



Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.

www.livable-neighborhoods.org

To improve and promote the livability
of all neighborhoods in the La Crosse area

2013 La Crosse Mayor/Council Candidate Survey

Livable Neighborhoods is a non-profit citizens group established in 1996. Our purpose is to improve and promote the livability of all neighborhoods in the La Crosse area. As part of our mission we encourage citizens to research and discuss important issues facing our community. Certainly one of the most important of those issues is who we should choose to represent us in local government.

The following questions have been developed to help La Crosse residents learn more about the candidates for Mayor and city council prior to the spring election. We are inviting each candidate to answer these questions with a 3- to 5-sentence response. The responses of all candidates will be collated and made available at <http://livable-neighborhoods.org> and in the local media. Your answers will be quoted without summary, editing or editorializing.

Please complete the survey by typing in your best answers to the highlighted questions in the row below. As you type, the row will expand, so you should not need to do any formatting. Or if you prefer, you may hand write your answers (please number) on a separate piece(s) of paper. Your response will be posted online and shared with the media exactly as you return it.

Please return your survey by Monday, March 18 to president@livable-neighborhoods.org. Or you may mail it to **Charley Weeth**, 122 17th St S, La Crosse, WI 54601-4208.

Questions? Please contact **Charley Weeth** at 784-3212 or **Charles Clemence** at 738-1736 or vp@livable-neighborhoods.org.

Thank you for your willingness to serve. And good luck in the upcoming elections.

Name: _Doug Farmer_____

Address: ___321 South 21st Street_____

Phone: __782-7062_____

Email: _doug@farmerforlacrosse.com_____

Candidate for Mayor Candidate for Council Council District Number _____

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Questions

1. Political experience is helpful in governing a city, but effective leadership skills may be gained in many different ways. Please list the work, business, civic, or charitable experience that best demonstrates your ability to manage city operations

Who is Doug Farmer?

- La Crosse resident since 1971.
- District 10 resident since 1971.
- Husband to Betsey since 1971.
- Father of four sons.
 - Morgan — Central '96
 - Malcolm — Central '99
 - Gordon — Aquinas '03
 - Douglas — Aquinas '08

Is Doug experienced?

- La Crosse City Council
 - 1987 — 2012
- La Crosse School Board
 - 1992 — 93, President
- La Crosse County Board of Supervisors
 - 1974 — 84, Finance Chair
- State of Wisconsin Banking Review Board
 - 2003 — Present
- Western Wisconsin Technical College Board
 - 1986 — 91, Chairman:
Search & Screen Committee
for College President

Who is Doug by day?

- Soon-to-be-retired Executive Vice President at Park Bank
 - 1981 — Present
- Finance Instructor at Western Wisconsin Technical College
 - 1977 — 80
- Loan Officer at Batavian National Bank
 - 1971 — 77
- Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration
 - George Washington Univ.,
Class of 1971

2. The City of La Crosse is facing budgetary problems stemming from increasing costs and stable or

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decreasing revenue. Assume the city is facing a situation where budgeted expenses are expected to exceed revenue by a significant amount. How would you address this shortfall?

3. What do you feel are the greatest problems facing La Crosse neighborhoods? How should the City focus its revitalization resources? Specifically, please discuss and rate the importance of the following factors:

- Aging and dilapidated housing stock.
- Attracting middle class residents to La Crosse neighborhoods.
- Developing job and business opportunities for residents.
- Neighborhood institutions (parks, schools, libraries, civic organizations, etc.).
- Licensing landlords, limiting the conversion of owner occupied homes to rentals, etc.
- Please sum up your approach to stabilizing and improving La Crosse’s neighborhoods.

4. La Crosse is blessed with a unique and varied natural environment. While this is a great benefit, it can also pose challenges to expanding the tax base.

- Should the city strictly apply its development standards within three miles of its border as allowed by law and laid out in the comprehensive plan?
- Should the City create development strategies or growth plans for surrounding towns?
- Should the City consider extending sewer or water services without requiring annexation?
- Do you support continued funding of the bluffland acquisition program?

5. The north-south corridor remains part of the La Crosse Area Planning Commission and the Department of Transportation’s long-range transportation plan for the La Crosse area. This despite the 1998 referendum turning down the 5B-1 proposal.

- Do you believe there is a need for new north-south road through the city of La Crosse?
- Do you believe other projects, such as the proposed extension of 12th Avenue S in Onalaska to State Hwy 16 or the proposed traffic roundabout at 7th & Cass, should be developed as alternatives to a new corridor?
- Do you believe the city should pursue measures to curb use of single occupancy vehicles as

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<p>alternatives to a new road? For example, regulation of neighborhood parking, special fees and assessments for parking, and encouraging alternatives (walking, biking, car pools, mass transit etc.).</p>
<p>6. How would you promote the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the City?</p>
<p>7. Recently La Crosse has seen a disturbing increase of accidental deaths and other serious problems related to alcohol abuse. What do you think the city's role is in stopping and reversing this trend?</p>
<p>8. There has also been a recent series of violent deaths, assaults, and drug related crimes in the city. Does La Crosse have a problem with the growth of serious crime? What measures would you take to improve public safety in this area?</p>
<p>9. Historic preservation has become a popular method for neighborhood revitalization in La Crosse. The city currently has several historic districts and dozens of designated properties. However, all requests to demolish historic buildings have been approved by the city council.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the historic status of a building have an impact on whether it is demolished?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What criteria should the city use to evaluate the impact of a development on historic properties?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the city provide funding and/or technical help for property owners to maintain and renovate historic buildings?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the city's ordinance be changed to give the Heritage Preservation Commission more than just advisory authority over designated properties?
<p>10. Do you think the City has assisted or thwarted attempts at regional cooperation? What direction would you give department heads to encourage such cooperation?</p>
<p>11. Public opinion polls show that most people want to cut the size and cost of government, but there is no consensus on where to cut and how much. What is your approach to spending and taxes? Would your goal be to decrease taxes, hold them steady, or allow for some increase?</p>
<p>12. A large part of the cost for providing city services is currently borne by property taxpayers. The city has the ability under state statutes to establish utility districts and user fees so all property owners pay for the services provided and received.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you support creation of a utility for fire protection? A fire protection utility would charge to all property owners based on the level of fire protection needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the city look to fees and fines as a source of revenue or as a cost recovery device only?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently there is a controversial plan to raise fees relating for all types of city services. Do you think current fees are adequate or should they be raised?

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13. La Crosse voters soundly defeated a proposal to hire a city administrator. However we are in a shrinking group of cities without professional administrative expertise. Do you think the referendum settled the issue of a city administrator or should the discussion continue?

14. The Joint City-County Housing Task Force identified a number of actions aimed at that it felt would help the revitalize neighborhoods and expand the tax base. The number one recommendation was "Better education and enforcement of existing codes and standards". Do you agree? If so, how what changes would you suggest be made at City Hall?

15. Finally, what do you want voters to know that haven't been brought out by our questions? What experience, ideas, qualities, etc. do you have that make you the better choice?