

STEVE DAVIS FOR MAYOR



TO ELMWOOD BUSINESSES:

STEPS TO INCREASE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN ELMWOOD

I believe by continual cooperation and coordination with all of Elmwood's people and organizations, we can lift economic activity. Increased economic activity adds sales tax revenues to the City of Elmwood. It is the consequence of more profitable businesses operating in Elmwood. The City of Elmwood and the businesses of Elmwood should view themselves as partners in the future because they are. I want to listen to the concerns and approaches proposed by our citizens, and then formulate suggestions. Incorporating the valuable experience and knowledge of others, will allow us to develop practical steps of implementation. I throw out ideas to get them into the discussion, thought processes, and research studies required to develop the practical steps of implementation.

I am running to be mayor in order to: keep us moving forward, to be a part of the decision making mix, to help overcome the obstacles, and to be a great ambassador for Elmwood. I believe I have the time, skills, and personality to make me the best person to serve as mayor for the next four years. I will attempt to talk, contact, and interact with all the people of Elmwood. I know working together our community will make great strides. Achieving results in making Elmwood a better community will be our goal. I am going to propose a series of suggestions - suggestions to be debated, thought about, shaped into solutions, or put aside for another time.

GOAL # 1: BRINGING PEOPLE TO TOWN WHEN BUSINESSES ARE OPEN

- 🍷 **Saturday Night Specials** Elmwood has long sponsored a municipal band; it was done to bring people to town. It used to be on Saturday night that was the great market night for people to come into town. I would like to suggest the band concerts move to Saturday night, possibly earlier in the evening. Also an inflatable play item might encourage more families to come out. On some nights maybe a band (country, rock, or Christian) could play following the municipal band. Working in coordination with our restaurants, theater, and bars, we could invigorate Saturday night in Elmwood.
- 🚌 **Tour Destination:** One time when I stopped at the Hick'ry Stick for coffee, a tour bus was having lunch. The group was on a barn tour. Bringing groups to town during the day would be a good regular event. We might need to offer a history guide or re-enactor performance to enhance our attractiveness as a destination. The Elmwood Historical Society might assist in this effort.
- 🌾 **Farmers Market:** We need a regularly occurring (hopefully daily) farmers market, possibly in the Fair Store Space. I think 4H or FFA may have people with the skills and connections to arrange growers. The market would need a good person to manage it. A manager working with one or two of our high school students could make this a success. The high school students would acquire a great management and marketing experience, burnishing their resumes. A farmers market would need to work for growers and buyers. The market could possibly have a day to feature local crafts. The State of Illinois is

encouraging farmers markets. A program offering advice and assistance in starting markets was run last year through the Lt. Governor's office.

- 📌 **Event Coordination:** Our events like Strawberry Festival and Fall Festival should communicate and coordinate with our businesses to benefit them during those days. We might consider adding an event, not a festival that requires many volunteers, but something that appeals to a special interest or club. A special interest club might be an antique tractor event, a draft horse show, an art, or music event. The club would be an organizing partner. Monmouth's Cruise Night has really grown in just a few years.

GOAL # 2: KEEPING OUR BUSINESSES AND ATTRACTIONS PROMINENT

- 📌 **Publicity Coordinator:** We need a media coordinator keeping our businesses and attractions active on social media, contact networks, and in print. We need to review our restaurants on sites like Yelp and Google. An uncoordinated collection of web sites, Facebook pages, and photo streams is not an effective method of messaging.
- 📌 **YouTube Channel:** We should create a YouTube channel. It will make all our videos available to anyone finding an Elmwood video. It would suggest other videos about Elmwood from our channel. Video profiles of various people who live here, grew up here, or have a good Elmwood story to tell, would make great content for this channel.
- 📌 **Message Integration:** I have begun using a new application from a start up technology to integrate posts from Facebook, Twitter, Google plus, Instagram, etc. It could automatically consolidate announcements of our various Elmwood groups. These announcements would appear on a web page accessible to anyone whether they use social media or not. If this is done in coordination with the communication and contact project being overseen by U of I Extension, it could greatly improve information flow in Elmwood.
- 📌 **Leverage Elmwoodil.org:** As mayor I would help a media coordinator turn Elmwoodil.org into a tourism and visitor site, making it a hub to promote our businesses, services, and attractions. An official city government web site should not dip too deep into business promotion.

GOAL # 3: INCREASING LOCAL DOLLARS GOING TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

- 📌 **Promote Local Contractors:** Elmwoodil.org could host profiles of all our local contractors and other service providers. We should feature them with referrals and comments from people for whom they have worked. When someone is planning an improvement project, information about a local person, their skills, and contact information would be readily available.
- 📌 **Mayor as Salesman:** The mayor should be available to welcome prospective buyers when realtors are showing them Elmwood properties. A welcome packet should be available to highlight Elmwood, its businesses, schools, contractors, and artisans. If a realtor feels a visit at City Hall would help, appointment times would be able to be arranged to make this type of outreach possible.
- 📌 **Profile Newcomers:** When new residents move to town we should welcome them with a short profile on the web site, making their family a part of Elmwood's story as quickly as possible. It would highlight the reasons their

family chose Elmwood. Many would have nice comments about how well they were treated by a local business.

- 👉 **Confidential Consultants:** We should also have a small committee with a goal of keeping our existing businesses profitable. They would act as a consultant group to work confidentially with our businesses. Their goal would be to develop strategies: to lower operating costs, increase revenues, and improve the quality of products and services offered. Our businesses need constructive feedback, not overheard rumors from the gossip mill. Working more closely with our new residents would help businesses adapt to meet their needs, as well.
- 👉 **Elmwood Bucks:** Elmwood should investigate a system of creating a local currency; other communities have used this method to keep dollars in the community. We could create a system where payments are of real value, but only redeemable at an Elmwood business. If youth help set up for a festival pay them in Elmwood bucks, other people providing services could be paid in Elmwood bucks, it would encourage youth and others to buy a product in town. A complicated system like this would require study of other communities who have done this.
- 👉 **Promote Each Other:** New concepts should not be dismissed out of hand. Incorporating new practical steps will allow our citizens to be allies in making each business successful. Elmwood businesses should complement each other. We should also encourage more business-to-business activity within Elmwood.

As mayor these are the type of efforts I would help our citizens coordinate into actions. I will encourage all our citizens to participate. I want you to contact me, my email is steve@elmwoodil.org . I am eager to listen to you and interact in ways to make Elmwood's future even better. We have tremendous potential when we work together.

Action steps to help move forward: on Facebook *Like* the [Steve Davis for Mayor](#) page, join [A Better Elmwood](#) group, send me a *Friend* request, I'm the Steve Davis married to Nancy Horney Davis that makes me the unique Steve Davis. On Twitter, follow [@elmwoodilorg](#) ,and please, suggest news items or send photos you would like to see published on [Elmwoodil.org](#). Encourage others with questions to contact me. I hope you will support me in this effort, vote for me on April 9th or earlier.

I appreciate the opportunity this community offers us all.

Thank you,
Steve Davis



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