

Cory Nichols, P.E., District 1

Jacksonville Beach Candidate Written Questions

1. How will you address the budgetary shortfalls caused by the loss of the Better Jacksonville Plan, as well as the proposed amendments that change property tax exemptions? What is your plan to preserve the levels-of-service for Jacksonville Beach residents?

Any budget shortfalls and be offset by the implementation of an innovative economic strategy focused on locally owned businesses in Downtown Jax Beach. Our Central Business District is the heart of Jax Beach and is where we should be generating tax revenue, not by raising property taxes.

The CRA has been poorly managed over the past 10 years. Large amounts of tax dollars have been wasted and the area has become very challenging for the City.

2. What are Jacksonville Beaches' infrastructure needs when it come to sea level rise and resiliency and what would you propose to address these issues?

As a civil engineer whose career focus is on infrastructure, I am uniquely qualified to work towards solution for these issues. I've researched and been involved with the construction of 'secant walls' that protect roadways that are oceanfront, as well as other protective barriers.

Innovative ideas similar to the ones demonstrated on a recent 60 Minutes episode (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/storm-water-management-dutch-solution-henk-ovink-hurricane-florence-damage-60-minutes/?ftag=CNM-00-10aab5j&linkId=57259409>) are the kind of 'outside of the box' thinking that could be needed if the ocean levels do rise.

3. Do you agree with the current parking solution? Why or why not?

There is no current 'parking solution'. The downtown area needs to be much more bicycle/pedestrian friendly. I fought the City's proposal to put a parking garage in the 'Ritz' parking lot in the middle of the CBD on 1st Street. We do not want to draw vehicular traffic to the heart of the CBD. A mixed-use garage needs to be constructed on the outer edge of the CBD and current parking needs to be controlled more effectively.

4. Please explain what personal and/or professional community service experience has prepared you to serve as an elected official for the citizens of Jacksonville Beach?

My experience, education, and proven success in running a growing civil engineering business makes me highly qualified for this position. My areas of expertise include solving complex problems and getting projects successfully completed, all while functioning in a partnering environment with the public, contractors and facility owners. These qualifications include:

- Member of the Jacksonville Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) – Appointed by the Jacksonville Beach City Council on June 17, 2013 through June 2017. Responsible for saving taxpayers over \$1 million.
- Licensed Florida Professional Engineer beginning 1999 (P.E. # 53941) – Civil Engineer, specializing in infrastructure development and construction management.
- Business Owner (80+ employees) – AE Engineering, Inc. is a Civil Engineering company that specializes in Construction Engineering & Inspection (CEI). Major clients include the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), Palm Beach County, City of West Palm Beach and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). AE Engineering takes the role of the owner's agent. As an owner's agent, **we are tasked with ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent prudently**, construction projects are completed within contract time and on budget, while being built per contract documents. We are selected based on our teams' qualifications and experience. NOT low bid.
- Active Senior Project Engineer on many types of construction projects throughout Florida with over 50 projects completed, totaling hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Florida (2000 and 1994). Specialty in Construction Management and training in Urban Development.
- Full academic scholarship to Santa Fe College
- Graduate of FICE/FTBA Leadership Academy.
- 24 years of combined experience working as a State of Florida Employee for the FDOT and working successfully as a consultant for the FDOT.
- What is most important is my overwhelming love for this community. I believe that working together, we can seize the opportunity to make a real difference to the quality of life for everyone living and working in Jacksonville Beach. We can do this with prudent management, while lowering the total tax burden on our residents and businesses.

5. What differentiates you from your opponent?

Experience – Having worked with the City for 4 years as a part of the CRA.

Knowledge – In depth understanding of how the City functions and the people involved.

Community – Established and ongoing relationship with thousands of Jacksonville Beach residents of all walks of life, business owners and first responders.