

East Bethel Candidate Profile



Candidate Name: *Kevin Lewis*

Office Sought: *Mayor*

Bio:

It has been interesting and challenging to serve as Mayor of East Bethel since June 2023, and I am seeking re-election based on encouragement to do so from both residents and fellow Council Members. As a 28-year resident of East Bethel (Coon Lake) I appreciate our peaceful community and the good nature of those who call it home. We have a strong foundation to preserve and build on.

I have been happily married to my wife Linda for 42 years, and we are close friends with our adult children, Danielle and Cole, who live in the Twin Cities area and have great memories of growing up in East Bethel.

My work experience included being an economist and director of corporate planning for a large agribusiness firm, merger and acquisition work, and commodity trading. I have an M.S. degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois.

Most people I know in East Bethel want a local government that is honest, responsive, and well managed. We are fortunate to have excellent City staff; knowledgeable and good people. Due diligence on the part of our City Council is essential and involves asking the right questions and getting complete information for sound decision making. When the current City Council came into office, one of the first responsive steps we took was to return the Public Forum to the body of regular City Council meetings, so that it would be broadcast live and also recorded.

A good measure of how well an organization is managed is that key objectives are accomplished at a reasonable cost. In East Bethel's case our budget increase between 2023 and 2024 was the second lowest amongst Anoka County's 17 cities. We look to have a similarly low levy increase for the 2025 budget year, about 3%. This compares to higher rates of increase not only amongst most other cities in Anoka County, but also compared to the County itself, which is reportedly looking at a 20+% levy increase for 2025!

We share a vision for the future of East Bethel in which preservation of its natural beauty and livability is balanced with measured growth. With a couple of medium-density residential housing projects in the works for the Highway 65 corridor, as well as a number of low-density residential housing projects in the rest of the City, it appears that a future focus on commercial development along Highway 65 is appropriate. Business properties pay property taxes at about twice the rate of residential properties and require less City services per tax dollar received. They also provide services to residents and job opportunities, as well.

I would appreciate your vote. Thanks, Kevin

