

Ward 1 Council Candidate Information Form
BIXBY CITY COUNCIL



Name as it will appear on the ballot: John Easton

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Occupation: President Easton Sod Farms, Inc.

Political Experience: First attempt at Political Office

As a Candidate, my top priorities are:

To improve the delivery of municipal services to all of the city and give the hard working employees of Bixby the manpower, tools and training they need to fulfill their missions. Proper staffing levels and training in all departments will be a priority.

I am seeking office because:

My family has operated businesses in Bixby since the 1920's. I was born and raised in Bixby. I have lived here all my life. I work here. I remember when Bixby's population was less than 2000. For decades I sat on the political sidelines, but the recent boom of roof tops and new businesses have convinced me that it is time to get involved. I love my hometown, I am excited about its growth and the rebirth we are experiencing. It is time for me to offer my business experience and sense of our town's history to the new citizens of Bixby. I personally talk to business owners and managers everyday. I listen to their comments and ideas. I am in a unique position to offer community perspective to our City government.

What specific experience makes you attuned to the needs of our business community?

Easton Sod Farms not only is in the business of providing grass to the retail market but additionally is a major contractor providing sod and erosion control to Federal, State and local governments. I have worked for years on large projects with governmental agencies and contractors in at least 7 different states including providing turf grass for the Indianapolis Colts practice football fields. My experience in dealing with various governmental agencies and large corporations and the associated red tape gives me a unique perspective on how to attract business to Bixby. I have also witnessed unscrupulous contractors employ methods of construction that reduce their costs to the detriment of the project. I can help us avoid these kind of contractors on our public projects.

What can the City Council do to encourage more businesses to open in Bixby?

The Bixby City Council is responsible for providing its citizens with the most efficient and effective government. We must remove unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles to the business community that hamper economic growth. We must look for ways to assist the private sector in making the decision to move here. City departments should work with potential businesses to provide for their needs instead of discouraging their plans. Look for areas in the application process to reduce red tape and look for ways where City assistance can be offered as enticement to get business to locate here.

Bixby is obviously in a growth pattern. How do you feel about the expansion and growth? How would you balance the needs of the City versus the concerns of the community?

Bixby is the fastest growing City in Oklahoma. This fast growth has resulted in a greater burden on the various departments in Bixby such as the Police and Fire, public works, water and park departments. The population has grown by 541% since 1990 and is up 161% in the last ten years. Our sales tax revenue is lagging far behind the population growth. The City of Bixby web site advertises that there are nearly 350,000 people that live within 10 miles of Bixby. We need these folks to visit Bixby and spend some money here. The new sports park project is an ideal attraction for us. We all need to get 100% behind that project and do what we can to make that the best facility of its kind in this part of the Country.

What do you think that the three greatest challenges or opportunities are for the Bixby community and economy in the next 5-10 years?

1. We must identify and implement changes necessary to improve processes and reduce waste at City Hall. The focus should be on customer service, both to our citizens and the business community.
 2. Create long term budgeting priorities to increase our staffing levels of critical city services to better serve our growing community. The City must become proactive instead of reactive in planning for the future growth of this area.
 3. Balancing the need for more businesses to expand our tax base while maintaining and improving the quality of life that we all enjoy.
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