



## Questionnaire with Edmond Mayor Candidate Dan O'Neil (Candidates answers are recorded in red)

### 1. If elected to City Council/Mayor, what will be your top priorities?

#1 Roads: With the Council's approval and working with Staff, our first workshop topic will be "Edmond Road Plans" that should lead to an item on next 2019-20 Budget. I think this council will encourage staff to add to the road budget significantly starting with the 2019-20 Budget, beginning July 2019. I hope to provide some specific goals

#2 East of I-35: – There is an explosion in housing and development East of I-35. Because most Citizens seldom drive out there – few people in town know about this. 10 years ago, the Council laid out some big plans in Plan IV for East Edmond. Many of those have already been developed, but we need to have a more robust, civic driven input to make sure we do it right. That is why I favor retaining and updating Edmond Plan IV. I hope the Chamber will join in this effort to update plans east of I-35. We need our best minds working together with city staff, school officials, residents and land owners who live east of I-35, to blend the other half of Edmond into one community.

#3. Council and City Staff need to communicate more about our Public Works and City Business in general. Last year, we floated \$188 mil in bonds, we began construction, started building a brand-new Waste Treatment Plant - right next to the current plant. This year 2019, we approved a major expansion of Water Treatment, which will double the drinking water available from Arcadia Lake. Council and Staff held all proper hearings to be sure and all the t's were crossed – However, in every audience I have talked to, most everyone was totally unaware we started building a new Waste Treatment Plant or planned to double Water Plant capabilities. As mayor, this council will work with staff to make sure we keep you fully informed. That is why elections are important to examine issues and promote full transparency.

Conclusion: Edmond has grown into a much bigger city that we used to be – but we don't need "to act or look like one". We need to work at keeping our small-town charm. We can do a better job keeping our streets clean, we can improve parking downtown, we can create modest trails around the rest of

Arcadia Lake, maybe we can add another dog park, we can encourage beautification, and we can promote Edmond as the “Redbud Capital of Oklahoma”. We need to do a better job of telling businesses how much we appreciate their efforts to make their business attractive and keep shopping a pleasure. That will keep our sales tax dollars at home and keep Edmond growing.

2. Do you support the continued use of the Edmond Development Authority’s incentive policy to recruit new business and assist existing business? Why or why not?

This Economic Incentive Program has been on the books for nearly 10 years. EEDA received \$100,000 a year from Edmond Electric. The current project (still pending) was tentatively approved in principal by council, will pay \$700,000 to build streets and add parking by the railroad in Downtown Edmond. That seems feasible. YES - I support continuing efforts to reach a partnership that also insures public benefits (streets & parking) from this public investment.

3. Do you support allowing voters to decide whether to tax themselves to build a Regional Transit/Commuter Rail System in central Oklahoma (to connect, for example, Norman, Edmond, OKC and Tinker AFB)? Why or why not?

This is a new group. I have read an article but not familiar with this effort. During my prior term as Mayor, I supported public transportation and started the Edmond Bus service we have today. I also supported passenger railroad initiatives in 2007 -09, when it only involved federal and state money. I am not a property tax advocate. However, if the Business Community publicly stands up for this proposal, the School Board is on board and the public desires this, I would support a Public vote and advocate for the property tax proposal. It must make sense for Edmond.

4. Do you support the use of city funds to implement a railroad quiet zone in Edmond city limits? Why or why not?

Residents and downtown businesses (DEBA) all seem to favor Quiet Zones and approve closing certain streets to minimize Quiet Zone costs. I opposed this 10 years ago because the \$30 mil (?) estimated cost by the railroad was prohibitive. Oklahoma City and Norman have done it – it seems a worth-while effort. We still do not have the Railroad cost estimates. I support the Quiet Zone project if the price is reasonable. I hope the council will not spend our sales tax dollars on Quiet Zones just so somebody can build big apartment complexes downtown.

5. Are you aware of the Federal Opportunity Zone located in downtown Edmond and what is your view on how this area should be developed?

The Federal Opportunity Program is not final. Hopefully it can help us develop along the railroad. I love downtown. Here are my thoughts. Edmond has probably contracted more studies on how to develop

downtown than any location in Edmond. These ideas were interesting and some have been pretty grand.

I have continued to support Downtown and DEBA long after my term as Mayor. Without DEBA we would not have a downtown – without downtown and our newspapers, Edmond is not a community and we lose most of our charm. When the movers and shakers are ready to do something (beside big apartments) – I will support them as well as I can. In the past 10 years, we have lost some great retailers downtown and added two nice retail/office complexes and the city has doubled up on infrastructure to facilitate growth. Pick a plan and let's do it.

6. What is your view on the best solutions for the increased traffic areas that are part of the future growth of Edmond?

We started Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS) in 2007. We used to have traffic sensors embedded in the roads at the stop lights. ITS has evolved and we can closely monitor and adjust traffic signals from a central computer. The city is expanding ITS to other major streets beyond just 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. ITS doesn't work so well, if the streets are clogged with cars. I have found that traffic flows best on the streets with a landscaped median – you have less traffic, travel at higher speeds and less accidents. Tell me what you think about medians or ITS, because we really need to fix this problem.

7. As you know, sales tax is the primary source of revenue for cities in Oklahoma. What is your opinion on how to drive sales tax generation and growth for Edmond?

Edmond collects more sales tax per person than any other city in Oklahoma. We did it by working together, encouraging good planning and having high standards, so that people enjoy shopping in Edmond. We have another 30,000 Edmond residents living in the Greater Edmond Area who believe they are part of our town, attend our Edmond Schools and shop here because it has been a good experience. It has worked here like nowhere else in Oklahoma. The Interstate is our best sales tax generator for the future. Anybody with answers involving improving retail near South Broadway – we need to talk.