

**As our community continues to grow, so do the demands on our water and sewer infrastructure. How do you plan to address the balance between maintaining and upgrading these essential services while keeping water and sewer fees affordable for businesses? Additionally, what measures would you take to ensure transparency in how these fees are calculated and allocated?**

**Jacob Coleman\* - Candidate: Waconia City Council**

As Waconia continues to grow, the demands on our water and sewer infrastructure will inevitably increase. My approach to addressing these challenges focuses on proactive planning, responsible budgeting, and transparent communication to ensure that our essential services meet the needs of the community while keeping costs manageable for businesses and residents.

**\*\*Balancing Maintenance, Upgrades, and Affordability:\*\*** To maintain and upgrade our water and sewer infrastructure effectively, I would prioritize a long-term capital improvement plan that identifies critical areas needing attention and allows us to phase in upgrades over time. By spreading out the costs of necessary upgrades and focusing on preventative maintenance, we can avoid sudden, costly repairs that might otherwise lead to spikes in fees. Additionally, I would seek out state and federal grants or low-interest loans that could help finance infrastructure improvements without placing the full burden on local businesses and residents.

**\*\*Ensuring Transparency in Fee Calculation and Allocation:\*\*** Transparency is key to building trust within the community, especially when it comes to fees. I would advocate for clear, detailed explanations of how water and sewer fees are calculated and how funds are allocated. This could include providing residents and businesses with easy-to-understand breakdowns of their bills, offering public forums to discuss rate changes, and publishing regular updates on infrastructure projects funded by these fees. I believe that when people understand exactly where their money is going and why, they are more likely to support the necessary investments in our community's future.

By taking a strategic, transparent, and fiscally responsible approach to our water and sewer infrastructure, we can ensure that Waconia's growth is supported by reliable services, without imposing undue financial strain on our businesses and residents.

**Jim Lohan - Candidate: Waconia City Council**

We must evaluate the water and sewer business as we would any of our businesses. Then we have to share that with interested residents.

Next, we have to evaluate and improve: Do we have a handle on costs? Can we be more productive? Are we asserting our independence by making sure we are ONLY doing things that benefit our citizens?

**Simon Malinski - Candidate: Waconia City Council**

Demands on our infrastructure will have impacts on business owners and residents alike. Improvements made should be in alignment with our annual budget to ensure the least amount of impact to fees and assessments. Thoughtful planning of replacement and expansion is going to be important as our community needs change.

**Derek Siddons - Candidate: Waconia City Council**

It's imperative to work closely with the Met council, engineers, planners, and ultimately the building companies that are bringing the additional homes into Waconia to ensure chartered growth so that our systems don't

get overwhelmed. Healthy and clean drinking water is not only imperative but it's a right for our citizens. Waconia's water quality is a priority. Consistent comments of concern from residents are nothing new, but with the systems being pushed water quality needs to be pushed to the top.

### **Tim Litfin - Candidate: Waconia Mayor**

We need to keep our fees reasonable so that our fees cover costs, and we are not higher regionally than our neighbors. It is a business, and we need to treat it that way. However, in any business expenses are reviewed and cost-saving measures are regularly put in place. Upgrades and improvements will always be necessary. We need to space out these projects. We need to communicate the information and the schedule better to our citizens. We need to use the chamber and the school communication abilities, signage, and websites better to make sure our message is as effective as possible, and then repeat it often.

From the experience of communicating my community education program to thousands of people, I know that not all will see or hear the message, which is why we need to continue to communicate and repeat it often.

### **Mayor Nicole Waldron\*- Candidate: Waconia Mayor**

The sewer and water infrastructure systems are enterprise funds that run like a business. Annually the fees are evaluated and determined based on projected development. The fees set are needed to support growth to support further development. These adjustments are shared with the public annually with the budget presentation.

Whenever possible we look for ways to support these funds. For example, ARPA funds were applied to various downtown reconstruction projects to reduce rates. We are also looking for bonding dollars that could apply towards future projects.

## CONTACT THE CANDIDATES

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### How Can I Vote in Waconia?

City of Waconia residents have multiple options for voting:

1. Vote by mail.
2. Vote at City Hall, 201 South Vine Street (City of Waconia Residents Only).
3. Go to the Taxpayer Services Department at Carver County Government Center, 600 E. 4th Street, Chaska, (ALL Carver County Residents).
4. Vote in person on Election Day on November 5, 2024.



### Early and Absentee Voting at City Hall (Waconia residents only)

Early and absentee voting starts September 20 and goes through November 4. Waconia residents can vote at City Hall Monday - Thursday from 7:30 am - 4:30 pm, and Fridays from 7:30 am - 11:30 am. Extended hours include:

- Saturday, October 26 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 29 - 7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, November 2 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 3 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Monday, November 4 - 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If you are not a City of Waconia resident (but reside in Carver County) you can absentee vote at the Carver County Government Center in Chaska. Their hours are different than the hours listed above.

### How Do I Vote by Mail?

To request a mail ballot, please visit the [Secretary of State's Website](#) or [www.waconia.org/votebymail](http://www.waconia.org/votebymail).

### City of Waconia Polling Locations

The City of Waconia is no longer part of a Ward Boundary System. Your polling place may have changed in 2022. The City of Waconia is divided into three precincts, please view the polling places listed below. If you are unsure of the precinct in which you reside, please consult the [City of Waconia Precinct map](#) (link).  
[www.waconia.org/DocumentCenter/View/3042/WaconiaPrecincts](http://www.waconia.org/DocumentCenter/View/3042/WaconiaPrecincts)

#### Precinct 1

Faith Lutheran Church  
800 Waconia Parkway North  
Waconia, MN 55387

#### Precinct 2

Trinity Lutheran Church  
601 E. 2nd St.  
Waconia, MN 55387

#### Precinct 3

Waconia Ice Arena  
1250 Oak Avenue  
Waconia, MN 55387

Questions? Call City Hall at 952-442-2184

### Current Elected Officials

For a full listing of current city, county, state, and federal elected officials, visit [www.DestinationWaconia.org/live/#government](http://www.DestinationWaconia.org/live/#government).

