1. How has the COVID pandemic affected the Hamilton County budget and how will budget changes impact infrastructure programs and future development plans?

   The COVID pandemic has impacted the county’s revenue from parking, motel/hotels, and general funds. That said, we have saved up enough dollars in our economic development funds to weather the storm. Despite the pandemic’s impact, we will continue to move forward on projects like the development of the Banks and the Millennium hotel. There will still be challenges as we advance, but because of the prudent financial decisions the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) have made, we will be able to emerge from Trump’s recession in a better place.

2. What are your plans to encourage job growth in industries that can bring higher wages, diverse occupations, and help create new housing and development?

   At the county level, we have moved to increase employee wages to $15/hour. We have also implemented policies to make sure our local tax dollars spent on construction projects go to work creating local jobs and training opportunities.

3. What are your plans to address the shortage of labor in skilled trades essential to future development and growth?

   We need to make construction jobs more attractive for young people who would usually not go into trades. I support institutions like Cincinnati State that provide trade certifications. We need to put more value in these types of jobs. Where possible, when the county is engaged in large construction projects, we want to ensure that we are using local dollars focusing on local hiring.

4. What are your plans to help small businesses in Hamilton County recover from COVID, grow, and thrive?

   The BOCC is committed to the economic recovery of the region. We have appropriated over $7 million from our CARES Act dollars towards stabilizing our small businesses that have suffered during the pandemic. As a former small business owner, I will continue to advocate for local businesses, which are our community’s lifeblood.

5. What is your position on zoning changes and development incentives to encourage more housing construction, especially multi-family housing?

   Zoning changes are not always under the purview of the BOCC. While the county zoning code only applies to our townships and villages, zoning changes can happen if they are supported by the community when appropriate. I am in favor of zoning changes that allow for more workforce housing. When applicable, incentives and zoning changes make sense on a case by case basis.