

Shoemaker takes first official steps in Mayoral campaign (photos/video)

By **Dan Gray** - June 15, 2022 @ 3:39 pm

A downtown Police Station, funds to demolish and rebuild homes as well as promises to make Old Little Italy (Jamestown) great again were the foundations for Matt Shoemaker's official campaign launch.

With city workers diligently cleaning up the area and a few members of Jamestown strong protesting as the backdrop, former Mayor Steve Butland provided his endorsement this morning before Shoemaker took to the podium.



"I think he gets down in the trenches at City Hall. He knows the inner workings, the outer workings is just what makes the place tick," said Butland. "Some of the people who would be running against Matt will talk, we got to fill the potholes, we got to build better roads, we got to do the basics. Let's do nothing beyond what is just the usual. And I'm saying, No, there's got to be more than that. And I think Matt has that vision as to what else is there besides the basics."

Building on those opening remarks, Shoemaker noted he's a budget hawk and has saved the taxpayer over \$2 million dollars at budget time. He also spoke of the hundreds of motions to make the city better in his eight years on council. Noting that the inflation rate is getting higher, he made this promise.

"You have my word going forward that if elected mayor, I will not support any budget that has \$1 more in it than it has to. I have a proven record of finding savings, and I will keep my pencil sharp if elected Mayor this October," said Shoemaker.

What would he do if he was elected, he said the following.

The community will also want to hear what I will do if elected. What I can assure you is that my record as a councillor thus far is a good indicator of where I will focus my energies if elected. And you should look at the records of my fellow candidates as well. They are the best indicator of what they'll do, or wont do, if they're elected. For me, I have said time and time again, we need a greater police presence downtown. Not only is our police station more than 50+ years old, and built for a service that existed in the late 1960s, but our area of greatest need is downtown, and the police service should be immersed in the area it is serving. This would help bring police close to the areas they are most often being called to, and would also help those who want to go downtown feel safer being there. The police station is an old asset that needs to be refreshed, so while we're doing it, why not combine a number of community benefits into that project. A new police presence in the downtown

core would be, in my opinion, a much better place to spend taxpayer dollars than a \$10+ million downtown plaza that not 1 constituent ever raised as a community need before it was brought forward by a consultant.

The City is also in desperate need of housing as prices skyrocket and first time home buyers struggle to break into the real estate market. Having an affordable stock of housing is what differentiates us from the big cities, and what will keep us competitive in a world where people are being priced out of their cities. Here we have no commute, 4 season activities, and quality of life second to none.

He then expanded on how other communities are working to do just that by putting money into destroying boarded up housing and replacing them with duplex, triplex even bigger options.

When SaultOnline asked him after his launch more about the downtown police station, where his perfect location would be, he didn't hesitate.

(19) SHOEMAKER KICKS OFF CAMPAIGN – YouTube

"They have studies that locate those things, I would say probably the place that to me makes the most sense, and I'm no expert, is the corner of Dennis Street and and Queen Street where the bus terminal is that they're now moving, which I voted against," said Shoemaker. "That corner seems to be close enough to downtown, close enough to Jamestown, that you can get where you need to be if you establish there. Of course you know it'll depend on a number of things including whether the property becomes available and how much space the police service needs. So it's something that needs to be looked at but that's that's the area that I've had in my mind is ideal for that area."

Before leaving the site he addressed the concerns of members of Jamestown Strong who wanted promises their area would be taken care of, and you can watch for that story next week.

Shoemaker promises to provide more details on his platform in the weeks to come, and SaultOnline will be there when they are made available and bring them to you.

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Images from the launch of Matt Shoemakers Campaign in Jamestown, June 15, 2022 (Dan Gray/SaultOnline.com)