

Sparker's Soapbox
John Krol for City Council

About Me

1.) How long have you lived in the City of Naples and in what parts of the community have you been most involved?

I have been a resident of Naples for 22 years, residing in the Royal Harbor Area of Golden Shores, where I raised my family.

2.) How old are you?

64

3.) What is your educational background and past work experience?

I hold an undergraduate degree in Finance and an MBA in Business.

I served for eighteen years as a Vice President at Goldman Sachs, and For five years as a Managing Director at Charles Schwab Capital Markets.

I am currently the President of three Real Estate-Related Companies in Naples

4.) What experiences professional or volunteer best prepare you to serve effectively on the Naples City Council?

I was approached by Florida Gulf Coast University to help develop a new major in Real Estate and taught as an Adjunct Professor for 2 years.

I have also served on boards such as Junior Achievement Manhattan, Rider University's business advisory board, and others.

5.) Have you previously served in elected or appointed position in Collier County the City of Naples, or other governments (including advisory boards or civic organizations)?

I serve as a two-term member and Chairman of the City of Naples Code Enforcement Board.

6.) What do you see as the most challenging issues facing Naples in the next four years, and if elected how do you propose to address them?

a.) Infrastructure, Flooding and Resiliency Problem

- Problem: Storm water infrastructure is too old, with small pipes and blockages from buildup inside pipes. Some gravity drains in communities are ineffective and need to be

replaced with a backup pump system to help move water quickly in the event of heavy rainfall. We have vulnerable waterfront communities that need new ways of moving all of the water being dumped into our roadway system due to our increased development of green spaces.

- Solution: We must update the stormwater infrastructure and modernize the piping system. Storm water pumps are needed for waterfront communities with low elevations. Tide valves are needed to counter high tide events with low elevation properties on the water. We must increase water retention capacity east of 41. Use of bioswales and retention areas will help channel runoff and keep it away from properties and roadways.

b.) Coastal Defenses

- Problem: Coastal defenses are weak along the Gulf and other waterways.

-Solution: Some work has been done, but much more needed. The city has begun some dune formation and dune-grass planting with the beach restoration which is good. More dune protection needed along beaches with dune grass planting. Mangroves are great for pushing back and breaking tidal surge and should be utilized along the Gordon River and Back Bay areas. Additional engineered solutions must also be investigated.

c.) Utilities Vulnerable to High Winds

-Problem: Utilities vulnerable to high winds and power loss.

-Solution: This issue requires collaboration with utility companies in storm-prone pockets which are west of 41 need to be moved underground. Backup power needed to sewer lift stations, pumping stations, and all emergency services in the event of a grid failure.

d.) Lack of Home Owners Preparedness for Resilience

- Problem: Lack of Home Owner preparedness for resilience.

-Solution: Coordination with federal and state government is needed to help homeowner readiness. Incentives are needed to encourage impact windows, generators, elevated HVAC, roof reinforcements, voluntary elevation studies should be prepared to educate on risks, flood gates, taping strategies, sandbags, and more.

e.) The Attack on Home Rule

-Problem: The loss of home rule would be highly detrimental to our community and must be prevented.

-Solution : Our last resort would be to pursue litigation, however, it must be an option on the table. The current power grab on the airport, must be stopped. The airport must remain under the control of the city.

e.) Safe Community

-Solution: Police are essential to the City of Naples' success . We must maintain and expand a community policing policy which includes safe infrastructure and a strong police department.

f.) Events and Fun

-Problem: Civic events are essential for creating a strong community.

-Solution: We must create/schedule community events for all City families to enjoy.

In addition, we must secure Cambier Park so that we are able to bring back events that are safe and affordable for participants.

g.) Over Development, Traffic and Congestion

-Problem: longer commutes, safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and increased pollution.

-Solution: First enforce responsible zoning and height limits. We must protect waterways, parks, preserves, wetlands, mangroves, and our wildlife. Any large scale project must require detailed impact studies before approval or input from residents is elicited.

Our plan must include the adoption and enforcement of codes that preserve architectural integrity and neighborhood character. In addition, we must optimize traffic flow with smart technology, improve transit connections, provide safe bike and pedestrian lanes.

h.) Environmental Degradation

-Problem: The loss of wildlife, increased flooding and heat, lower water quality in Gulf and inland water ways, and damage to city's natural beauty.

-Solution: Our plan must include the protection of our natural areas. This can be achieved via code enforcement, tree planting initiatives, and the above water quality and infrastructure improvements. These will help to reduce all negative impacts.

i.)-Community Cohesion

-Problem: Residents feel disconnected from local government, decreased volunteerism and civic involvement, misinformation by large special interest groups, and low and mis-information.

-Solutions: I am running a grassroots campaign, walking door-to-door and talking face-to-face with residents to learn about key concerns to help generate optimal plans and protections for our city. These conversations have proved to be invaluable, and if elected, I would continue them.

I also support the Arts, and community events that bring us all together.

In addition, I support increased transparency via the use of town halls, forums, meet and greets, and online involvement. We have many great community boards.

7.) What principles and priorities will guide your decision on matters that come before city Council?

a. I will serve the public interest first and foremost. I am running as a public servant and not as a politician. Health, safety and the quality of life. Long-term thinking and steward of public interest is my approach.

b. Inclusion. I am a strong, independent thinker. I will support decisions to benefit all.

c. Fiscal Responsibility. I support balanced budgets, low taxes and common sense costs.

d. Legal, ethical and sound judgement. I will follow the City Charter, State Laws. No conflict of interest. Fair treatment ensured with transparency.

e. Common Sense and evidence-based decision-making. Facts and data.

f. Community input. Listen to our residents on all views.

g. Long term planning. Balanced growth preservation and resilience.

h. Coordinate with County, State, Federal governments

8.) How do you plan to communicate with constituents and involve them in City government?

-I will communicate via regular, and frequent local forums and social media.

9.) How should the city plan for long term sustainability given recurring storm recovery costs and infrastructure needs?

We need to build our city back better than ever. I want to see Naples as the number-one resilient city in Florida.

We must seek out possible grants and public sponsorship opportunities. Realistically, storms are part of our future reality and all budgets must align with this fact.

10.) What is your position on the future of the Naples Municipal Airport including its continued operation, location, governance, structure, and the relationship between its board and Naples City Council?

The airport is a city asset. It must be appointed by and overseen by City Council. The board should be appointed by the City Council. Home rule must be protected. The airport should remain, but be managed for safety and public nuances.

11.) Should the City of Naples continue to participate in litigation challenging state laws that limit local control over land-use and zoning decisions? Why or Why not?

Yes. Local control of our City and community must never be surrendered.

-Problem: The loss of home rule would be highly detrimental to our community and must be prevented.

-Solution : Our last resort would be to pursue litigation, however, it must be an option on the table. The current power grab on the airport, must be stopped. The airport must remain under the control of the City.

12.) What overriding principles will you use in considering requests to approve permits for events that may attract protests or require additional security? How would you balance public safety costs and free expression rights?

Our City has control over the permit process. All applicants must be assessed for safety. The City should decide on what is appropriate for location and security costs.

13.) The City has begun the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan which will continue through 2026 and may lead to revisions in the land use, planning, and zoning codes. What changes, if any, do you believe are needed to maintain Naples character while accommodating appropriate redevelopment?

Code must be followed as well as the City plan. Smart growth and common sense must be paramount.

14.) Do you support keeping , loosening, or tightening the City's current 30-day minimum rental rule for residential properties? What outcomes are you aiming to achieve?

I support keeping the existing policy. I do not see any issues with the current policy.

15.) Was there a City Council vote during the last four years in which you disagreed with the outcome? If so, why did you disagree?

I disagreed with a variance to fill in a lake on a private home lot within the city because it had negative environmental effects.