



**Candidate Questionnaire - County Commissioner
August 2022 Primary Election**

Your name: Daija Hinojosa
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Your phone number: (239) 293-0262
Your age: 35
Today's date: June 2, 2022

What year did you move to Southwest Florida, and where were you living previously?
I have been a full time resident of Collier County since 2012. I moved here from Portland, Oregon (grew up in Vancouver, Washington)

What is your educational background and work experience?
I'm a Leadership Trainer with 18 years in Business Management. My experience consists of overseeing departments & personnel, managing multi million dollar budgets, and directing operations for large corporate retailers. I've played key roles in every organization with proven success in transforming work culture, developing internal leadership and driving results. I know what it takes to lead, run and manage a successful organization and I'm ready to bring my strengths to the Board of County Commission.

Describe a time in the last ten years when you led an effort to bring about change in our community. Was your effort a success? Why or why not?

I work with a non-profit organization called Agents for Change International. A global community based out of Naples, Florida that empowers communities through mentorship and discipleship. We help people discover their leadership ability by discovering their purpose in life. Our program has students from all over the world. I became passionate about leadership development in the earlier part of my career. I am a product of someone's time/knowledge/expertise/experience invested in my ability to learn how to discover what I am most natural at, how to capitalize on it and help others do the same. Helping people break mental chains is incredibly gratifying. It is all too common for us to get sucked into the rat race of life, chasing money and the next best thing. When in reality, everyone is searching for their purpose and significance. The way we bring change in our communities is to begin changing the way that we think about ourselves and developing the discipline in order to prosper into everything that we have the potential to be.

Describe a recent County Commission decision with which you disagreed. Why did you disagree and what should have been done differently?

I disagree with all of the rubber stamping of development taking place in the county. The residents in the City of Naples are upset that we are building 'out of control'. We lack the infrastructure needed to sustain all of this growth that comes with development. As

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Commissioner I would encourage the private sector to focus on redevelopment within CRA's before clearing new land to build apartment complexes and new villages! I also disagree with the board awarding gifts and incentives to private companies that bring low wage jobs to our area and building a new recreational facility when we already have multiple parks that are in need of severe maintenance and repairs.

What is your top priority in terms of Collier County's environment? What county government solutions do you propose to address it?

I have had the opportunity to speak with so many residents within District 4 but one particular resident's personal experience with busted pipes really caught my attention. He woke up to a sinkhole in his backyard from old broken clay piping underground. The county had made plans to fix the pipes, but later informed this resident that they will need to wait until funding can be secured. As Commissioner I will prioritize the county's primary responsibility to ensure that adequate funding is set aside for infrastructure so that residents aren't stuck with sinkholes in their backyards (especially for two years) I think that it's crucial to take care of the environment that we inhabit because that is our duty as humans to be good stewards of our resources. As Commissioner I would be a strong advocate for the county in Tallahassee to get grant funding to help homeowners complete a septic to sewer conversion. I would also like to look into the option of utilizing deep ASR injection wells to eliminate our Blue Green Algae and Red Tide issues. I think that there are a lot of great organizations that are passionate about preserving our resources and so as Commissioner I would continue to collaborate and make myself available for them.

What is your top priority in terms of Collier County's infrastructure? What county government solutions do you propose to address it?

Our top priority for infrastructure is to make sure that we are spending the budget wisely enough to account for related costs and expenditures. After speaking with many residents that live in eastern Collier, I have yet to meet one person who is excited about all of the development. I think that we are going to have to manage the results of the decisions that have already been made and hopefully minimize the amount of development that takes place. Based on research, additional developments are not favorable with eastern Collier residents. As Commissioner, I would adhere to the land development code, follow the growth management plan and direct focus on re-development. We must manage the decisions that have already been made. Our infrastructure needs serious attention especially with the new growth coming.

What is your top priority in terms of the growth and development of eastern Collier County? What county government solutions do you propose to address it?

Adhering to the growth management plan and the land development code along with staying in touch with the concerns of residents before making any decisions to amend what is already written is my top priority.

What is your top priority in terms of redevelopment in coastal Collier County? What county government solutions do you propose to address it?

As Commissioner it would be my top concern to stick to the land development code and growth management plan as we move forward in planning for future development. Along with that,

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listening to the concerns of residents in the area in question. The current situation with the Isles of Capri is a great example of residents pleading with the Commissioners to not approve a zoning change. Isles of Capri wants to keep their C-3 zoning and are not interested in having residential condos on their island in the business circle. We must maintain a balance of commercial and residential development. Commissioners also must take the concern of the residents in the surrounding area into consideration when making a decision on zoning change proposals.

What is your top priority in terms of affordable housing in Collier County? What county government solutions do you propose to address it?

Collaboration with the private sector could take years. Not only is land at a premium price, but so are building materials. I have consulted with developers, architects, builders, engineers, realtors, community leaders and neighbors and the conclusion is this; affordable housing is not feasible. The numbers just don't make sense. In order to satisfy the great demand that we have, at the rate that any developer would be willing to develop at, we would need hundreds of complexes! It's such a difficult season to be in right now, but as we all know, the government cannot legally interfere in the private sector, so we must stick to what we can do.

What commissioners can do is pay essential personnel livable wages. We are a world class city so we should be a world class employer. I am in favor of auditing the budget to find out where we can pay our essential service and emergency service personnel livable wages so that we can attract and retain the best of the best in each field! The county has a duty to provide EMS. We need our essential service personnel!

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