

PA-PAC Questionnaire for Mayor and City Council Candidates – 2017

When answering this questionnaire, please repeat the questions in your response document with each question numbered and organized as it appears here. Type your responses in italics, bold, or a different font to distinguish your responses from the questions. Please do not use colors. Please try to confine your responses within the word limits set for each question. They should be generous. Do not feel obliged to exhaust the limit for each question.

Please return the completed form along with your resume describing education, work history, community service, and prior political experience as soon as possible, but by July 30, 2017, at the latest.

You may e-mail your responses to Tom Miller at tom-miller1@nc.rr.com or you may send a printed copy of your responses to Durham PA-PAC c/o Tom Miller 1110 Virginia Avenue, Durham, NC 27705-3262

Please note that following the July 30 deadline, the Durham People's Alliance PAC may publish your responses to this questionnaire and your resume.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire and your willingness to serve the people of Durham.

Candidate's name **Steve Schewel**

Office for which you have filed for election (circle one): **Mayor** / At-large City Council

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Government and the Public Good

- 1. Of all the issues confronting city government, which single issue is most important to you and why? What would you do about it if elected? *Please limit your answer to 300 words.***

On City Council, there is one issue that I work on *every single day*, and that issue is affordable housing. Everyone in Durham deserves to have a safe, decent, warm, affordable home.

With limited resources and limitless need, we must focus on the most critical goals. My highest goals are to (1) end family homelessness within the next few years ; (2) continue the strong City support for the Housing Authority (DHA) so that DHA can redevelop its aging housing communities and ensure the success of its voucher program—which together support the housing of 12,000 or our most vulnerable; (3) use publicly owned land downtown to

leverage affordable housing; (4) develop an effective strategy for inducing developers to contribute to our affordable housing; (5) help low-income homeowners affected by gentrification stay in their homes by providing effective financial support; (6) help fund the work of Habitat, DCLT, CASA and other non-profits; (7) help redevelop DHA's downtown communities as mixed-income so that they are still home to the current DHA residents but no longer force those residents to live in isolated poverty.

Here is some of my work:

I have helped bring the Housing Authority and the council into close cooperation on financing the redevelopment of the Authority's aging housing communities, funding the housing voucher program, and funding the \$4 million repurchase of the 19-acre Fayette Place site.

This year, I advocated for doubling the "penny for housing" to two pennies—now producing \$5.5 million annually. I have fought to fund Rapid Rehousing to quickly rehouse homeless families, to fund Habitat second mortgages and land purchases, and to adopt the Pro-Active Rental Inspection Program which has brought hundreds of properties into housing code compliance.

I have forcefully advocated for the use of City land downtown for affordable housing—especially the site adjacent to Durham Station.

I annually lead a team in the Homeless Point-In-Time Count to search out, count, and offer assistance to homeless residents of Durham.

I brought together leaders of Durham Public Schools, the State Employees Credit Union, and CASA to develop 24 units of below-market price rental housing for new teachers. This project is nearing the final stages of planning and financing. I work closely with our local housing non-profits to help them move their agendas forward and strengthen their capacity.

2. What can the city do to lift the wages of the lowest paid workers in Durham and reduce growing income inequality in our community? Where in our community do you see opportunities for city government to address the racial wealth gap? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

There are few areas where the regressive policies of our state's General Assembly matter more than the area of wages. The General Assembly has refused to raise the state's minimum wage above the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour, outlawed local minimum wages above the state minimum, and even prohibited localities from requiring contractors to pay a living wage.

Given these major constraints, here is what we in Durham can do to help raise wages;

- (1) The City Council is working to make City government, with its 2,400 employees, a model employer. By July 1, 2018, all City employees will be paid a minimum of \$15 per hour. In addition, the City now offers 12 weeks of paid parental leave as well as a superb health insurance plan to its employees. The City should set an example for other employers by certifying with the Living Wage Project as a living wage employer.
- (2) As Mayor, I will work with unions, Fight For Fifteen, and community groups to persuade Duke University to raise its minimum wage to \$15 per hour. As the state's largest private employer, Duke's wages set the scale for the entire region.
- (3) We can support the Living Wage Project by encouraging Durham businesses to certify with the Project as living wage businesses, thus putting upward pressure on wages in the city.

Beyond raising wages, the best way to attack the racial wealth gap is through minority business formation, support and capitalization. Please see Question 5 for my response on this issue.

Finally, we can attack the racial wealth gap through asset building for people of color using a Financial Inclusion Strategy built on some of the work that City staff, local non-profits and the Finance Task Force, which I chair, are doing as part of a 12-city National League of Cities collaborative.

Here is what we can do to help our low-income residents of color build assets: (1) Build on our successes with the matched children's education savings accounts at Y.E. Smith School and with Partners for Youth Opportunity; (2) Ensure that all youth employed in the City's Summer Youthworks program have access to bank accounts, direct deposit and incentives to save; (3) Encourage, or pressure, if necessary, employers to use direct deposit instead of debit cards to pay employees; (4) Promote low-cost transaction and savings products in partnership with local banks; (5) Aggressively recruit people for free tax preparation and EITC application at our neighborhood VITA sites; (6) Provide affordable home finance via low-interest second mortgage loans to low-income households through Habitat; (7) Curb predatory consumer lending through zoning powers; (8) Conduct local awareness campaigns to encourage employees who are not covered by employer retirement accounts to sign up for public options such as the U.S. Treasury's MyRA program.

- 3. Describe your interest in and commitment to public amenities such as playing fields, open space, street trees, traffic calming, and walking and biking facilities. Are you willing to raise property taxes to provide for and**

maintain these amenities? Are public amenities allocated to neighborhoods of different wealth and income levels equitably? Please explain and cite examples. Please limit your answer to 500 words.

As a youth soccer coach for 18 years, and as a runner and cyclist, I am deeply committed to what this question calls “public amenities” which are critical to creating a healthy and happy community—and these public assets must be equitably distributed throughout Durham. Wealthy residents can afford access to clubs or private greenspaces. It is our impoverished neighborhoods which are most in need of healthy infrastructure.

In some areas—trail miles, sidewalk miles, and ball fields—Durham sorely lags behind our neighbors. In addition, some healthy infrastructure is not equitably distributed. The tree canopy, in particular, can be traced through neighborhoods by simply following the old bank redlining maps from the early 1900’s.

Changing these facts is something that I constantly work to drive forward. To advance the funding of parks and trails, I pulled together a breakfast meeting of diverse advocates at my home four years ago. This group campaigned for and won a half-cent on the City’s tax rate to be annually dedicated to improving our parks and trails, and this has greatly enhanced the quality of these important assets.

I am honored that my work in this area was recognized by the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association which presented me with the 2014 statewide “Distinguished Legislator” of the year award.

My priorities now include:

- \$20 million worth of sidewalks and bike lanes prioritized by the council.
- Building greenway trails at a much faster pace in all parts of town.
- 100,000 trees in the next 30 years. We are losing our tree canopy to age and development, and I am helping to lead a public-private effort to set a bold community goal and meet it.

Here is my track record:

- The tree canopy: A group I convened at City Hall is now organized as Durham Tree Advocates. Together, we have successfully advocated for

City funding of tree management, surveys and a master plan, and we also held Durham's first community tree forum last year.

- The Beltline: I have championed the purchase and development of a trail along this two-mile rail line which runs through downtown and the neighborhoods to the north and east. The Beltline will soon be in City hands, and its development as a crown jewel accessible to all residents will begin.
- Athletic fields: Durham has a dearth of athletic fields, especially soccer fields. To change this, I called together a group of coaches and parents to meet at my home, and this group soon became the Durham Soccer Council. Together, our advocacy led directly to the City's recent purchase of 50 acres of land in East Durham that will be the eventual home of new soccer fields.
- Ellerbe Creek West Trail: I pushed hard for several years to get the Ellerbe Creek West Trail extension fully funded, and it is now under construction.
- Public green space: I advocated for the adoption of the City's urban and downtown open space plans to preserve our scarce inner-city greenspace, and I worked to get the developers of the Durham ID District to commit to the preservation of publicly accessible greenspace to be designated as a public park.

4. How should the city measure the benefits and costs of incentives to promote development especially as those benefits and costs affect low-income residents of Durham? How would you use these measurements when deciding to vote for or against a proposed incentive? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

Please see Question 9 below for my explanation of the most important part of this answer: We need to move our tax incentive strategy away from commercial development and towards affordable housing.

There are two kinds of incentives traditionally offered by the City. The first is a small grant to a local business, usually for building renovation in a targeted corridor such as Angier-Driver or Fayetteville St. These grants are usually in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range, but on a rare occasion go higher.

This kind of incentive still has a place in our economic development plans because it spurs redevelopment of struggling commercial corridors and supports local and minority businesses. I apply one additional standard: Will this incentive bring good-paying jobs to the people of the neighborhood, especially people of color?

The second kind of incentives are the larger tax incentives given for downtown redevelopment projects. These once played a critical role in the revival of downtown. Now, however, we have much less need for these incentives since developers are flocking downtown and paying premiums for real estate. Subsequently, the number of tax incentives proposed to the Council by the City administration has slowed to a trickle.

There are still rare conditions under which the City should consider a tax incentive for a commercial project: if the project is going to be truly transformative, or preserve a crucial historic structure, or will have very substantial financial benefit to City taxpayers and residents over the long term.

If a project meets this threshold, other key criteria kick in: The project must truly require the incentive in order to succeed. Also, the incentive must not be paid out until the building is redeveloped and taxes are being paid to the City. In that way, the incentive leads to positive financial results for our taxpayers from Day One. The burn-off period for the incentive should be short and the tax rebate percentage low. The developer must sign agreements both to recruit its workforce from Durham's Career Centers and to utilize women- and minority-owned contractors for a significant percentage of construction. I will only support an incentive that I am convinced (a) will bring construction contracts to minority contractors and good-paying jobs that our own residents, especially people of color, will be able to get and (b) will be substantially positive for our City taxpayers and services both immediately and over the long term.

5. What actions should the city take to expand job creation and job quality? In your answer, please comment on the city's potential involvement in entrepreneurship, worker-owned cooperatives, and union organizing. Please limit your answer to 400 words.

The City's work to expand job creation and job quality should focus on inclusive innovation and support of the small local businesses that drive employment. Because of Durham's historic pride in the businesses of Black Wall Street, Durham has a reputation as a hotbed of black business success. The facts are otherwise. Since the recession, Durham's black business formation has badly lagged other cities in North Carolina. We need to change that by encouraging minority-owned business formation, sustainability and capitalization. Here's how:

- (1) We must leverage our jobs incentives by offering them only to partners who will truly help us meet our ambitious minority contracting goals.
- (2) We must convene local banks to help create a self-regenerating loan fund to capitalize minority businesses and offer them technical assistance in finance, accounting and marketing. The City should consider back-stopping such a loan fund.
- (3) We must expand Durham's lagging supply of minority sub-contractors by working with self-employed individuals in the trades to prepare them for small business ownership, and we must align these sub-contractors with the City's procurement needs.
- (4) We must invest in a coordinated effort at technical assistance for minority businesses by Durham Tech, NCCU and other providers.
- (5) We must bring Duke University and the Research Triangle Park companies into a procurement strategy that targets minority firms and gets these firms prepared to win this corporate business.
- (6) We must ensure that our Office of Economic and Workforce Development is working closely with City contractors to get our minority firms sub-contracts.

If we do all this well, we will be supporting the small minority-owned businesses that can drive inclusive job creation and quality which is what Durham needs most. (See Question 2 regarding wages.)

In addition to this work, I endorse the important role of unions in bargaining for better jobs and wages. This past year, I signed a union card myself for the first time as I joined and publicly endorsed the faculty union organizing at Duke. My department was eventually removed from the bargaining unit, but I was proud to sign the card and support the victory of the union in its quest for better wages and working conditions. Unions are critical to quality jobs that pay well.

Finally, the City should encourage the formation and success of co-ops in Durham, and we should consider a co-op incubator and technical support.

Housing, City Planning, and Neighborhoods

- 6. What does "gentrification" mean to you? What, if anything, should be done about it? How, if at all, is the issue of gentrification implicated in the Planning Department's current review of zoning in East Durham, the proposed creation of an Alston Avenue Design District, and the redevelopment of the former Fayette Place property? Please limit your answer to 400 words.**

Gentrification is one of the most important issues facing Durham now. I like a simple definition of gentrification that I once heard from Mel Norton: “Gentrification is the process by which higher income people capitalize on decades of disinvestment in the inner city by moving into neighborhoods historically occupied by lower income people and displacing them.”

The march of gentrification through Durham’s disinvested neighborhoods is the product of powerful market forces. The influx of young people who want to live near downtown’s jobs and restaurants is the force driving gentrification. They are its agents even as they are concerned about its results. At the same time, investors sensing opportunity are buying, rehabbing and flipping houses, thus displacing the original neighborhood residents.

These market forces are powerful, and we cannot defeat them. But we can positively affect change in the gentrifying neighborhoods if we are strategic, determined to exert the necessary political will, and willing to spend the necessary tax dollars.

An affordable housing strategy is at the heart of this work. Please see Question 1 above for my affordable housing strategy.

The East Durham zoning review, the Alston Ave. design district work, and the future of Fayette Place are all implicated as we think about how to counter the ill effects of gentrification. In each of these cases, the City’s work is paving the way for investment in disinvested neighborhoods. This is a good thing. The neighborhoods and churches around Fayette Place, for example, certainly want and need investment.

But we must make sure it is the right kind of investment. In the case of the East Durham zoning review and the Alston Ave. design district, it is critical that we do not surrender the City’s leverage over developers by “giving away” base zoning. Developers should have to come in and request upzoning, and this can be combined with density bonuses to leverage affordable housing commitments. (See more details on this strategy in Question 9.) These commitments can significantly mitigate the effects of gentrification.

Fayette Place, a 19-acre site near an eventual light-rail station at the head of Fayetteville St., is a key site for redevelopment that will benefit the nearby neighborhoods and will not be gentrifying. I was deeply involved in shepherding the Housing Authority’s re-purchase of Fayette Place and the City’s \$4 million financial support of this purchase. This site will be the subject of an extensive public process centered on the needs of the people in that area. It will certainly include affordable housing, and we must work to make sure

that it also includes business opportunities for people of color that will employ neighborhood residents at good wages. This will take time and significant financial commitment, but Fayette Place should be a model of development that benefits the surrounding community. And it can be.

7. What should the city seek to accomplish through its power to stimulate and regulate growth? What principles and considerations will guide your decisions in zoning cases and other development issues? Illustrate your answer with a recent controversial zoning case. Did the city decide the case correctly? Please limit your answer to 500 words.

As we grow, our planning and zoning regulations and decisions should (1) protect our critical drinking water resources and dwindling open space, (2) provide for sufficient industrial and commercial zones to encourage job creation, (3) discourage sprawl while encouraging density around the eventual transit corridors, (4) protect residential neighborhoods from commercial encroachment, (5) accommodate housing at a variety of price points for the onslaught of new residents, (6) ensure orderly transition from residential neighborhoods to commercial and industrial uses, (7) interlock with our transportation plans to encourage walkable, bike-able neighborhoods and mass transit, (8) incentivize mixed use, mixed income development around transit stations, (9) create form-based compact design districts which require that developers pay attention to how property relates to the public realm, (10) ensure that each design district has its own unique set of characteristics that meets the area's particular needs, (11) protect significant historic and cultural sites, (12) give developers, residents and everyone reliable expectations about the dependability of the Future Land Use Map, (13) incentivize the creation and preservation of affordable housing, (14) be nimble enough to accommodate necessary changes such as tiny houses on non-conforming lots, (15) require adequate infrastructure before a rezoning, and, (16) in general, provide for the orderly, sustainable growth of our community.

These principles are best served by a transparent, participatory zoning process, and I am proud of Durham's current process. Evidence of our success is the enormous numbers of Durham residents who often get involved in zoning cases and follow them all the way through to the City Council. We have excellent notification practices, generally good guidance for inquiring residents by our Planning staff, and robust public hearings.

We need to encourage resident-initiated zoning actions in addition to the many developer-initiated applications we receive. And we need to make sure that developers are actively reaching out to work with nearby communities when they seek a rezoning.

Those are the principles that guide me when I make zoning decisions, and different principles have more or less salience in each case. I opposed a dense residential development on Berini Drive even though Durham is badly in need of more housing because of concerns I had about the development's effect on the Eno River headwaters. Despite their implications for sprawl, I have voted for developments near Brier Creek because of our significant need for moderately priced housing for seniors. Often, then, our important goals are in conflict in zoning cases, and I try to make the wisest decision I can.

In addition to zoning, we approve other planning regulations which affect Durham's quality of life. I make these decisions with the values above in mind. So our development ordinances should encourage the preservation of our tree canopy, adequately buffer our streams and reservoirs, require developer compliance with bike, trail and transit plans, effectively regulate stormwater runoff, encourage green building and infrastructure, value preservation of significant historic sites, require significant tree-save on new developments, and require appropriate buffering when new developments are built.

8. Does the city adequately fund its affordable housing plan? If no, what funding are you willing to fight for in the next budget for affordable homes for lower income Durham renters, homebuyers and homeowners? Where will the money come from? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

When I first ran for City Council in 2011, I campaigned on the issue of funding affordable housing--specifically the adoption of the "penny for housing"—and the council adopted the penny in 2012. Since then, I have been advocating for more spending on affordable housing, and now we have doubled our dedicated housing fund to "two pennies" in our current budget.

What this means in practice is that the owner of a \$200,000 house is paying \$40 per year to help build a home for someone else. This produces \$5.5 million in local spending this year.

In addition to this local funding, we have approximately an equal amount of federal funding for housing. This means the City is spending about \$11 million total for affordable housing this year. Our housing money goes to build dozens of rental units in the Lofts at Southside subsidized for people living at less than 50% of the Area Median Income. It goes to help the Housing Authority redevelop its aging housing communities. It goes to support Habitat homeowners. It goes to Housing for New Hope for its Rapid Rehousing program which rehoused 184 families last year. It goes to provide gap financing for Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects. It goes to CASA to support affordable

housing for disabled veterans and to the Durham Community Land Trustees to support renovation of affordable rental properties.

And our local funding leverages so much more. For example, \$1 million in local funding is leveraging the private financing of two Housing Authority properties, Morreene Rd. and Damar Court, with a total of 326 units and a total cost of \$42 million.

Including the Housing Authority's budget of more than \$30 million, plus the private capital we are leveraging for construction, affordable housing spending in Durham from all sources in the next year should top \$85 million.

For this year, the "two pennies" for housing (\$5.5 million) is an appropriate local commitment. But in future years, we will need more. We need to have a strong Low-Income Housing Tax Credit pipeline to compete for these funds. We need to incentivize developers to subsidize affordable housing (see Question 9). And we will need to add more "pennies" to our local property tax funding in the near future if we are going to meet the aggressive affordable housing goals we have set for Durham.

9. Under what circumstances would you vote to approve a rezoning that does not include commitments to meet the city's affordable housing goal? If you answered yes, how would you ensure that the city meet its goal? Please illustrate your answer with a recent case. Please limit your answer to 500 words.

The City has set a goal of having at least 15% of housing in the transit station areas affordable. Because North Carolina law prohibits inclusionary zoning, we are not allowed to require the inclusion of affordable units when a developer comes to the council for a rezoning.

So we have not had a "stick" to require affordable units, and we haven't had much of a "carrot" either. That is, the tools that the City has had to incentivize developers to include affordable units have been minimal and ineffective. The main benefit we have offered developers has been a density bonus for including affordable units. The bonus has been on the books for more than a decade, and not a single developer has taken advantage of it.

I and other affordable housing advocates have struggled without success to come up with a strategy that would effectively incentivize affordable units in the transit station areas. Now, however, I have a strategy to propose that I believe can succeed. It has three elements:

First, as we approve the upcoming zonings for the compact neighborhoods around transit stations, we should leave the base zoning in place rather than upzoning.

Second, we should adopt an aggressive density bonus. In order to get the added density and the form-based zoning they want, developers will need to include affordable units. This idea is not new, and without an additional incentive it won't work in the current environment. Rents simply aren't high enough to cover the subsidy for the affordable units and the cost for the structured parking that will come with the added density. Instead of taking the density bonus and including affordable units, developers are much more likely to build four-story stick-built apartments like they are building now all over town without the density we want at a transit station and without any affordable units. So let's add a third element to the plan:

Third, we should start giving tax incentives to developers who will take the density bonus and build affordable units when they develop in the transit areas. Tax incentives to commercial developers worked to help kickstart the redevelopment of downtown. We should now use this tool instead to incentivize affordable housing. This would essentially be project-based Tax Increment Financing (TIF). We would partially rebate the developer's taxes over the first few years of the project in exchange for the affordable units.

There would need to be a lot of staff work done to get this right. This would need to be a tiered program which would tie the amount of the tax incentive to the number of affordable units required and the level of affordability.

This kind of strategy could be applied to rezoning cases like Wood Partners or Witherspoon Rose—and would at last give us a strategy that might truly incentivize developers to build affordable units. With this strategy in place, I would not support any developer wanting a rezoning in the transit station areas without including affordable units.

City Finances, Capital Improvements, Transportation, and City Services

- 10. If the city needs more revenue for a basic public service, do you, in general, favor a new or increased user fee or a property tax increase? Residential trash pickup is an example of a basic service. Please limit your answer to 250 words.**

In general, I support public funding of City programs and services through property taxes with the exception of those services where a fee would serve an important progressive public purpose. The council has twice voted on a solid waste fee since I have been a member, and both times I have voted and argued against the fee which is clearly regressive since it disproportionately hurts low-income people. We need to continue funding trash pickup through our taxes which are not nearly as regressive as the proposed fee.

On the other hand, City water fees are progressive, and I support them. These fees fall hardest on the largest water users, who tend to be wealthier. The per-gallon fees charged to users rise as usage rises. These fees also successfully encourage water conservation, which we badly need.

11. Do you support or oppose Durham's plans for rail-based transit? If federal funding for the project is denied, what must Durham do about transportation, urban planning, housing, taxes, and infrastructure? Please limit your answer to 500 words.

Yes, I unequivocally support Durham's plans for rail-based transit. Durham needs a mobility strategy for the next 50 years, and rail transit is a critical part of any such strategy. In 30 years, Durham will nearly double in population. If we do not have a strong public transit network by that time, anchored on rail lines, Durham's commuters will be standing stock-still on every highway and byway in the Triangle on the way to work. Highway 15-501 and I-40 will exist in permanent gridlock, and our air quality will be deadly.

As chair of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Chatham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the legally mandated transportation planning body for our region, I am proud to have helped lead support for the 18-mile Durham-Orange light rail project. Durham and Orange Counties voted in referenda to tax ourselves to pay for the light rail, and after a years-long planning process, we are waiting to hear if we are approved for \$1.2 billion in federal funding. The total cost of the line will be \$3.3 billion including state and local funding. That is a huge expense spread over 50 years, but let's put that expense in perspective: Building one new lane each way on I-40 alone would cost more than \$1 billion, and it will fill up as soon as it's built. When we consider road spending that the rail lines will make unnecessary, the rail spending is a bargain.

In addition to the light rail line to Chapel Hill, we now finally have a willing rail partner in Wake County. We need to begin serious planning now with Wake to build the commuter rail on existing tracks from Raleigh to downtown Durham. Our current tax levy will fund a significant part of

Durham's share of the rail line. These projects take years to plan, finance and build—so we need to start this work now.

If federal funding for this project is denied, here should be our next option: Our committed local funding, along with much more funding by a larger Wake County, should be enough to build the commuter line from Durham to Raleigh. We would build the commuter line first and wait on a change in Washington for the light rail funding.

Our second option would be bus rapid transit—but a dedicated corridor for buses is almost as expensive as a rail line and not nearly as efficient.

Barring those options, our region would be plunged into a decades-long traffic quagmire. New technologies like self-driving cars might save us some future pain, but we will still have to get to work, to entertainment, to visit friends. We need rail transit to maintain our quality of life over the next five decades and beyond.

12. Has the city's investment in bus transportation reached the population which needs it most? What else can be done to improve bus transportation access and affordability? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

Durham's bus system, GoDurham, provides a critically important service to thousands of residents. Daily boardings top 20,000, and the people who ride the bus in Durham tend to be those who are elderly, cannot afford to own a car, or have a disability. So operating an efficient, affordable bus system with a dense network of routes throughout the city is of great significance to our most vulnerable population.

I started my advocacy to improve Durham's bus system in the early 1980's. At that time, Duke Power Company owned the bus system as a vestige of its streetcar lines and had let the system decay. We in People's Alliance began advocating for public ownership of the system. Eventually, under pressure, Duke Power donated the bus system to the City along with operating funds for several years.

From my very first days on the council, I have fought to keep bus fares very low in Durham, and we have done so. A single ride costs \$1, and children under 12 and senior citizens ride free. Because of these fares, student discounts, inexpensive monthly passes, and the fare-free Bull City Connector, the average effective fare is less than 40 cents per ride.

We keep fares so low with federal funding and the help of Durham's taxpayers. For example, the owner of a \$200,000 house in Durham pays about \$60 in property taxes annually to support the bus system.

We are constantly improving the system. We have recently added routes, improved on-time performance, and reduced headways on heavily traveled routes from 30 minutes to 15 minutes. In addition to Durham Station, we have established a convenient second bus hub in East Durham.

And we need to do more. We need to:

- (1) Work with downtown employers to provide free bus passes as an employee benefit and to reduce the need for parking downtown.
- (2) Build bus shelters at a faster pace. We have 1,100 bus stops, but we have shelters at fewer than 20 percent of those stops.
- (3) Engage Duke University in funding our bus system which provides tremendous public benefit to the university and can save Duke millions of dollars in parking.

Finally, we need to begin planning for how to make our bus system fare-free. This would attract thousands of new daily riders, but it would be very expensive and so it must be carefully planned and phased in. We should also determine if riders would prefer a fare-free system or one with a denser network of routes on which buses run much more frequently. Riders' voices will need to be central to this process.

13. Would you support a property tax relief program, for example, a circuit breaker, to reduce the tax burden on homeowners with limited resources and help them stay in their homes? If your answer is yes, please describe the program or programs you would support. If your answer is no, please explain. Please limit your answer to 400 words.

Yes, I do support a program of tax relief to reduce the burden on low-income homeowners to help them stay in their homes. I have been advocating for this during the past year and trying to find the best way forward. On our City Council agenda next week is a City staff proposal, crafted over many months, to provide property tax relief to low-income homeowners in three neighborhoods who are experiencing at least a 10% increase in property taxes stimulated by the City's revitalization investments. In order to qualify, these homeowners must also be "housing burdened," paying more than 30% of their income for housing. Their relief would come in the form of zero-interest loans

for a period of four years to cover the cost of the tax increase, these loans to be paid back by the homeowners upon the sale of their homes.

This proposal is another “Durham workaround” a problem that should be solved at the state level. The state’s Elderly/Disabled Homestead Exemption provides significant property tax relief to low-income seniors or people with a disability. Ideally, this state mitigation program would simply be extended to all low-income homeowners. Instead, Durham is trying to find our own local progressive solution.

As we deliberate next week, I will be considering two courses of action. The first will be to vote to support the staff’s proposal with a view towards improving it next year. The second will be to simply give grants to the identified homeowners in the target area for next year while we work on setting up the best possible loan program for future years.

The staff’s proposal is a huge step forward, but it can be improved significantly. The City staff can work with community members to craft a program that is more equitable in the groups that it targets, more efficient in terms of administrative costs, and more effective in terms of meeting our chief goal of providing affordable housing to very low-income households.

This is just the kind of problem that shows why governing is harder than progressive slogans. Social policy involving public expenditures to help one low-income sub-group is hard to get right. In the case of the policy in front of us now, we’ve got a sub-group that is fairly arbitrarily identified. We have significant loan-closing costs for very small loans, so the efficiency of the program is very low. We are leaving out people who are not defined as “housing burdened” but whose home ownership is still threatened by rising property taxes. We don’t have a good handle on the long-term costs. I am strongly in favor of property tax relief for low-income homeowners, and I will be voting for that relief next week either in the form of loans or in one year of grants. Either way, we need to spend time in the next year getting this program right.

Policing and Public Safety

- 14. Is there a trust problem between the people of Durham and the police department? Are you satisfied with the department’s responses to issues of use of force, racial profiling, deployment of personnel, searches, and communication with the public? Please limit your answer to 400 words.**

Yes, there is a trust problem between the people of Durham and the police department, and it is critically important that this trust be restored. There is

widespread belief in the community, supported by data, that many officers in the Durham Police Department (DPD) engage in racial profiling, especially when it comes to stops and searches and use of force. Please see my answer below in Question 17 for a fuller discussion of racial profiling and specific ways to combat it.

In addition to the remedies I cite below in Question 17, I support the significant trust-building reforms instituted by new Chief C.J. Davis. These include (1) the appointment of liaison officers to the Northeast Central Durham community, the LGBTQ+ community, and the Hispanic community—all of whom have been very well received; (2) racial equity training (see Question 17); (3) the expectation that drug possession and other small offenses by people under 21 will be referred to Durham’s Misdemeanor Diversion Court rather than criminalized; (4) the Chief’s decision to cease traffic checkpoints which have created significant problems for Durham’s immigrant population; (5) the Chief’s work with SONG to make sure that transgender youth are treated with respect by the DPD; (6) the patient, non-confrontational way in which the DPD now deals with public demonstrations.

Another important potential trust-building reform is the City’s deployment of body cameras which was supported in our recent resident survey by 94% of respondents. While the legislature has undermined the privacy and transparency features of our own local body camera ordinance, I believe that body cameras will improve behavior on both sides of the camera if—and only if—cameras are turned on at all appropriate times, without exception, and residents interacting with police know that the cameras are on.

In addition, our police department needs to adopt the best national practices for genuine community policing. I want a department where such policing is the routine, not the exception, where police are known and trusted in the communities they serve.

Finally, I want to emphasize that this trust problem is a two-way problem. That is, as our very recent survey of the police department shows, officers overwhelmingly feel that they do not have the support of the City Council and City management. If we are to successfully reform the culture of our police department to win the trust of the community, the council must simultaneously work to win the trust of police officers. No policing reforms we mandate will take hold in the field without the rank-and-file police officers feeling that they are valued for their dangerous and difficult work. We must

hire the best officers, pay and train them well, hold them accountable to very high standards of behavior, and let them know that we value their work.

- 15. To what degree, if any, should the city cooperate with U.S. Department of Immigration & Customs Enforcement? Should the city become a sanctuary city? If your answer is yes, for whom should the city provide sanctuary and by what means should sanctuary be provided? If your answer is no, please explain your reasons. In either case, please be specific. Please limit your answer to 400 words.**

It is important to tell the truth: We can't prevent ICE's active presence in Durham. Therefore to declare Durham a sanctuary city would be a false promise of safety that we cannot truly deliver to our undocumented neighbors. Latino leaders in Durham CAN and El Centro Hispano have not been pushing to declare Durham a sanctuary city for that reason and for one other: The declaration of sanctuary is guaranteed to win the additional unwanted and punitive attention of ICE, the North Carolina General Assembly, and now the Trump administration.

It would be rhetorically satisfying to declare Durham a sanctuary city, but on the ground it would be damaging to our neighbors and friends.

Having said this, Durham is and should proclaim itself to be a welcoming city to all people, regardless of immigration or refugee status, and we can do everything within our limited power to protect our neighbors.

This includes continuing the current position of our police department that it will not do the enforcement work of ICE. It includes Chief Davis' decision to cease traffic checkpoints that were ensnaring immigrants in significant difficulty. And it includes the City's endorsement and police recognition of the Faith ID provided by El Centro Hispano to undocumented immigrants who are not able to get a driver's license.

We should also be rewarding with U Visa certification undocumented immigrants who assist our police in solving crimes. Without the expectation of this certification by the police department, undocumented people will be scared to come forth to report even very serious crimes. For the safety of the Durham community, we must make good use of U Visa certification.

During my first years on council, I convened meetings between Latino advocates and top City officials to talk about more liberal certification of the U Visa. As mayor, I will re-convene these meetings to make sure that undocumented immigrants who come forward to report crimes are appropriately granted U Visa certification.

On council, I have been proud to stand with our undocumented neighbors. I have introduced council resolutions welcoming unaccompanied minors fleeing violence in their own countries and offering City support to El Centro Hispano for the issuance of the Faith ID. I have signed on in support of local churches offering sanctuary to undocumented people. I have marched often in support of “Dreamers” and local youth facing deportation. I will continue to do so.

16. Should the city allocate more, less, or about the same money to policing? Please explain your answer. If your answer is less, would you allocate more money to other services to improve public safety? Again, please explain. Please limit your answer to 400 words.

Durham needs strong council oversight of our police force to ensure that everyone lives free from fear. I strongly support Chief C.J. Davis’ reforms and her emphasis on community outreach, racial equity and de-escalation. I support her efforts to battle violent crime as well: Every two days someone is shot in Durham, mostly resulting in terrible wounds and sometimes in death. Plus, there are robberies at gunpoint nearly every day. Communities that experience this violence want fast, effective police response. I will continue to work towards a police force that effectively fights violent crime while actively seeking to build the trust of our entire community and enforcing the laws free from racial discrimination.

Meeting these dual goals means hiring the best officers, incentivizing them to stay on our police force and live in Durham, and giving them the tools to do their job well. In that light, I think that the budget for the next fiscal year unanimously passed by the City Council spends an appropriate amount on policing. This includes expenses for construction of the new police headquarters, body camera deployment, take-home cars as an incentive for officers to live in Durham, bonuses for new officers coming out of our training classes to agree to work in Durham, and expenses for racial equity and procedural justice training.

The budget also includes an essential pay increase to make Durham competitive with nearby localities for the best officers. As I said elsewhere in this questionnaire, we must hire the best officers, pay and train them well, hold them accountable to very high standards of behavior, and let them know that we value their work. Because Durham’s pay has not been competitive, we have not been able to keep enough officers on the street.

At the same time, our budget funds many other things that broadly contribute to public safety, notably job training, economic development efforts, affordable housing, and an enormous and wide-ranging parks and recreation

program. This year, for the first time, we mandated that our outdoor swimming pools and our drop-in rec center programs would be free to all young people. We are also funding free after-school programs for teens at four recreation centers beginning this fall. So at the same time that we need to be adequately funding our police department, we need to be steadily increasing funding for those programs which reduce violence in other ways.

Civil Rights

17. Name one issue in Durham that directly impacts, or is directly impacted by, race inequity and how can the city incorporate a race equity framework in addressing this issue? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

The mayor and members of the City Council need to view *every* issue through a racial equity lens. In fact, anyone who attends even a handful of council meetings will know that racial equity is at the top of the council's agenda.

During the past three years, I have attended racial equity trainings by dRWorks and the Racial Equity Institute (REI) as well as the police department's training on bias-based policing. I have also encouraged our city manager to institute racial equity training. He and his senior managers have now attended REI training themselves, and the City has budgeted to send 150 more staff through REI training.

One issue to which we especially apply a racial equity lens is policing. Durham unquestionably has a history of racial profiling by the police. To take one clear example, the police department commissioned a "veil of darkness" study by RTI which showed that white and black drivers were stopped at approximately equal ratios after sunset; but before sunset, black drivers were more than four times as likely to be stopped.

I will continue to work towards a police force that effectively fights violent crime while enforcing the laws utterly free from racial discrimination.

In order to apply a race equity framework to this issue, the City has taken the following actions:

- (1) Collecting, monitoring and regularly reporting data about traffic stops and searches to the City council for public scrutiny;
- (2) Assertively recruiting African-American and Latino officers to serve on the Durham police force;
- (3) Hiring and promoting minority officers into the top ranks of our police force, including the job of Chief;

- (4) Training every new recruit in racial equity, de-escalation and procedural justice—and training every veteran officer in racial equity as well;
- (5) Requiring officers, by direction of the Chief of Police, to refer most drug and other minor infractions by people under 21 to the Misdemeanor Diversion Court, thus keeping them from getting a criminal record;
- (6) Requiring, by City Council direction, written consent to any consent search. I was a leading advocate of this policy which puts Durham in the national forefront of progressive policies on consent searches. Total searches of cars have fallen by 44% - which means hundreds of people, mostly African-American and Latino, are being spared jail and criminal records for minor violations, such as marijuana possession, that might result from a search.

So we are making progress, but there is so much more to do. African-Americans whose cars are stopped still endure a much higher ratio of searches than whites. Several young black men have died at the hands of Durham police in recent years. In two of the cases, it is clear to me that these men—each depressed and calling out for help—did not have to die. We need more crisis intervention training, and more patience, in these situations so this will never happen again. Black Lives Matter.

18. If the city could adopt an ordinance concerning the civil rights of members of the LGBTQ community, what provisions should that ordinance contain? Please limit your answer to 400 words.

This issue is of paramount importance to me and to our community. When the state legislature seeks to diminish the rights of LGBTQ+ people, we must stand as a united community to vigorously defend those rights. Here is my record:

- During the battle for marriage equality, I and my wife Lao Rubert held a fundraiser at our home in opposition to Amendment One. More than 200 people attended and contributed over \$20,000 to organizations fighting Amendment One.
- I introduced a resolution for the City Council to defend marriage equality by opposing Amendment One.
- Nearly thirty years before marriage equality was affirmed by the Supreme Court, I wrote what I believe was North Carolina's first "wedding announcement" for a same-sex couple and published it prominently in my newspaper, *The Independent*.
- At *The Independent*, we crusaded for LGBTQ rights over three decades beginning in the early years of the AIDS epidemic.

An ordinance guaranteeing the civil rights of LGBTQ+ people would recognize that all citizens, in the words of EqualityNC, are “deserving of equal treatment under the law, access to the same opportunities and subject to the same responsibilities, regardless of their age, race, nationality, immigration status, ability, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or other inherent characteristics.”

Such an ordinance would (1) prohibit employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, (2) prohibit public accommodations from denying service to LGBTQ+ people, (3) guarantee the rights of transgender people to use the restroom of their choice, (4) deny the ability of local magistrates and registers of deeds to refuse to marry LGBTQ+ couples, (5) provide for City endorsement of a local ID card, much like the local Faith ID for undocumented immigrants, that would be available to transgender residents and would allow them to update any changes in their name and gender.

Most of these potential ordinance provisions are against the law in North Carolina. It is necessary that we change the membership of our legislature before we can guarantee these rights.

Finally, in Durham, we must defend and embrace the liberation of our LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors that goes far beyond the essential but narrow guarantees of rights. We must nourish the strength of LGBTQ+ institutions and support a flourishing LGBTQ+ culture. We must make it breathtakingly clear to the people of Durham, to North Carolina and to the world that in Durham, all love is beautiful. In Durham, LOVE WINS.

Personal and Political

19. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence other than a minor traffic offense? If your answer to this question is yes, please describe the charge or charges, the circumstances, and the outcome. Please limit your answer to 250 words.

I have never been charged with a felony. I have twice been charged with misdemeanors as a result of civil disobedience. The first time was in the 1970s when I was charged with misdemeanor trespassing in an anti-nuclear demonstration, and I was convicted and served eight days in the Wake County Jail. The second time was during the Moral Monday demonstrations of 2013 during which I was arrested for charges related to failing to depart the General Assembly building when asked. I chose to do community service hours in exchange for the charges being dropped.

20. For whom did you vote in the 2012 and 2016 presidential and gubernatorial elections? For whom did you vote in the 2014 U. S. Senate election? *Please limit your answer to 100 words.*

President:

Barack Obama in 2012

Hillary Clinton in 2016

Governor:

Walter Dalton in 2012

Roy Cooper in 2016

Senate:

Kay Hagan in 2014

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