

Alicia C. Cosky, Sycamore City Council, Ward 1 election questionnaire

Full Name: Alicia C. Cosky

What office are you seeking? City Council, City of Sycamore Ward 1

What is your political party?

In this nonpartisan municipal election, all candidates are listed as independents.

Occupation: Professor/Dean – recently retired after 28 years at Aurora University

What offices, if any, have you previously held?

SY09 Precinct Committee Person

Campaign Website: “Cosky Cares About Sycamore”

<https://coskycaresaboutsycamore.com/>

Education:

Northern Illinois University

Doctor of Education with an Endorsement in Gerontology

Master of Science in Education

Wayne State University

Bachelor of Science in Education

Community Involvement:

I participate(d) in a variety of volunteer activities because of my passion for serving others and building community:

- Director (25 years): DeKalb Corn Fest Races
- Regional Coordinator (15 years): Northern Illinois Senior Olympics
- CPR Site Director: DeKalb County CPR Coordinating Committee
- National Coordinator-Fitness Programs for Older Adults: Leadership Training Workshops
- Exercise Instructor: Oak Crest Retirement Center
- Girls on the Run: DeKalb County Coordinator
- Direct Care Volunteer: DeKalb County Hospice
- Parish Lector
- Hope Haven Meal Preparation
- DeKalb County Community Gardens Food Distribution - Westminster Presbyterian Church

- Rotary Club of Sycamore
- 100 + Women Who Care

Why are you running for this office?

I have resided in Sycamore for 43 years and fell in love with this city. It is time for me to give back to Sycamore. My life experiences and proven leadership skills will further contribute to a sustainable legacy for the next generation of Sycamore residents.

What makes you qualified for the office you're seeking?

Effective program and budget planning, implementation, and assessment; building organizational structure and culture; open and honest communication; respecting and affirming diverse perspectives; and a healthy sense of humor, are skills I gained over the years. Engagement in volunteer activities and talking to residents by knocking on doors during this campaign, required listening to others, solving problems by working together, and being transparent and accountable in governing. I will carry this on as Alderperson.

What is your position on the *Illinois Assault Weapons Ban* that took effect in January 2023?

I'm committed to upholding state law as passed by our elected officials and signed by the governor.

Is crime a problem in your community and, if so, what would you do to curb it?

A public community safety alert was issued in mid-March by Police Chief Jim Winters, informing residents of suspicious activity in our neighborhood, and recommended that we keep cars, houses, and garages locked. I appreciate all that our law enforcement agencies do to keep our residents and visitors safe.

What is your assessment of how the COVID-19 pandemic was handled locally?

I was pleased with how it was handled. Most places of business enforced the mask mandate and most people complied. A world of thanks to all first responders and essential workers who kept us safe and ultimately alive. You truly are heroes!

What did you learn from the pandemic?

I acquired a newfound respect and appreciation for science, researchers, the County Health Department, and pharmaceutical companies who diligently worked in record-breaking time to ultimately save us from Covid19. Working together and caring for our neighbors were key.

How would you spur economic development in your community?

When individuals look for a new place to live, they research communities that offer quality of life within their price range. Questions asked may be: What is the rating of the school district? What community resources are available (library, museums, organizations, public safety, shopping, etc.)? What is available for leisure and

recreational activities? Sycamore's answers to these questions will serve to retain current residents and attract new ones.

Attracting and supporting small businesses is critical. I support The Sycamore Chamber of Commerce and see their work as a guide. Local shopping is encouraged through the many events listed in the Discover Sycamore Guide and the major events downtown attract residents and nonresidents to visit and experience the unique attributes Sycamore has to offer. These events spotlight Sycamore as a welcoming and profitable location for small businesses.

Continually striving to develop affordable and sustainable housing for all income levels is paramount. Pursuing contractors that design smart homes that are efficient in conserving energy usage must occur. "Sustainability is all encompassing and includes every element of our life, our work, our health and our communities. We are at a tipping point to make a meaningful shift and set forth the changes we want to see" (<https://www.global.ntt/>).

Would/can/should local governments do anything to help reduce the tax burden on residents?

Yes, funding should support and sustain the city's infrastructure, growth, and vibrancy while not placing the financial burden solely on our residents.

These strategies can help reduce the tax burden on our residents:

1. Evaluate the current diversification of revenue sources (i.e., property taxes, sales taxes, use fees, state funding, etc.) to ensure: (1) an appropriate balance of funding, (2) funding structure can sustain the city's needs, and (3) is equitable so that it does not disproportionately burden low- and middle-income taxpayers.
2. Develop incentives that attract and retain new businesses AND enhances residents' lives (i.e., shopping, restaurants, recreation opportunities, employment, etc.).
3. Implement new sustainable initiatives (i.e., replacing windows, lighting, HVAC systems, etc.) that reduces utility costs and provides savings that can be reallocated.

Do you support recreational marijuana being sold in your community to help lower resident's tax burden?

Since we already receive an allocation from the state in this regard, it would be contraindicated if the council did not at least hear a request for a dispensary in Sycamore. Due diligence would need to be done ensuring that the prospective business meets all state and local requirements and that their product meets the highest standards of quality. Certainly, I will solicit resident's perspectives in considering this issue. Residents can communicate with me on this or any other matter at

<https://coskycaresaboutsycamore.com/>

What projects or infrastructure would you look to address in your community and how would you do it?

We need to follow through with continued progress on replacement of the lead water pipes. During this campaign residents shared concerns regarding the sidewalk along Maplewood from N23 to Everett that the middle school students use to and from school; an incomplete park trail; an unfinished street resurfacing project; and the addition of pedestrian/bike paths so users feel safe from vehicle traffic. I will meet with the respective elected or city official to learn about a reported concern and attempt to work together in seeking an affordable and viable solution. Residents would stay informed of progress made via my website and personal communications.

Will you accept the voters' decision in your race on Election Day?

Yes

What is your position on open and transparent government?

It is the only way to govern for this democracy to endure well into the future.

Do you support the Freedom of Information Act and citizen's ability to freely access government records?

Yes

Would you sign a nondisclosure agreement with a prospective company that would limit your ability to communicate with your community?

Yes