

Candidate Steve Stenger

Responses to St. Louis County Executive Candidate Questions August 2014

Housing

1) If elected what will you do to help families deal with or prevent foreclosure?

I'm well aware of how traumatic the prospect of losing a home can be as evidenced by the large number of area families affected by the sizable downturn of the economy in late 2007. Many families that lost jobs, pensions or savings were looking everywhere and anywhere for assistance.

As county executive, I'll continue my work with lending institutions to encourage the use of mediation and all other tools to help troubled owners facing the loss of their home or a financial position that might be compromising their mortgage.

Collectively, we have found that government working together with the private sector and other non-profit organizations in collaboration allows us to find the best alternatives available to assist troubled homeowners.

2) Which tools would you use to strengthen housing and economic development in the county?

We need to reorganize and prioritize reforms within St. Louis County's Problem Properties Unit, which relies on only two inspectors to keep up with inspections which has become a problem throughout areas of the county.

As county executive I'll step up efforts to work even more closely with elected officials at the federal, state and municipal levels in order to make sure St. Louis County gets its fair share of housing program funding.

See Economic Development Plans Below.

Economic Development

3) What policies would you put into place to invest in communities in need? How will you support community commercial districts?

To address extreme poverty in certain St. Louis County areas I plan to take a multifaceted approach on each of the following underlining causes of distressed communities.

- 1) Increased Crime
- 2) Low Levels of Private Investment
- 3) Poorer Health Outcomes
- 4) Depreciating Property Values
- 5) Underperforming Schools

I will form a Division of Community Empowerment by realigning existing county resources at no additional cost to taxpayers. This division will simultaneously address all underlying causes of poverty.

At the same time the Division of Community Empowerment will coordinate with the economic development arm of county government to enhance industry recruitment, workforce development and corporate infrastructure in order to attract jobs to St. Louis County's distressed areas.

4) How will you make sure large-scale economic initiatives benefit communities in need of jobs or investment?

In addition to combating the underlying problems of distressed communities, and or poverty as referred to above, my economic development plan will focus on workforce development, developing necessary corporate infrastructure and industry recruitment. The Division of Community Empowerment will identify all positive attributes of each of St. Louis County's distressed communities in order to properly match growing or emerging industries with that community and to identify the corporate infrastructure and necessary workforce to attract large scale development.

Within the first 100 days of my administration I will identify emerging and or growing industries that the county wants to maintain and recruit.

5) How would you reduce barriers to entering the workforce for a variety of populations (college students, new mothers, etc)

The underlying causes of distressed communities and poverty addressed above are primary barriers to a variety of populations entering the workforce. In addition to addressing these underlying barriers, in order for underserved communities to fully participate in today's competitive economy, which demands education, training and skills required for employment, there needs to be a fully concentrated commitment to work force development programs, job training and educational opportunities that match the workforce with emerging and growing industries.

TRANSPORTATION

6) How would your administration accommodate these resident preferences and connect neighborhoods to jobs, education, services and amenities?

First, we are going to transform the County Highway Department to the County Department of Transportation to represent a new vision for transportation and its role in the new economy and changing communities. We will work to provide the right mix of multi-modal transportation systems (eg. bike paths, lanes and trails, accessible rapid bus transit, disabled and pedestrian accessible infrastructure and other emergent transportation options and enhancements) embracing the concepts of walkable communities, mixed use development, sustainable economic development and increasing the role of public transit. We will ensure that the County determines the best avenue to secure and leverage state and federal resources to best meet the needs of the county's changing population and business needs.

How would your administration improve north-south corridor transit?

Consistent with the above answer and my transportation plan as set forth above, I would enhance our existing infrastructure to improve connectivity both north and south, accessibility and traffic flow while respecting the elements of multi-modal transportation systems and doing so in the most sustainable as well as environmentally responsible manner.