

**CFF Candidate Questionnaire
Mayor and City Council Candidates
November 2019 Election
(4-year Term)**

Name: Raylon Leaks-May

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Describe community involvement:

I have been an active volunteer in the schools and community for over 25 years. I have served on various Committees in the schools such as PTO, PTA, Headstart Family Committee, Ferndale Fine Arts, Citizens for a Fair Ferndale and The Ferndale Education Foundation just to name a few. I was , also elected to serve on the Ferndale Schools Board of Education and served in this volunteer position from 2012-2015.

Why did I decide to run for council and what has prepared me to hold this role?

After having served on the Ferndale Public Schools Board of Education, I decided to run for Ferndale City Council in 2015. I ran for this position because I felt that as a parent, school board member, an African American woman and a Ferndale resident for 25+ years, I could provide great representation as a civil servant and could bring a different perspective and voice to the council table. As a result, I was elected to Ferndale City Council in 2016 and am running as an incumbent not o Lynn based on those same reasons that lead me to run in 2015 but also, because I am coming in as a policy maker and someone who has a track record of listening to residents concerns and acting on them as well. I am a champion for community engagement, bringing voices to the table, building bridges between our schools and the community and simply love being recognized as a civil servant for this community who loves working for you!

What is the most productive relationship between council and mayor?

The most product relationship between a council and mayor is one of respect and collaboration. At the end of the day, we can agree to disagree; we can walk away from deliberations knowing that we have, thoughtfully and thoroughly acted with due diligence for our community and residents.

When there is a disagreement between council members, what is the responsibility of individual council members?

Council members should be able to discuss any type of grievances among one another. At the end of the day, we are still a team and need to be able to communicate and work as such.

What role do boards and commissions play in Ferndale's government and how should members be screened/recruited?

Boards and Commissions have a very vital role in Ferndale's government because they allow residents/ stakeholders with the opportunity to be involved in decision- making practices at the local level. Being involved in a Board or Commission, also allows individuals to take a more active role in the governing process and gain exposures and experience to perhaps pursue elective offices locally, statewide etc...

How will you work to promote inclusion of populations that might feel excluded in this community?

As an elected official, I have always felt that open communication is vital between a city and residents. This is one of the reasons why I championed a consolidated email for council so that residents could reach any council member, at any given time and for any reason. I continue to invite residents to reach out to their council because we have a responsibility to hear kudos and/or address concerns of the community.

Describe the types of development that you see as most beneficial to Ferndale?

I would love to see affordable housing brought to Ferndale. I am proud to say that the city is making strides for that goal to come to fruition. We have a housing ordinance that allows for tax incentives to be rewarded if affordable housing is the goal for those who wish to develop here. However, I would like to see the ordinance revised to decrease the number of housing units necessary for the ordinance to take affect. The types of development that come to Ferndale should not only be vetted via city council and the planning commission but also via those with a vested interest in the community and its growth potential.

What specific ideas do you have for reducing expenditures while maintaining city services?

I am pleased to say that the city has taken many strides to reduce expenditures. We are converting to an LED street lighting system that is expected to save the city about \$168,000/ year after installation. The police department now has a solar carport for squad cars. As a result, this offsets costly energy needs that can be applied elsewhere. In addition to this city department heads are always looking for grants or ways in which to allocate funding for city initiatives with the intent to not provide taxable burdens to residents and stakeholders etc... I will personally continue to ask challenging questions and encourage the city to investigate all options when it comes to financing projects or city initiatives.

Describe one program that you would champion to help foster community.

I will always be a champion for affordable housing. Affordable housing options in this community would help to maintain the diversity that we value highly in our community and continue to promote inclusion as well.

Where do you see Ferndale in five years?

I see Ferndale as a vibrant, balanced community that will be even more inclusive, welcoming and attractive to homeowners, renters, stakeholders and visitors.