a cultural and entrepreneurial hub.