



City of Rochester Hills  
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME Thomas Blackstone COUNCIL DISTRICT 2  
DATE 12-5-15 ROCHESTER HILLS RESIDENT FOR 20 YEARS  
OCCUPATION Retired police officer and insurance investigator, currently a part time shuttle driver

INTERESTS/REASONS/QUALIFICATIONS

Interested in public affairs  
Served on several citizen committees  
Past president of a homeowner's association in Detroit

BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES ON WHICH YOU HAVE SERVED (LIST MUNICIPALITIES AND DATES)

Advisory Traffic Safety 2004-2015  
Public Safety & Infrastructure Technical Review 2013-2015  
Liquor License Technical Review 2014-15

ELECTIVE OFFICES THAT YOU HAVE HELD

None

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Rochester Area Neighborhood House, OPC, ESL tutoring thru the Oakland Literacy Council.  
I was a Board member of an insurance investigator's association for five years. I sat on the Board of Education of a small parochial school in Grosse Pointe Park for several years.

PERTINENT EDUCATION

B.A., Political Science with a concentration on local government.

HOBBIES/INTERESTS

Hiking, reading history, following current events: local, national and international.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I have lived in District 2 for 20 years. I know the area well, its neighborhoods and commercial areas.

# THOMAS BLACKSTONE

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## *Resume*

### Education:

B.A. Political Science, Wayne State University, Detroit, Mi., 1970.

### Work Experience:

November 2015 to present, shuttle driver for Fox Automotive, Rochester Hills. This is a part time morning job.

1995-2013 Investigator for Farmers Insurance, investigated claims (e.g., property fires, burglaries, and stolen vehicles) suspected of fraud. Worked in conjunction with other insurance companies and law enforcement. Retired.

I was a Board member of an insurance investigator's association for five years.

1970-1995 Detective/sergeant, Detroit Police Department, worked in patrol, administration, investigation of general crimes, internal affairs and homicides. Retired.

### Volunteer Work:

Rochester Neighborhood House Food Pantry.

Tutor for Oakland Literacy Council.

Reader for Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic for nine years until the facility was closed.

Past president of a homeowner's association in Detroit in late 1970s and early 80s.

Board of Education member of a small parochial school in Grosse Pointe Park for several years.

### Involvement with City of Rochester Hills:

Advisory Traffic & Safety Board

Public Safety & Infrastructure Technical review Committee, current chairman.

Liquor License Technical Review Committee

Interests:

Following public affairs, hiking, reading history and literature.

Personal:

Married to Diana for 40 years, two grown children.

# Thomas Blackstone

(1) I have a B.A. in Political Science with a concentration in local government. I was a Detroit police officer for 25 years and retired as a detective/sergeant. I went on to work another 17 years as an investigator for Farmers Insurance in which I investigated suspected fraudulent insurance claims. I have a great deal of experience with the legal profession and courts. I have an avid interest in public affairs. For quite some time I have viewed city council meetings on line and in person and become well versed in city affairs and issues on the minds of residents. I believe that politics is the marketplace of ideas and the art of the possible. My experience will enable me to artfully weigh the many interests, issues, controversies and personalities that comprise our community.

(2) I served on the Advisory Traffic & Safety Board for over ten years and came to a good understanding of the concerns and complaints of residents on traffic matters. I have served on the Public Safety & Infrastructure Committee the past three years. During this time the committee successfully brought about re-purposed millages for road maintenance, planned for upgrades to fire stations and promoted a millage increase for the hiring of additional firefighter/paramedics to better serve the community. I am currently the chairman of this committee which is now analyzing the city's stormwater drainage system with a view to developing ways to finance its maintenance outside of the general fund.

I have served on the Liquor License Technical Review Committee the past two years. This committee proposed a new ordinance requiring licensees to return their licenses to the city should they close their business. This ordinance was enacted by City Council. It better controls the movement of liquor licenses in and out of the city. This committee also reviews liquor license applications.

I am a volunteer for the Rochester Neighborhood House Food Pantry, which has helped me understand the financial plight of some of our residents. Thru the Oakland Literacy Council I tutor immigrants who are learning English as a second language. I am involved at the Older Persons Commission in such activities as studying current events, socializing and exercising. I have an understanding of the needs and desires of our senior citizens, not to mention that I am one.

(3) The City of Rochester Hills is a very pleasant community. It has great neighborhoods, schools and recreational areas and facilities. It has all the necessary retail businesses to serve its residents. The financial condition of the city is excellent. I have reviewed the city's financial reports for the last several years and, although I am not an accountant, I have a fair understanding of the financial situation of the city. Budgeting is done on a multi-year basis, allowing for long term financial planning. Fund balances generally exceed recommended levels of surplus.

Brownfield redevelopment should be a priority in the next few years as there are several former landfills in the city. The landscape along Dequindre north of Hamlin is a stark contrast to the rest of the city. This is definitely a tough nut to crack. The city is mostly built out; however, there are several development projects in the offing and attention should be directed in this area to ensure good land use. Continued pathway development should be encouraged to increase beautification and recreational appeal. Road maintenance seems to be under control, especially as the Tienken Rd. project is now complete. This road bisects District 2, so I and my fellow District 2 residents are breathing a sigh of relief. Three new roundabouts have been installed along Tienken Rd. in the last few years and all three were recently beautified with very handsome landscaping and brickwork. As a member of the Public Safety & Infrastructure Technical Review Committee I am confident that ample city funds will be available to continue our road maintenance program.

## Thomas Blackstone

As a resident of District 2 and living in the area of Rochester Rd. and Tienken I have an interest in renovation and further development of the northeast corner of that location which is occupied by buildings and vacant land associated with the old National Twist Drill facility. Kudos to U-Haul for purchasing and redeveloping the building at the extreme south end of this property along Tienken Rd. The exterior of the building and parking areas have a much fresher appearance. The main part of this facility is occupied by a warehousing facility. In the center of this facility is an ugly, unused water tower. It is an eyesore which I and my neighbors cringe at upon passing it. I would like to work with the management of this facility to demolish or renovate the water tower. Additionally, there is some vacant land on the north side of this property which I believe is zoned office-research-technology. The land is overgrown and unsightly. I would like to see this land developed.

I believe that city government can work with residents and businesses to accomplish an even more pleasant, well run community.