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Home > Voter Guide to November 2019 East Lansing City Council Election

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By:

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Above, clockwise from upper left: Lisa Babcock, Jessy Gregg, Warren Stanfield, Mark Meadows, Erik Altmann, and John Revitte (photos by Raymond Holt)

November 5 is voting day in the City of East Lansing, but you can vote early, even if you're not currently registered. Voters have the opportunity to cast ballots for up to three City Council candidates. Here's a nonpartisan guide to that election. (We have a separate voter guide to the land sale ballot question.)

City Council election reporting from ELi:

We provided a report on how the candidates are funding thier campaigns. Read that [here](#).

Several candidates are running on platforms of increasing transparency in City government. Read our report about transparency [here](#).

We answered readers' questions about the election, including why it may look like Gregg and

Meadows are running together, when they're not. [Read more.](#)

We have fact-checked the incumbents' claims that they don't support tax incentives for developers, and found that does not match their records. [Read more.](#)

We looked into library advocates' complaint that Meadows is misrepresenting library funding. [Read what we found.](#)

We've looked at the pairing of two candidates in a mailer from the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. [Read what we found.](#)

We provided a report on the ASMSU debate, where differences showed among candidates. [Read that here.](#)

We reported on the candidate debate hosted by ASMSU. [Read about that here.](#)

We have explained how write-in candidacy works. [Read about it.](#)

We have explained why you might not want to cast all three of your votes in this election. [Read more.](#)

We've explained our election coverage. [Read that.](#)

We explain how you vote early in this article.

How the election of East Lansing's City Council works:

The Council is made up of five at-large members. (They do not represent districts.) Three members of Council will be elected on November 5.

Of the six candidates, the three who receive the first, second, and third most votes will fill the three Council seats. In East Lansing, Council elections can be very close.

Each Council member serves a four-year term. The three people elected in 2019 will join the two incumbents who were elected in 2017: Ruth Beier and Aaron Stephens.

After the election, the five people on City Council will elect from among themselves who will serve as Mayor and as Mayor Pro Tem (substitute mayor). The vote by Council members for Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem occurs shortly after each election for the following two-year period.

Whose terms are ending?

The terms of Erik Altmann (currently the Mayor Pro Tem), Shanna Draheim, and Mark Meadows (currently the Mayor) are ending. Draheim has decided not to run for re-election. Meadows and Altmann are both running for another term.

There are six candidates running for the three seats:

- Warren Stanfield (see [ELi's profile](#) and the [State News? profile](#))

- John Revitte (see ELi?s profile and the State News? profile)
- Mark Meadows (see ELi?s profile and the State News? profile)
- Jessy Gregg (see ELi?s profile and the State News? profile)
- Lisa Babcock (see ELi?s profile and the State News? profile)
- Erik Altmann (see ELi?s profile and the State News? profile)

How have the incumbents voted?

ELi has steadily reported on actions at City Council and you can see that coverage by clicking [here](#). Here are some major Council votes in the last two years that involved split decisions (something other than a 5-0 vote), linked to our coverage:

- Decision to give the Mayor more power than others in agenda-setting
- New Freedom of Information Act policy, giving the mayor more power
- Criminalization of LGBTQ conversion therapy
- Rental overlay district in Shaw Estates and similar in Hawthorn neighborhood
- Search for possible new City Attorney
- Renewal of Tom Yeadon?s contract as City Attorney, 25 percent raise on the contract
- Arts vs. social services budget battle (following earlier split vote on same topic)
- Vote to shrink the Oakwood Historic District, and to remove Valley Court Park
- Construction of still taller buildings allowable downtown
- Spacing between marijuana dispensaries
- Glencairn residential lot split
- Medical marijuana provisioning centers (eventually this passed 5-0)
- Accommodating missing council member?s schedule
- Managing missing council members? leaves of absence
- Townhouse-style student apartment project on Albert Avenue
- Areas where people can have outdoor fires

Big unanimous votes by the current City Council include votes supporting all the large downtown developments (DRW Convexity?s Park District, Harbor Bay?s Center City District, Core Spaces? The Hub), giving Costco tax increment financing, reappointment and a raise for City Manager George Lahanas, and putting the income tax on the ballot, twice (it passed the second time).

There have been two public candidate events:

- October 3 at the Hannah Community Center, **a forum** hosted by the League of Women Voters (read more).
- October 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m., **a debate** at the MSU International Center (Room 115, 427 N. Shaw Lane) hosted by ASMSU (read more).

Need help voting?

If you need an absentee ballot, need to register to vote, want to know where you vote, or need any other help with voting, contact the office of City Clerk Jennifer Shuster. You can register to vote up to and on Election Day. The City Clerk can provide information about how to register, particularly close to the election.

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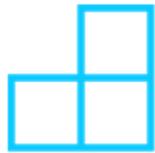
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