



APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO YPSILANTI CITY COUNCIL WARD #2 POSITION

Applicant Information

(Please type or print)

Applicant Name Liano Sharon

Residence Address 2022 Washtenaw Rd, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Home Phone [REDACTED] Work Phone _____

E-Mail [REDACTED]

Cover Letter & Resume

Please attach a one page cover letter and a resume of no more than two pages to this application.

Supplemental Questions

Please respond to the following questions regarding your interest in the position of Councilmember for the City of Ypsilanti on separate pages using no more than 3 pages total:

1. Why are you interested in serving as an Ypsilanti City Councilmember?
2. What strength would you bring to the Council?
3. What are the three highest priorities and/or issues you believe the City needs to address? How would you propose to address these issues?
4. Explain your current and past community involvement and/or service on city, nonprofit, or public boards, committees, task forces, or commissions and how this has contributed to the Ypsilanti community. Address its relevance to the position of Ypsilanti City Councilmember.
5. What do you wish to accomplish during this appointed term as an Ypsilanti City Councilmember?
6. What is your vision for our City and community?
7. Is there anything else that you may wish to add that would help us get to know you a little better?

Please return (*in person*) this form, your cover letter, resume, and answers to the supplemental questions to the City Clerk, at Ypsilanti City Hall (1 S. Huron St.) **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 27, 2018.**

Applications received after 5:00 p.m. will not be accepted.

The application and any correspondence should be addressed to:

Frances McMullan, City Clerk
City of Ypsilanti
One South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

November 26, 2018

To: Ypsilanti City Council
One South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

From: Liano Sharon
2022 Washtenaw Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

RE: Application for Appointment to City Council, Ward 2

I am writing to apply for the open position on City Council for Ward 2.

Our city faces many challenges. From social to economic to ecological. Finding solutions requires growing understanding of our challenges across the community, and building trust in each other as we travel the future together.

The more diverse a community is, the stronger, more sustainable and resilient it is. A community that includes public spaces, transportation, and affordable housing, educational and economic opportunities, activities and cultural events, is a community that draws people in, and keeps people and resources in the community, to the benefit of all. A diverse community fosters a spirit of connection to each other, the land, and our common environment. These are some of the reasons I loved Ypsilanti when I first moved here in 1994, and why I chose to move back in 2008.

I have a strong background in science, teaching, business, language, culture, and social activism around public policy. I've had decades of experience bridging gaps across diverse groups to find common ground where solutions can be built.

I believe my knowledge, experience, and skills will be a significant asset to the community and the council. I hope to use them to bring a greater understanding of our complex issues to all Ypsilantians, and help to both clarify and find solutions to the challenges we face, together.

Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions or need clarification on anything.

Best regards,




Liano Sharon



Liano Sharon

2022 Washtenaw Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197



EXPERIENCE

Self-Employed — Consultant — 2000 - PRESENT

Provided management and technical services to the industrial, commercial, and consumer industries; product design and development, global sourcing, supply chain, logistics, and project management.

Provided cross-cultural training to C-level executives, management, and technical personnel relocating around the world; developing tools for observing and learning from familiar and unfamiliar cultures to improve cross-cultural communication.

Michigan for Revolution — Organizer — December 2016 - PRESENT

Organized with people across Michigan to actively challenge the dominant cultural narrative of industrialized society. As part of a larger team, help organize and execute actions in support of progressive political values.

Organized with people across Michigan to join the Michigan Democratic Party, and elect progressives to positions of authority in the Democratic Party and in local, regional, and state government.

Michigan Democratic Party — State Central Delegate — February 2017 - PRESENT

Represented Michigan Congressional District 12 on the governing body of the Michigan Democratic Party.

As a member of the rules committee, proposed and negotiated changes to the state party rules to reduce barriers to new members, and improve transparency, accountability, and democracy in the Party.

Michigan Progressive — Co-Publisher — March 2017 - PRESENT

As part of a larger team, developing a progressive media platform.

Friends of Dana Nessel — Campaign Manager — February 2018 - April 2018

Managed a statewide campaign for State Party Endorsement. As part of a larger team, successfully achieved the objective, overcoming a significantly better-funded opponent, with a larger and more experienced staff.

EDUCATION

Knox College, Galesburg IL — BA, Mathematics — 1989 - 1993

Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti MI — 1994 - 1996

Graduate studies in education - curriculum and instruction.

LANGUAGES

English, Mandarin, Spanish

Application for City Council, Ward 2 - Supplemental Questions - Liano Sharon

Question 1:

Why are you interested in serving as an Ypsilanti City Councilmember?

I want to help Ypsilanti continue to improve for all its residents.

I believe I have the background, experience, and skills to help improve communications across the community, represent diverse beliefs and experiences fairly, and help differing groups of residents find common ground. Common ground does not necessarily mean complete agreement, or even close to it; common ground means enough agreement to support a common path forward built on mutual respect and understanding.

Question 2:

What strength would you bring to the Council?

Decades of experience working with diverse people to find common ground and solve problems across technical, financial, linguistic, and cultural barriers. My experience in education and training, from mathematics to culture to management, often helps me to explain complex concepts in plain language, while minimizing loss of nuance.

Question 3:

What are the three highest priorities and/or issues you believe the City needs to address? How would you propose to address these issues?

Livability for everyone.

A city where people can't afford to live well in the community is a segregated community. Affordable housing, utilities, transportation, educational and economic opportunities are necessary components of a livable city.

Long-term financial stability.

Long-term financial stability means economic development that keeps resources - human time and attention, money, energy, materials - in our community, rather than shipping it out. Examples include worker co-ops, production, distribution, and retail of locally sourced products and services from locally sourced skills and materials. Public initiatives to grow economic activity in the community should prioritize organizations - businesses, nonprofits, co-operative enterprises, and others - that design their operations and processes with sustainable and resilient communities in mind.

Improved community services.

A city can be a place to live life, or just a place to sleep when you're not living life somewhere else. The public facilities and community services we provide to each other as a community are a key part of what makes a city a place to live, not just a collection of roads and buildings. From utilities like water/sewage and trash removal, to electricity and high speed internet, to public transportation and community spaces like libraries, sidewalks, schools, and bike paths, improving community services and infrastructure improves the lives of city residents, promotes community, draws visitors and future residents.

The problems underlying each broad issue need particular attention, but they're parts and pieces of a whole. Addressing them well requires looking at the whole and how it is built from the various parts and pieces, and how they can be organized to support rather than disrupt each other. Re-developing Water Street is potentially an opportunity for livable housing, community generation of electric power, community spaces, and co-operative enterprises that keep resources in the community. However we go about handling problems like Water Street, the aging dam, our water and sewage system, lack of affordable housing, among others, we should look at each as part of a larger whole and approach problems as opportunities to strengthen our entire community.

Question 4:

Explain your current and past community involvement and/or service on city, nonprofit, or public boards, committees, task forces, or commissions and how this has contributed to the Ypsilanti community. Address its relevance to the position of Ypsilanti City Councilmember.

I first moved to Ypsilanti in 1994, when I attended graduate school at EMU, and was employed by the university to set up and run their first Mac lab. I moved back to Ypsilanti in 2008, in large part because I've maintained strong connections to the community from my EMU days. Since moving back to Ypsilanti 10 years ago, I've participated in community discussions on what became the Shape Ypsilanti Master Plan in 2013, and worked with community groups on permaculture and urban agriculture, including around the initiatives to allow bees, chickens, and greenhouses in the city.

I am currently a member of the Michigan Democratic Party State Central Committee, elected to represent CD12, which includes Ypsilanti. As a member of Standing Rules Committee, I participated in a year-long review and revision of State Party rules, improving fairness, transparency, and access to meaningful participation by all. This process involved a lot of negotiation and compromise, as well as much research into how best to incorporate changes, in order to achieve a fair and workable outcome.

Question 5:

What do you wish to accomplish during this appointed term as an Ypsilanti City Councilmember?

Work to ensure every voice is heard, all concerns are represented fairly, and addressed with integrity. Provide the best advice and service my reason and experience enable. Grow trust in city government processes and understanding of our challenges across the community.

I am keenly aware that as an appointee, I have neither sought nor received the consent of the governed for any policy platform or broad vision for the future I might personally advocate. I have therefore consciously limited my goals for the period of appointment to improving community relations and government processes to facilitate community engagement.

Question 6:

What is your vision for our City and community?

People are drawn to Ypsilanti by opportunity - for education, employment, social engagement, events, and community activities. To grow well as a community together, we should invest in public services that enhance, support, and expand the reasons people already come here to live, learn, work, and love. We should create local jobs by encouraging worker-owned co-operatives, and prioritize businesses with a vision of being part of our community, not just of what they can extract from us. I'd like to see streetcars in Ypsilanti again, or similar low-cost public transportation, connecting with a more robust regional transit system; perhaps bike and pedestrian-only areas.

Question 7:

Is there anything else that you may wish to add that would help us get to know you a little better?

Community is what makes us human. Communities are the environment of life. They are where friendship, love, knowledge, art, joy, peace, and freedom are cultured and grown. The purpose of a city is to grow community.

I lived four years in Mexico, five in Taiwan, and have spent long stints in India and mainland China, among other countries. Each culture has different ways of thinking about our relationships to ourselves, each other, the world, and the unknown. Learning to see the same world through multiple different paradigms of relationships and organizations taught me that however clear my vision may seem, there are multiple visions of comparable clarity.