



2026



MAYOR

CANDIDATE PROFILES



LEE'S SUMMIT
CHAMBER

2026 Mayor Election

On April 7, 2026, Lee's Summit voters will cast their ballots in the Municipal Election to elect the Lee's Summit Mayor.

Candidates:

- Mayor Pro Tem/ 3rd District Councilmember Beto Lopez
- 3rd District Councilmember Cynda Rader

The Chamber encourages residents to make an educated vote on Tuesday, April 7, 2026. Contact Chamber President, Matt Baird, at 816.524.2424 or mbaird@lschamber.com for more information.

Please Note: All answers were copied directly from answers provided by candidates and were not edited by the Chamber. This Program was paid for by the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce, Matt Baird, President.



Beto Lopez

Education: BA, Rockhurst University; MBA, Baker University

Occupation: President & CEO, Guadalupe Centers

Activities & Organizations: LS Rotary, LS EDC, LS Chamber, St Lukes East – Lee's Summit, Board of Directors

Political Experience: City council member (8 years)

1. What compelled you to run to be the next Mayor of Lee's Summit?

I have lived in Lee's Summit for 30 years. For more than 12 years, I have had the privilege of serving the people of Lee's Summit, first on the Planning Commission and for the last eight years, as district 3 City Councilmember and Mayor Pro Tem

I believe Lee's Summit's strength lies in its residents, neighborhoods, businesses and the character of our community. I'm running for Mayor because I want to protect the promise of a better life for the people who call Lee's Summit home, and I believe Lee's Summit needs a leader who can bring people together to make our community stronger and to keep us all safe.

2. What are the three top issues/concerns you have as a candidate for Mayor and why?

*Public safety – including road & flooding improvements and ensuring we remain competitive with the compensation and benefits of our first responders. We need to continue to provide them with the right resources so they can do their jobs effectively.

*Plan for continued population growth

*Strategic economic development

3. The city of Lee's Summit has become a regional hub for major economic development projects. Do you support the current incentive policies that have been adopted and if not, please explain what you would do differently?

I support the current incentive policies that have been adopted by our current city council. There are appropriate times when developers may be granted incentives for new construction projects, but the decisions to do so should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and should be based on the return these incentives provide to the city and the taxpayers. As Mayor, I would continue to evaluate any requested incentives to see what, if any, benefits would be returned to the city as a result.

4. The next Mayor will be directly impacted by actions taken to update the city's charter. What changes, if any, would you like to see with the current charter?

The Charter Review Commission's work is intentionally citizen-led, and I value that community-driven approach. As the current Commission members conduct their review, I believe it is appropriate to examine whether the Charter continues to promote transparency, accountability and effective governance and whether it reflects the needs of our growing community. I look forward to reviewing the Commission's recommendations and carefully considering any proposed changes brought to the Mayor and City Council for action.

5. If elected, how will you balance long-term planning with immediate community needs when resources are limited?

During my eight years on City Council, we have taken a strategic approach to development and future growth, prioritizing responsible planning that protects our residents while ensuring our first responders and public works department are not overburdened. Responsible growth requires a clear vision and commitment to long-term planning. To achieve this, we have followed the citizen-driven plan, the Ignite Strategic Plan for the city. This plan sets benchmarks and goals for the type of responsible development Lee's Summit needs to ensure balanced growth while addressing the needs of the community. As mayor, I will continue to put an emphasis on securing responsible growth which includes ensuring that the appropriate infrastructure is created to support new growth, investing in the infrastructure needs in our downtown and older neighborhoods and improving existing roadways to accommodate continued growth.

6. Housing affordability is not only an issue facing Lee's Summit, but regionally as well. How should the city of Lee's Summit address this growing issue?

After eight years working for this city, my fellow councilmembers and I have been focused on providing appropriate housing for all Lee's Summit residents.

We have followed the Ignite Strategic Plan which encourages builders to build a variety of types of housing for residents of all ages and economic means.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to housing in Lee's Summit. We need to continue to grow the right way, using the strategic plan as a guide. Citizens formulated the plan and instructed us to build a mixed variety of housing types to accommodate all citizens and income levels. To date, we have followed this guide as we have reviewed proposed development projects. Recognizing the need to build more affordable single-family residences, we have modified our unified development ordinances to allow for smaller lots and have worked to reduce costs and red tape for builders so that they will want to come to Lee's Summit and build these smaller single-family residences and make them more affordable for our children and young adults who want to reside in Lee's Summit and continue to call it home.

We must continue to work with housing industry experts to find solutions to build moderately priced single-family housing and also find ways to repurpose existing housing stock options.

7. There are individuals running for the same position you are. What qualities do you possess that make you the best candidate for the position? What type of community engagement, organizations or public service positions have you been part of or involved in?

Leadership and Experience are vital qualities and skills that the next Mayor of Lees Summit must possess. Leadership is ultimately about trust- the ability to listen, collaborate and lead responsibly when important decisions are being made. Experience provides the framework for a leader to lean on when he is in a role guiding and serving others.

Throughout my career, I have been trusted to represent numerous civic, business and community organizations as a board member. In many of these roles, I was selected by my peers to provide leadership and help guide complex initiatives. In my current role as a CEO of a local non-profit with over 400 employees, I oversee a \$50 Million budget. During the renovation of the Chief's and Royal's stadiums, I was selected as the Chairman of the Jackson County Sports Complex authority and managed a budget of over \$600 Million. I was recently selected by elected peers on the Mid America Regional Council (MARC) board to serve as Chair of the MARC board this year. I'm honored to be the first elected official in Lee's Summit to serve in this role. In my career, I have served and am serving on numerous other boards, including utility boards, banks, institutions of higher learning, public safety boards and other non-profits.

In Lee's Summit, I remain actively involved with local groups like the Chamber of Commerce, EDC, Rotary Club and the St. Luke's Lee's Summit Hospital Board.

These leadership experiences have taught me valuable skills about collaborating with and listening to the needs of others and how to build relationships based on trust. These experiences drive me to continue to serve our community, and my experience and proven leadership background is why groups like our Lee's Summit police officers and fire fighters believe I am the candidate to lead our community forward and have endorsed me to be the next Mayor of Lee's Summit. As Mayor, I will bring experience, collaboration, and a results-driven approach to City Hall. My commitment is simple: to lead with integrity and to work every day to keep Lee's Summit moving forward.



Cynda Rader

Education: 1 year college

Occupation: Broker, Cynda Sells Real Estate Co.

Activities & Organizations: Chamber, Downtown Main, Lee's Summit Symphony BOD

Political Experience: Planning Commission 2019-2024; City Council District 3. 2024-2026

1. What compelled you to run to be the next Mayor of Lee's Summit?

I am running for Mayor because I care deeply about the future of Lee's Summit and want to ensure that the community we value today remains strong, inclusive, and prosperous for future generations. As our city grows, the decisions we make now, about infrastructure, housing, public safety, and economic development, will shape Lee's Summit for decades. I believe my experience, collaborative leadership style, and commitment to listening to residents position me to help guide that growth responsibly while preserving the character that makes Lee's Summit such a great place to live.

2. What are the three top issues/concerns you have as a candidate for Mayor and why?

First, smart and sustainable growth. Lee's Summit is growing rapidly, and growth must be managed thoughtfully to ensure infrastructure, schools, public safety, and neighborhoods can keep pace. Second, housing affordability and availability. Families, seniors, and young professionals should all be able to live in the community they serve and love. A healthy city requires housing options at multiple price points. Third, fiscal responsibility and transparency. Residents deserve confidence that tax dollars are being spent wisely, priorities are clearly communicated, and long-term financial health is protected.

3. The city of Lee's Summit has become a regional hub for major economic development projects. Do you support the current incentive policies that have been adopted, and if not, what would you do differently?

Economic development incentives can be a valuable tool when used strategically. I support incentives that are transparent, performance-based, and clearly demonstrate a return on investment for residents. However, incentives should not be automatic. Each project should be evaluated on its merits, including long-term job creation, wage levels, infrastructure impacts, and community benefit. I would emphasize accountability, regular review, and alignment with the city's broader goals rather than incentives alone driving development decisions.

4. The next Mayor will be directly impacted by actions taken to update the city's charter. What changes, if any, would you like to see with the current charter?

Any charter updates should focus on clarity, efficiency, and accountability in city governance. I support changes that strengthen transparency, clearly define roles and responsibilities, and improve how residents engage with city leadership. Most importantly, charter revisions should reflect community input and be evaluated through the lens of what best serves Lee's Summit today and in the future.

5. If elected, how will you balance long-term planning with immediate community needs when resources are limited?

Balancing long-term planning with immediate needs requires discipline, communication, and prioritization. I believe in using data-driven decision-making, maintaining strong reserve policies, and planning ahead for infrastructure and capital needs. At the same time, we must remain responsive to urgent community concerns. Open communication with residents and collaboration with staff and council will be key to making informed choices when resources are limited.

6. Housing affordability is not only an issue facing Lee’s Summit, but regionally as well. How should the city of Lee’s Summit address this growing issue?

First, we need to be honest with our residents about what affordability really means.

Place a heavier focus on pathways to homeownership. The Missing Middle housing which is townhomes, duplexes and small lot single family is a great way to build a lower cost product.

I believe we need to pause and reevaluate the continued incentivizing of large apartment projects. Simply building more apartments will not solve affordability. Renters do not control their housing costs, those costs are ultimately determined by landlords and market fluctuations. That model does not provide long-term stability for families.

In certain instances, I have proposed exploring infrastructure partnerships with builders and developers who are willing to bring attainable, for-sale housing to the market as well as further streamlining the permitting process to save costs that should be passed onto consumers.

7. There are individuals running for the same position you are. What qualities do you possess that make you the best candidate for the position? What type of community engagement, organizations, or public service positions have you been part of or involved in?

I bring a steady, collaborative leadership style and a strong commitment to listening before acting. I value respectful dialogue, thoughtful decision-making, and working with others to find common ground. My involvement in community organizations, civic groups, and public service has given me a deep appreciation for the diverse perspectives within Lee’s Summit. I am committed to being accessible, accountable, and focused on serving the entire community, not special interests, nor myself.

- PTA mom and teacher’s aide for 12 years
- Member, volunteer, and sponsor with the Lee’s Summit Chamber since the late 1990s
- Volunteer and sponsor of events for Lee’s Summit Downtown Main Street
- Board of Directors member for the Lee’s Summit Symphony since 2018
- Served on the City of Lee’s Summit’s Tax Review Board, Water Utilities Board and Planning Commission
- Currently serve as Councilmember for District 3

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Lee's Summit Chamber Supports Full Proposition C Waiver

The Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors recently voted to endorse a full waiver of the state-mandated property tax rollbacks associated with Proposition C, which will appear on the April 7, 2026, ballot.

The LS Chamber believes the full waiver would enhance and support the economic ecosystem of the Lee's Summit community, which necessarily lends to the furtherance of the LS Chamber's mission, vision and values.

Prop C is a state-wide 1 cent sales tax for public education, approved in 1982, that supports Missouri school districts. Prop C also requires school districts to reduce or "rollback" their local tax levy unless their voters approve a proposition to eliminate or "waive" that requirement. LSR7 is asking voters to consider a full waiver of its Prop C rollback.

If approved, a full waiver generates additional operating revenue each year that the LSR7 School District plans to use to fund and maintain increases in staff salaries and benefits. Approval also aligns LSR7 with the 91% of Missouri school districts whose communities have already approved a full waiver, provides the district a stable and predictable funding source, helps improve competitiveness with other Kansas City-area districts and supports recruitment and retention of quality staff.

"Approval of the Proposition C waiver is extremely vital to the growth, development and future of Lee's Summit and the Lee's Summit school district," said Matt Baird, President of the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce. "The LSR7 school district is a key partner and contributor to the success of the Lee's Summit community, and by approving this full waiver, we will ensure our district can retain top talent and that the community is still a top-rated destination for businesses to grow and flourish."

The Lee's Summit Chamber supports a full Proposition C Waiver and encourages the citizens of Lee's Summit and the business community to show their support for by voting yes on April 7!

ABOUT THE LEE'S SUMMIT CHAMBER

The Lee's Summit Chamber was incorporated in 1968 and is a member-supported organization of businesses dedicated to creating opportunities for business success through networking, advocacy, and business and professional development. For additional information, call the Chamber at 816-524-2424.

Interested in other legislative priorities supported by the Chamber? Visit [lschamber.com](https://www.lschamber.com) to learn more.

Don't Forget to Vote on April 7th, 2026!

Yours Truly,



LEE'S SUMMIT
C H A M B E R