



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Leeds council member Cary Kennedy announces re-election bid**

Cary Kennedy has launched his campaign for re-election to the Leeds City Council. The two-term incumbent said he's proud of how far the city's fiscal situation has come during his eight years representing District 5.

"When I took office eight years ago, Leeds was in a serious financial crisis," Kennedy said. "We had to make some tough, painful decisions at that time. It had taken the city 30 years of spending beyond its means to get deeply into debt, so we had to fix the fiscal crisis first. We had to make difficult cuts back then, but we've now slashed the city's debt and greatly improved city services. We're currently two years through a five-year debt reduction plan that's putting the city in a much better position for the future. It's been a slow and responsible re-birth, but we started with something that was sort of like a near-death experience."

As chairman of the council's Finance Committee, Kennedy has been at the heart of efforts to fix a fiscal mess that he and other council members inherited eight years ago.

"Even though we're just two years of the way into the debt-reduction plan, we've already cut city debt by \$4 million," Kennedy said. "By the end of the remaining three years, we're going to have wiped out \$15.9 million in debt. We're not going to borrow money like there's no tomorrow. Instead, we're going to be fiscally conservative so this city can have a bright future instead of being faced with the chronic problems we found when I took office."

As the city has reduced its debt, the plan has already saved Leeds taxpayers \$2 million per year in interest payments.

Kennedy said he sees the future stability and prosperity of Leeds as being the real issues in this election.

"The things we decide today are going to decide what kind of city Leeds is going to be in the future," Kennedy said. "If we continue down a responsible path, we can keep improving schools, keep upgrading our services and stop drugs and crime from taking over our city. If we

turn away from what we're currently doing, we'll sink back into a financial black hole that will eventually mean that citizens are deprived of the police and fire protection and other services that give us the quality of life that we all want. The choice is that simple."

Kennedy was raised in Leeds and attended Leeds schools. He now has two sons who are in Leeds schools, and he cites their future as one of his key motivations in running for re-election. Evan will start the seventh grade at Leeds Middle School next month, and Ethan will start the third grade at Leeds Elementary School.

"Leeds was a great place for me to grow up, and it's been a great place for me to live and run my business," Kennedy said. "I want to make sure that my boys have the same chance to live in a place with a high quality of life in the future. To do that, we have to keep improving our schools. We have to fight to get drugs and thugs off our streets and out of our neighborhoods."

Kennedy said Leeds faces challenges as it looks to the future, but he's excited at the progress that's been made in the last eight years.

"We do have complex challenges to face soon," Kennedy said. "For instance, we have to make sound decisions about the future of the co-operative district that we're in with Moody and St. Clair County. I can't tell you how we're going to solve all of the problems, but I can tell you that I'm completely pro-Leeds. I live here. I grew up here. I went to school here. I work here. I don't have any divided loyalties. I want what's best for Leeds."