

**2023 UA City Council Candidates
Responses to UAPA Screening Questions**

Q1: Why are you running for city council, what are your qualifications for this position and what are your top priorities/interests?	
John Kulewicz	<p>I seek re-election to the UA City Council in order to continue the work begun four years ago. We are making the operations of our city government more open and accessible to all. We are trying to maximize what we do with our pools, parks and recreation services. We are providing with increased efficiency the basic amenities that allow each of us to pursue our own purposes in life. It is vitally important to our community to move forward with our progress toward each of these objectives.</p>
Heidi Munc	<p>We moved here over 20 years ago for the schools and then discovered that UA is an incredible place that keeps families here over multiple generations. The Community is so good that there can be a resistance to any kind of change. The truth is no city can stay the same. Central Ohio is projected to grow by 1 million in the next 2-3 decades. It took us 210 years to get to 2 million, so that additional growth is going to feel dramatic. All communities are in a state of rise or decline, and I'm running to ensure that UA continues to rise as Central Ohio grows.</p> <p>My expertise in the field of human-centered research and design sets me apart from other candidates in this race. In my role as an executive leader of a large User Experience team, I use a problem-solving process that begins with understanding not only the problem but also the people who are experiencing the problem. You will get better outcomes by first fully understanding the issue and then, when possible, inviting those experiencing the issue to co-create the solution with you. I am an expert-level practitioner in this field with decades of experience bringing people with divergent opinions together to co-create desirable outcomes. I am visionary, while also being practical and realistic. My success in this role has prepared me to bring people together and serve the citizens of Upper Arlington to balance progress and preservation as our community grows and changes.</p> <p>My three top issues are:</p> <p>Driving strategic and sustainable economic development while building resilience for future. We are a suburban city of mostly single-family homes and when I'm out canvassing, I hear that people like it that way. But they also understand that there is a need to build other types of housing stock – particularly options that are attainable to our aging population who can't afford to stay in their home but want to continue to live in UA.</p>

	<p>Young families looking a place to call home are now interested in more than schools. They also want vibrant neighborhoods with local businesses that create a unique sense of place. Many of us would love it if more of their entertainment dollars were spent in UA.</p> <p>Additionally, it's important that any new development in UA considers resiliency to climate change. Working for an Insurance company for the past 17 years, I've had a front row seat to how the destructive force of nature impacts communities. We don't have hurricanes and are less prone to wildfire, but Central Ohio is going to get wetter and windier, and we need to ensure that we are getting power lines underground and preserving adequate green spaces to help absorb runoff water. These considerations should play an important role in the planning process.</p> <p>Foster a welcoming, accessible community for everyone. When I'm out canvassing, I ask folks what they love about living in UA, and what they wish was different. I've been pleasantly surprised with how many folks have mentioned that they would like to see UA evolve into a community that is more welcoming and accessible to all.</p> <p>Several parents mentioned concerns that the student population doesn't come close to matching the diversity of the workplace their children will enter as adults. Others wondered if we were missing out on attracting young, educated professionals from OSU due to our largely homogenous makeup.</p> <p>If we want to remain the city of choice for the younger generation of professionals, we still have some catching up to do to continue to ensure that all people feel a sense of belonging in Upper Arlington.</p> <p>Ensuring your tax dollars are used wisely. Working for a mutual has taught me a lot about fiscal responsibility. A mutual is owned by its customers and that means that every dollar I spend at work isn't the company's money, it's our members money. That fiscal discipline translates nicely to overseeing the budget of Upper Arlington. There are a lot of trade-offs to consider when determining where our tax dollars are used. For me, a guiding principle will be ensuring that tax dollars are used responsibly so they have the most impact for the most people.</p>
<p>Andrej Rotter</p>	<p>I want to contribute to making UA a welcoming community for everyone regardless of their background. I am a neuroscientist and have served in a variety of scientific and academic leadership roles. My top priority is reduction of UA's carbon footprint.</p>
<p>Q2: How are you focusing your campaign to persuade residents to vote for you over other candidates?</p>	
<p>John Kulewicz</p>	<p>The focus of my campaign is the daily door-to-door effort. On block after block, the conversations with UA residents have been enormously enlightening in helping me understand our city, the expectations of our residents, and the positive changes that are taking place within our community.</p>
<p>Heidi Munc</p>	<p>My campaign is focused on creating enough time for me to knock as many doors as possible to meet residents face to face. Direct voter contact and conversation is the best way to persuade someone to vote for you. As I'm out meeting residents, I have confirmed that my top issues resonate with them, and they are also enthusiastic about the diversity of thought that I would bring to the council.</p>

Andrej Rotter	I am actively knocking on resident's doors and presenting my platform as well as urging support for my two fellow contenders Heidi Munc and John Kulewicz.
Q3: How much financial support have you received for your campaign? Are you on track to meet your financial goals?	
John Kulewicz	My campaign has been fortunate to receive hundreds of contributions, from people throughout the community, which have enabled me to communicate with our fellow residents about the priorities that we share as a community.
Heidi Munc	Prior to launching my campaign, I mapped out how much money I would need to raise to fully implement my campaign plan. Currently, I have raised 80% of my goal number. I am confident in my ability to raise the remaining amount and fully implement my plan.
Andrej Rotter	I have loaned my campaign sufficient funds which I intend to use to support national, state and local Democratic candidates in addition to my own race.
Q4: What are the current challenges facing the City of UA and how would you prioritize them?	
John Kulewicz	Timely completion of the Community Center within budget. Updating UA fire protection services to accommodate recent and projected growth. Keeping UA pools, parks and recreation facilities vibrant and accessible.
Heidi Munc	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development and growth. Sometimes development can occur in a way that is not compatible to existing neighborhoods. The newly established neighborhood compatibility policy is a step in the right direction to preserve neighborhoods. However, we also need to prioritize making the most out of the areas that are ready for larger scale reimagination – such as south of Henderson Road. 1) Upper Arlington's aging infrastructure. This continues to be an issue, and we are currently in the last year of a 10-year capital improvement program. The city will need to adopt a new plan to continue to make progress on infrastructure improvement. 2) Addressing the needs of our senior population. Upper Arlington cherishes our multi-generational families. It is one of our values. Rising taxes and the cost of living is putting pressure our senior population. Creating housing options that are attainable for our seniors will allow them to remain in Upper Arlington while at the same time opening a single-family home for a young family to move into our community.
Andrej Rotter	The greatest challenge is the increasing political polarization within the UA community, which should be ameliorated by focusing on common goals.
Q5: How can we, or should we, expand the commercial revenue base of the city of Upper Arlington?	
John Kulewicz	We do this most effectively by concentrated, sensible and strategic growth within the 5% of the land in UA that is available for commercial development.
Heidi Munc	I believe we should, in order to best support the needs of the residents. As a land-locked community, there are only a few areas where the commercial revenue base can be expanded. The city needs to stay on top of opportunities to upgrade zoning and take care to develop commercially in a way that isn't overly disruptive to existing neighborhoods.

Andrej Rotter	The city should aggressively recruit compatible businesses to existing UA commercial zones.
Q6: What are your plans on dealing with the aging infrastructure (water delivery, sewage systems, stormwater drainage, roads, bridge repairs, etc.) within the city of Upper Arlington?	
John Kulewicz	Constant review of the infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements budgets. In addition, we will need to turn our attention next year to updating UA fire protection services in order to accommodate recent and projected growth.
Heidi Munc	As mentioned above, I believe the council and the city must collaborate and create a new capital improvement plan to address these issues when the current plan concludes at the end of this year.
Andrej Rotter	I support the annual update of our 10 year plan for infrastructure renovation and maintaining a rainy day fund for emergency expenditures.
Q7: What do you propose to do to improve communications between the city and the residents?	
John Kulewicz	On a program level, we should look for ways in which to expand the UA electronic newsletter distribution list. On a personal level, I want to continue to respond promptly to every e-mail and phone call and continue to take initiatives to reach out to UA residents and be available to anyone who wants to talk.
Heidi Munc	The biggest opportunity I see is to expand the number of forums where residents can interact with the council and city to discuss issues that impact the city broadly or specific neighborhoods. Currently, the city does a good job of pushing messages out through multiple channels (website, email, InSight magazine, etc). Adding opportunities for residents to have two-way communication with the city will allow for more direct input from residents.
Andrej Rotter	The city should expand the range of communication channels it uses to contact residents.
Q8: How would you prefer to receive input from UA residents: public participation during Council meetings, emails prior to meetings, or in person meetings with residents?	
John Kulewicz	For me, in-person meetings have been by far the best way to obtain and analyze information about issues that we face or want to raise.
Heidi Munc	I believe that it is better to ask how the residents would prefer to communicate with me. As a public servant, it is my duty to work with residents and allow them to communicate with me in the manner of their choosing.
Andrej Rotter	In person meetings with residents
Q9: What green initiatives are currently being implemented within the city of Upper Arlington and what further green initiatives could be implemented within the city?	
John Kulewicz	Electric aggregation based on 100% purchase of renewable energy credits is the most significant current initiative. In addition, I want to continue to explore ways to make installation of residential solar power equipment more affordable.
Heidi Munc	The largest current initiative is proposal to join the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council which would offer the community a new, fully renewable, electric aggregation program. Further initiatives could include expanding the compostable waste program, and more formal collaboration with Sustainable Upper Arlington group to increase the number of solar roofs, permeable surfaces and rain barrels throughout our community.

Andrej Rotter	Recycling and food waste collection are currently being implemented. Electricity aggregation and widespread solar panel installation should be implemented as future initiatives.
Q10: As Upper Arlington's residents age, what city services should be retained, improved or instituted to make living in UA feasible and enjoyable for seniors? What will you do to show your commitment to this segment of our population?	
John Kulewicz	Over the past four years, I have been involved in numerous outreaches to the UA CARES program on behalf of specific senior residents who have age-related needs. Over the past several days, I have been communicating with the legislative sponsor of the "70 Under 70" bill in the Ohio General Assembly, to urge an upward negotiation of the income limit for the benefits of the proposed property tax freeze.
Heidi Munc	Seniors are more susceptible to impacts of inflation and rising property values and taxes than other populations. Although the city already has several established programs for seniors, an established senior center, and additional programs provided by the Upper Arlington Commission on Aging, there is an ongoing need to work with seniors to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and add additional services and support as our population ages. I have been reaching out to seniors while on the campaign trail to hear their concerns and will continue to engage with them when I am in office to ensure that their voices are heard and do what is possible to meet their needs.
Andrej Rotter	UA commission on aging should survey seniors on an annual basis to determine what city services are desired by our aging population. As a 71-year-old myself I believe my commitment to seniors will be self-evident.
Q11: City Council is a team of seven leaders who are charged with improving our community. Team members do not always agree on solutions. Can you provide us with an example of a time where you had a conflict with other team members and how the conflict was resolved?	
John Kulewicz	One of the most satisfactory and constructive experiences that I have had in this regard was the opportunity that Council Member Ukeme Awakassien Jeter and I took to work together in preparing and winning adoption of an amendment to the ordinance for treatment of the athletic fields in our UA parks.
Heidi Munc	A good portion of my responsibilities in my role as an executive is gaining alignment on the path forward from multiple stakeholders who typically have opposing views on the right course of action. Nearly every project will be met with some objections – which are simply needs or concerns in disguise. When I hear an objection, I work to understand that stakeholders' needs and concerns so I can better address them. I then cultivate understanding between team members on what everyone's vision of success is. The success visions will all be different, but knowing everyone's success vision allows us to work through compromises as a team.
Andrej Rotter	As chairman of the OSU Pharmacology department I had to resolve differences of opinion among departmental faculty on a variety of topics. This was done by accepting the view of the majority even if such a view was counter to my own opinion. I would abide by this approach as a UA council member.