

Mentor Spotlight: Insight and Perspective from our Mentor and new City Council Member, Andy Thomson



1. How did you get into your field? What alternative career could you see yourself having?

I had originally planned to be an engineer. I studied electrical engineering at Georgia Tech and worked at a civil engineering firm in Coral Springs. But about halfway through my time at Georgia Tech, I came to realize that engineers focus so much on problem solving that they don't have much time for relationships and interactions with people. I love people (engaging with them, helping them), so I thought a career in the law might better suit me. That way, I could continue to solve problems, but at a more human level.

2. What has been the most interesting aspect of your job?

Helping people and resolving conflicts. People's legal problems take many shapes, and often folks have no idea where or how to start. I love being able to sit down with them and develop ways to tackle their problems and resolve their conflicts.

3. What is your favorite part of your job?

Bringing people together to resolve their problems amicably. Every conflict is an opportunity to bring people together, and I cherish each such opportunity.

4. Describe a typical day for you. What does a day in the life of a council member consist of?

I got elected only a few weeks ago, so I'm still figuring it out! I normally get up early (around 5:00) to exercise and read. I take my daughter to school around 7:30 and get to my law office

early. We have meetings and calls throughout the day (unless I'm in court). In the evening, I do my best to make it home to have family dinner. I read and work some after the kids go to bed.

5. What are some of the goals you hope to achieve as a city council member?

- a. Bring people together and solve our City's problems collaboratively*
- b. Increase transparency*
- c. Improve our traffic*
- d. Retain our perspective - Boca Raton has one of the best qualities of life around. We need to remember - and be thankful for - the many blessings we have here.*

6. What inspired you to run for council?

My love for people and our beautiful City of Boca Raton. I wanted to help preserve our wonderful quality of life and guide our City into the future.

7. What is one piece of advice you would give your younger self?

Read more - lots more.

8. What inspired you to join the Viner Mentor program?

I saw the tremendous impact that Eda and Cliff were having on making college a reality for kids. I knew I had to help.

9. Have you ever had a mentor? What was the most impactful thing you took away from that relationship?

I've been blessed to have several from different areas of life - spiritual, business, legal, political. The most meaningful thing that I learned was the importance of servant leadership - that true leaders seek not to be served, but to serve.

10. What is one aspect of your professional journey that not many people know about?

I've been blessed to have the opportunity to donate hundreds of hours of free legal work to non-profits and people needing legal assistance that can't afford to hire a lawyer. Helping those folks has been one of the highlights of my professional career.