

Primary Candidates' Questions & Responses
Primary Election - May 5, 2015

MAYOR

Jim Brainard

Rick Sharp

1. Compared to other cities, development in Carmel is expensive, and sometimes very difficult, due to the demand for particular materials and the process itself. What are your ideas for streamlining the process and making it more cost-effective, so that Carmel is an easier place to do business?
2. Fishers, Noblesville and Greenwood have all become second-class cities in the last several years? Would you be in favor of second-class city status for Carmel? Why or why not?
3. One of the major reasons for Carmel's enviable tax rate is its business investment. What are your ideas for ensuring that continues? How can we make certain the business voice is respected at committee and council levels to the same extent homeowners' opinions are?

Jim Brainard

1. The cost of redevelopment in Carmel is actually much lower than other cities across the country, which are the ones we are competing with for a high quality workforce. We must remember that our main competition does not always come from Hamilton County, but from all corners of the U.S. and around the world. Carmel has always prided itself in maintaining high quality standards when it comes to construction of commercial buildings and residential properties. Although some feel the standards are too high and lead some to choose to operate their business elsewhere, we find the opposite is true. Carmel has no shortage of economic development interest and both our business community and our residents appreciate the beauty and distinct architectural standards they see. We feel such standards go a long way toward improving the quality of life, which in turn keeps Carmel on the front lines of attracting corporate headquarters and one of the most highly-educated populations in the Midwest ... both of which return the favor to our local business community by purchasing their products. There are always ways that we can improve our processes and we continue to work with our partners in development, other agencies and internally to create an environment where high quality projects will be created that will stand the test of time.
2. Yes, I support and have proposed moving Carmel to 2nd Class City Status. A city our size would benefit from a couple of things. First, the addition of two city council members would mean our council districts would be smaller and council members would be better positioned

to respond to constituents concerns and questions. Second, we would be able to employ a full-time city controller, a true financial expert, to help the city with its short-term financial needs and long-term fiscal planning. I believe it is always a good thing for cities to rely on professionals to help guide us through often complicated situations regarding government finance. Lastly, the change would mean that the Mayor would no longer preside over the City Council and would no longer have a tie-breaking vote. This would further the separation of powers in Carmel, something that our country's forefathers held as a high goal.

3. One of the actions I have taken over the past few years is the expansion and improvement our city's combined Economic Development and Community Relations Department, from which we have greatly enhanced our working relationship with the local business community. I have always held the highest respect for our corporate constituents and I meet frequently with them to address concerns or help guide them in their goals to expand or to relocate within our city and we hold quarterly Carmel Small Business Network meetings to stay in touch with others in our business community. As Mayor, my goal has always been not only to attract new business, but also to make sure our existing businesses are treated with respect and kept informed about city activities and that we are aware of their needs. I hope members of the Chamber and other business owners know that my door is always open to them.

Rick Sharp

1. During the transition period leading up to taking office January 1st I will convene a blue ribbon panel of business owners and managers that routinely do business with the various City departments to discuss the shortcomings and challenges posed by doing business with the City. Together we will revise and/or devise processes that preserve the high level of expectations in Carmel but make it more straightforward and cost effective for business. We can maintain the expectations of the citizens of Carmel while offering a progressive system of review and approval. Given my extensive business background I am sensitive to the concerns I have heard, particularly in the last several years, and promise we will take concrete action to address them.
2. I would not favor second class city status as it brings little tangible benefit, in my mind, other than the expansion of the Council. I would support and will work to change State statute to permit either a third class city, under home rule, to expand their Council to 9 members or a second class city determine to retain an elected Treasurer. Nothing can promote open and honest government better than an independent elected official overseeing the checkbook. It is not a redundancy it is insurance!
3. Continue to make Carmel a desirable and safe place to live. Streamline the approval process in conjunction with business as we did with the sign ordinance. Promote responsible development that grows our tax base particularly in the Economic Development Areas to insure adequate TIF revenues to pay the existing debt. This last point would

ensure that we never are at a point that the SBT is levied as it would disproportionately affect business. I think the business community in Carmel is accorded the same level of respect and weight as are the voices of homeowners. The effective representation of business by the Chamber has helped insure that this is so.