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- 1. How long have you lived in your district? Please provide an example of one way that you have contributed to your community to date. Why are you the best candidate for the position you seek? (in order by District)**

William Downey - I am a life-long Woodford Countian and I moved into the 5th District on Stout Avenue in 1998 and have lived off and on in my district for 20 years. I currently live on Broadway Street in downtown Versailles. I have been fortunate to previously serve on the Planning and Zoning Commission and for the last two years been able to serve on the Economic Development Authority as a board member. I am a member of the Versailles Kiwanis Club and have participated in several service and philanthropic events such as our annual Pancake Breakfast, that helps raise money for scholarships to benefit graduating seniors from WCHS.

I believe I am the best candidate to serve as Magistrate on the Woodford County Fiscal Court because I will bring a new and fresh perspective to our local government. There is an entire generation of Woodford Countians that is currently not being represented on the Fiscal Court and I hope to provide a voice and a seat at the table as we make decisions that can have a 20-30 year impact on our community. I will work to ensure that we continue to move Woodford County forward in the right direction and not stand in the way of progress. We need new leadership in local government and as a first-time candidate running for office, I promise to bring an open mindset and a fierce determination to ensure that Woodford County becomes the best version of itself in the years to come.

- 2. What is the biggest challenge, and biggest opportunity you see facing Woodford County and your district?**

William Downey- I believe the biggest challenge facing Woodford County is the drug epidemic that has affected the lives of so many in our community. I do not have all the answers for how we begin to solve this problem but I do know that it will take a collaborative effort from every segment of our population: churches, government, civic and service groups, business and industry, schools, and at home in our families. I am of the belief that we must focus on prevention methods on the front end and rehabilitation efforts on the back end. We must give our schools and law enforcement the tools necessary to educate and protect our youth about the dangers of addiction.

As far an opportunity goes, I believe we have an underutilized asset in Big Spring Park downtown Versailles. I will work with the city, county, and our parks department to create some investment that will help with the revitalization of our park to make it safer, more accessible, and a place for families to bring their children. Improvements have already begun but with a collaborative effort between local governments, there is opportunity to enhance our downtown park and return it to a focal point for our community.

3. What do you believe are the main economic pillars in Woodford County, and what are some specific planning policies that you propose to further economic growth?

William Downey- Our agriculture and farming industry has historically been and continues to be a driving force in Woodford County. Cattle, corn, soy beans, and other commodities, all play a pivotal role for our economy. The world class horse farms scattered throughout the county support the equine industry across Kentucky. Our school system provides many jobs for hundreds of Woodford Countians who go to work to educate our youth every single day. Locally owned small businesses are also a key cog in the economic wheel that provide goods, services, jobs, and tax revenue to our community. Our bourbon and wine industries continues to grow and create tourist destination stops for people visiting our county. And our industries such as Ledvance, Quad Graphics, Ruggles Sign Company, and our new additions in Midway Station and More Than A Bakery in Versailles, employ thousands of people in our community and generate payroll tax revenue that helps operate our local governments.

I will work to help create an environment in Woodford County where we can incentivize our existing businesses and industries to stay, invest, and expand their companies in our community. We must continue to focus on workforce development to support our local businesses and expand our efforts with the school system that can provide the necessary training for our students to be able to enter the workforce and fill the needed job openings in our county.

4. Would you support a tax increase, such as Local Investment for Transformation (LIFT), a 1% local sales tax increase, for a specific project? Please explain what capital project(s) you might support as leveraged through additional taxation.

William Downey- I would not be able to support a hypothetical tax increase in the scenario described above. If a specific project were to present itself, I would be open to opportunities that would improve our county. I would prefer to continue to expand our tax base and generate additional revenue through good paying jobs in the community.

5. Do you support the study of a merger of the county government with one or more of the city governments?

William Downey- I would prefer to not spend tax payer dollars on a study for an outcome that is highly unlikely. I would however be in favor of a joint task force between the government entities to look at ways we can continue to create inter-local agreements and joint services with a goal of cost reduction and creating efficiencies.

6. In your opinion, is our transportation and infrastructure adequate to support our community? If not, where would you like to see improvements made?

William Downey- Large trucks traveling through downtown Versailles and general traffic congestion continue to be issues that need to be addressed. I believe infrastructure investment should be a main priority for any local government. When you defer maintenance on roads and sidewalks, you create safety hazards that impact the general public. Good infrastructure is vital to

creating a vibrant downtown that people can easily access. I will push for continued improvements in our sidewalks, county roads, and parks that impact all of Woodford County.

7. What role should regional land use planning play in our local planning & development moving forward?

William Downey- We should strive to be a good neighbor to our surrounding counties and work together on planning and development that will benefit the region. But I believe we must first look after the best interest of Woodford County to ensure that decisions that are being made will be to benefit our county. When we make good use of our land, create good and fair zoning ordinances, and experience development in Woodford County, it is a benefit to the Central Kentucky region.

8. What are your plans for improving the environmental sustainability of our county? How would you support investments in more renewable alternative energy development?

William Downey- I would potentially support an environmental sustainability audit of our local governments depending on the time and cost. I believe looking within our government to see where we could find areas to improve the environmental impact in our county would be a worthwhile endeavor. It would allow us to focus on the areas that need to be addressed immediately and develop long term planning that focused on specific improvements. As we make upgrades and improvements in our buildings and operations, I believe we need to make every effort to become more energy efficient and invest the necessary resources that will have the longest lasting impact for our county.

9. Agriculture is an annual \$565 million-dollar industry that supports 1 in 3 jobs (specifically 2,783 jobs) in Woodford County. Woodford County farmland also anchors a burgeoning travel and agri-tourism industry. To ensure continued viability of our agricultural industries and productive farmland, would you support an annual funding allocation to the Woodford Rural Land Board's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program? Why, or why not?

William Downey- I would be open to the idea if I knew exactly where the money was going and how it was being used. I want to support our farmers, farmland, agri-tourism, and the agriculture industry as a whole in Woodford County. I also want to make the best use of our tax dollars to operate an efficient, service oriented local government that meets the needs of the people in the community. Any diversion of our budget would need to be justified and shown to be a benefit to the people of Woodford County.

10. What other ideas and specific policies do you have to ensure the continued growth and viability of our agriculture industry?

William Downey- An idea that has been tossed around before but is perhaps worth exploring again is the growth of the bourbon industry and the need for corn, barley, wheat, rye, etc. Woodford County could develop a type of agriculture co-operative that served the existing distilleries in Woodford County and the region. The distilleries would ensure they would always

have their product and it would be sourced locally and our farmers would have an end user right in our backyard that would help create viability and reduce transportation and logistics costs of their operations.

Whatever the ideas, I am open and I want to see a strong, vibrant, agriculture industry in Woodford County for generations to come.