

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.

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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.*

Of all the issues confronting city government, the single most important issue to me is poverty. The reason is simple. At a time when parts of the city are experiencing great prosperity, others are being left behind. Durham has won national acclaim for our growth, economic development, business, and universities -- but 17.9% of our people live in poverty. That is higher than the state average, and it is unacceptable. Further, nearly a quarter of all census tracts in Durham County are designated as high-poverty. Some have child poverty rates above 63%. We must give children and families a chance to secure a job, earn a living wage, obtain a quality education, and excel in school. Access to housing, a safe community, food, and good health

care is paramount. It is time to get serious about tackling poverty and bringing opportunity to all people.

When Mayor Bell was asked what he would do differently as Mayor, he said, "In spite of the resources in this community... we still have the challenge of too much poverty. If I could wave a magic wand, then poverty probably is the first thing I would reduce."

Given the opportunity to wave the magic wand, I will:

- 1. Make poverty a priority This must include collaboration and programs beyond the current Poverty Initiative.*
- 2. Turn the current Task Force on Poverty into a Commission equipped with the resources and stakeholders it needs to succeed.*
- 3. Work with state and federal officials on legislation to improve educational opportunities from early childhood through college, providing a foundation capable of preparing our youth for success.*
- 4. Deconcentrate poverty by providing increased incentives and opportunities for mixed income housing, affordable homes, rental property, and home-ownership.*
- 5. Prioritize jobs and training opportunities in preparation of new employers and jobs.*
- 6. Expand entrepreneurship, including setting goals for increased Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) participation in city contracts, and supporting programs that build local capacity to meet those goals.*

I will call on every citizen -- tapping the experience, talent, and expertise of our business, civic, and community leaders, churches, nonprofit organizations, and universities -- to develop a plan that removes barriers to opportunity and fosters equity. Our strategy must be ambitious, attainable, and designed for the long term -- it is time Durham puts economic inclusion at the center.

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.

First, I commend the city's action to pass a livable wage ordinance -- lifting the wages of the lowest paid City employees from \$7.25 to \$15.00 by 2018. Importantly, the city also made the ordinance applicable to employees of contractors and subcontractors.

But this is only one step toward reducing income inequality. It provides an example and a basic framework for what the city can do to meet the needs of the community, but we must not stop here. It also serves as a model—a standard to be replicated in the business community throughout Durham. The next steps will be to include part time employees, and to enlist the business community throughout Durham through incentives and programs, to further increase wages and economic mobility.

The areas where I see opportunities for the city to address the racial wealth gap are primarily in communities where poverty and the associated obstacles to wealth are greatest. To minimize obstacles sustainably, I believe we should prioritize areas with the highest need. For example, census tracts in predominantly black and latino neighborhoods in East Durham that include Cleveland-Holloway, Edgemont, Golden Belt, North Durham, and others. Further, I believe we

must increase the availability of affordable housing in the entire Durham community not just in the thriving downtown district. And I will work to incentivize the creation of new mixed-use developments at proposed light rail stations. Each of these presents prime opportunities for greater socioeconomic integration, diversity and quality of life -- and I will pursue each vigorously.

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.*

Yes and as a founding member of the Durham Parks and Recreation Foundation, I believe investment in public amenities is essential—not only do such investments beautify the city and unite the community, but they provide the infrastructure necessary to sustainably improve residents' quality of life and inspire future growth. I believe the recent proposal and passage of the ½ cent tax was an excellent step forward, and will appreciably improve recreational spaces and outdoor facilities.

I believe two further considerations must be made. First, it is critical that the city creates strong plans that define the use of taxpayer's funds. Second, I believe that engaging the community when making these investment decisions is of critical importance. I am willing to propose additional property taxes to provide for and maintain public amenities such as playing fields, open space, street trees, traffic calming and walking and biking facilities, but these investments must be distributed equitably throughout the city.

There is no question that there has been a greater focus on the downtown community over the past years. This focus has certainly stimulated growth and additional economic development.

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.*

First, at a basic level, the city and county must improve their partnership when they jointly attempt to measure the benefits and costs of any incentive programs designed to promote development. That is step one.

More substantively, when conducting those calculations, I believe the city must consider the benefits and costs incurred by low-income residents with greater weight. Specifically, I believe the city should do five things.

First, in general, listen to the voices of the citizens through town halls, community gatherings, and inclusion of low-income residents on advisory boards on economic issues to solicit honest feedback. Second, determine whether the project is worthy of the public investment at all. Third, determine whether the project is racially and economically inclusive -- in its sourcing, leadership,

labor, and impact. Fourth, determine what benefits (strengths/weaknesses) the project will create for the city and community (reducing inequality, improving affordable housing, improving services, etc) and whether those benefits align with the publically-affirmed goals of the City and County's planning documents. Fifth, leave no stone unturned when determining what other types of incentives/subsidies or public-private opportunities may be available to support the development of the project to maximize impact.

For commercial downtown development, I would use the following measurements

- 1) Reviewing the data to determine the affordability and feasibility of the project.
- 2) Determine if the incentive is a responsible use of public funding
- 3) Does the project warrant an incentive, is there a suitable return back to the City/County
- 4) Verify that the incentive is consistent with City/County policies and enforce clawback provisions.
- 5) Confirm and measure the number of jobs, training eligible
6. Measure the Tax revenue generated

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.

First of all I want to acknowledge the tremendous leadership of Mayor Bell and the Council over the years, including when I served on the Council. Having the will, vision, innovative spirit and committed partnership of the business the birth of a new era of urban technology and entrepreneurship now is a mecca that has contributed to the overall buzz in the downtown community.

Durham is definitely an enterprising City with the proven leadership and innovation that has resulted in a City that is in demand. Durham's innovation centers have created a non-traditional environment where free enterprise realizes entrepreneurs, jobs and prosperity that contribute back to the community.

I believe the model where Innovative Labs, the Underground, needs to continue to expand so that more start-ups can be the catalyst for job creation and local citizens are employed. Working together with businesses, organizations, we are able to bolster expansion of building networks of success.

Minority Development --The Institute. *From my perspective, the Institute has also been an instrumental partner growing entrepreneurial efforts, driving diversity and ensuring economic success accounting for over 3000 jobs.*

Work Cooperatives

Another model of innovation is a concept successful in putting workers needs in front of profits and an effective tool for creating and maintaining sustainable, dignified jobs; generating wealth; improving the quality of life of workers; and promoting community and local economic development, particularly for people who lack access to business ownership or even sustainable work options.

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.*

To me, as an African American male, raised in the Durham community, while I was not aware of what gentrification meant growing up—I was fortunate to live in a diverse community with two parents that worked hard to own a home and raise a family.

As an adult, I have witnessed gentrification first hand. Our organization, The Institute, bought the Historic Black Wall Street property in an effort to preserve a historic part of the African American community. As I became more engaged in the community, serving on City Council, Chairman of the Durham Chamber; I was in the midst of the excitement of all the development in downtown. While at the same time, seeing a gradual wave of movement and displacement of minority businesses and low-income individuals move from the core of their neighborhoods that had been neglected. Today the land has increased in value and people who were not connected to the community are buying property in these communities. The “locals” who have leased / rented for years, have been displaced by people who do not look like them. I believe gentrification in Durham, in some cases, is an unintended consequence of rapid growth.

I believe we should require a thorough engagement of the residents in the communities affected to participate in the design of the community and the creation of the new infrastructure. In my campaign and in my life, I talk and want to truly realize “ONE DURHAM” ...a community that embraces diversity and the integrity and character of its residents, which offers a quality of life and respects different cultures

In the case of Alston Avenue and Fayette Place, both were historically and primarily African Americans with a mix of housing, duplexes and multiple family residences. While the planning department has said the redeveloped site must include affordable housing and can include market-rate housing or nonresidential uses, like office or retail space—these new opportunities should be enhancements that are offered to the existing residents and neighborhood. The pending light rail transit station planned for Alston Avenue, several blocks from the district, offers an opportunity to refocus on more pedestrian friendly amenities as well as transit oriented development to include affordable housing.

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.*

In order to achieve our One Durham vision, the city must use its zoning and other regulatory powers to achieve orderly development that (1) creates jobs and opportunities for Durham residents; (2) mitigates the displacement of low-income residents; and (3) maintains the character of the city that makes it an attractive place to live and raise a family.

These goals are not always easy to achieve, and there is sometimes tension between them, but a clear-eyed approach to zoning issues should take all of these factors into consideration and reaches an equitable result is possible.

Private sector investment in Durham—coming from both within and from outside our community—has bolstered our city’s prospects in recent years. But we have to ensure that all residents are benefiting from that growth. Not in a “trickle down” fashion, but in a concrete and lasting way. Therefore, I would encourage we use all zoning and regulatory powers available to foster growth and development that increases prosperity for all residents—not just a few—and furthers our goal of One Durham.

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.*

The City is fiscally responsible and funds all programs including the housing plan within a constrained budget. I am willing to support a transparent, fiscally responsible- accountable government. I am supportive of affordable housing and policies to support such efforts and will advocate for these vital programs and funds. The increase in the tax rate to support affordable housing equates to over \$5 million and with federal support \$8 million. This is not enough and can easily be exhausted with one affordable housing project. Yet, we must recognize the commitment of the city to invest in seriously addressing the issue.

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 may approve a rezoning if the project is commercial and industrial related and housing is not a component of the decision. For example, a company from Silicon Valley may want to relocate the company to Durham because Durham is an innovation hub and the site is not zoned appropriately. The company will use a local construction company to build the facility, commits to hiring 50% local workers during construction at above the living wage and provide funding for on-going workforce readiness programming for underutilized/diverse communities.

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.*

If the city needs more revenue for a basic public service, I would not encourage a new or increased user fee. Depending on the public service coupled with the budgetary capacity and citizen support, I would consider a property tax increase.

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 support the City of Durham's plans for rail-based transit. If federal funding is denied, it will be important that Durham regroup and work with the regional partners to address transportation. Additionally, if funding is denied or approved, Durham should continue the strategic planning process to address urban planning, taxes, and infrastructure.

Note, On July 28, 2017 as I was preparing my response to this question, I learned that Go Triangle received great news from FTA indicating approval of the Durham-Orange Light Rail project into the engineering phase. I applaud this action by the FTA who has maintained their role as an active partner in authorizing this project forward.

Go Triangle has taken considerable steps in developing a plan to acquire additional funding - 40% through regional partnerships and will be working in the near term to submit the request for the required 10% funding from the state.

Go Triangle was also recently awarded a Transportation Oriented Development Planning Grant from FTA that has a significant affordable housing component as part of the scope of work.

In regards, to additional transportation planning, the respective leadership of the City and Counties and their transportation and planning departments as well as the MPOs are working with Go Triangle to evaluate a number of Joint Development Projects at the transit stations. Go Triangle has also included a line item in the D-O-LRT project with the intent to build as the rail line is constructed. All proposed projects will have an extensive public engagement process.

I believe the need for transit improvements like the light rail will service the community well. The addition of the station at NCCU in a predominantly minority community was also a welcome change to the alignment and will spur property values, encourage development and be a valuable link to take residents in the community to jobs, shopping and medical appointments.

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.*

The City has an innovative vision for meeting the mobility needs of the Durham citizens. I believe Go Durham has been successful in serving the needs of the citizens. The paratransit system is a service that is very meaningful to our community, serving citizens over 62 to ride for free. As with any transit system you find across the country, there is a need to find a way to do more with less and I believe the City has been successful

Due to change in federal policies, the City has an additional burden to replace buses. Yet, the addition of the Transit Center has been a tremendous asset to the entire city in serving as a true connecting point.

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.*

I would be open to listening to any proposal that would provide relief that would allow homeowners with limited resources stay in their homes. However, I would not be supportive of placing the added tax burden on Durham residents by taxing them. I believe there are organizations and partnerships which currently offer financial education and opportunities that assist low income families with mortgages and home improvements. I would be in favor of bringing opportunities to the table that foster energy efficiencies to reduce cost of utilities. I would also be supportive of advancing greater outreach of programs for low income families in situations where they are facing foreclosure and programs that would offer residents gentrified to have priority options to housing in the community where displacement is anticipated.

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.*

Durham continues to experience a lack of trust between the community and the police. This is not for lack of trying to improve that relationship. Under the admirable leadership of Chief Davis, issues of racial disparity in policing are being addressed in a more systemic and sustained way than ever before.

However, mistrust between the police and the community is one of the most deeply rooted problems in this country, and Durham is no exception. There is a long and sordid history of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies being used as tools to oppress communities of color. This is of course unsurprising given the legacy of white supremacy in America.

Although we have certainly made strides in moving away from that brutal past, we have not done enough. For instance, there is no doubt that implicit racial bias continues despite various policing reforms and is one of the most difficult pathologies to root out.

However, with better training for police and stricter hiring standards, we can achieve the quality of policing that we need and deserve. Moreover, I support the decision of the City Council to purchase body cameras. Although there is no silver bullet for our police issues, studies have shown that excessive force and racial profiling have decreased in other parts of the country after implementation of body cameras. I also strongly support efforts to ensure that privacy concerns are addressed when the cameras are employed.

Finally, we cannot lose track of one important truth: better relations between the police and the community will lead to a decrease in crime. If police know the community, and the community knows and trusts them, residents are more likely to help police prevent serious crime in the first place and to provide vital information that allows police to apprehend violent criminals.

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.*

The City should not become a tool of the U.S. Department of Immigration & Customs Enforcement. They have their job, we have ours. The fundamental job of the City is to protect its residents. If our community members who are undocumented live in the shadows and are scared of the Durham Police Department simply because of those residents' immigration status—and not because of any crime they have committed—it hurts us all. If residents are unwilling to speak to the police and other city officials, they can and will be taken advantage of and violent crime will flourish. That's not the kind of city we want to live in, it is inhumane, and it makes all of us less safe.

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.*

We have so many needs in Durham, including efforts to reduce poverty and increase affordable housing and job opportunities in struggling areas of the city. Based on the current budget increase for policing to get to market pay, I would advocate maintaining the police. I would make training a top priority, with a particular focus on three areas: (1) racial bias and police-community relations; (2) de-escalation techniques; and (3) interactions with mentally ill residents.

These three areas lay at the root of distrust between the community and the police, and by better addressing them through intensive training, we can build trust between city residents and law enforcement. This, in turn, will allow police to do the important work of preventing violent crime and apprehending suspects quickly and without unnecessary harm to the community.

We should also keep money in the budget for body cameras. As discussed above, although these tools will not solve all of our policing problems, they play a very important role in increasing police accountability and building trust.

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.*

I discuss some of the issues with police-community relations above, but it bears stressing that the inequitable results of racially biased policing severely limit the ability of African American and Hispanic residents to share in the growing prosperity of Durham. This is a civil rights issue

of the highest importance. A criminal record can destroy a person's chances of getting a good job, often before a young person has had the chance to fully develop and mature. And once a person has a criminal record and cannot obtain employment, a vicious cycle takes hold where it seems that the only avenue for survival is more criminal behavior.

To address this problem, I will work to decrease arrests for minor offenses, support expanded use of diversion programs for those arrested for nonviolent offenses, work to stem the school-to-prison pipeline, and advocate for the implementation of "Ban the Box" policies in the private sector. These first three initiatives seek to prevent a criminal record from being created in the first place, while the third initiative helps alleviate the fallout when one does have one.

Durham implemented a successful Ban the Box program for City employment in 2011, and a study by the Southern Coalition for Social Justice shows that it has been successful in allowing people with records to obtain employment with the City. I will work to convince businesses--including City vendors--to adopt similar programs.

Because the criminal justice system impacts minorities disproportionately, working to reduce the number of Durham residents with criminal records (and helping those with records find employment) is a critical civil rights issue that we must address with more vigor.

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.*

Any ordinance must contain comprehensive non-discrimination protections for the entire LGBTQ+ community -- prohibiting all forms of discrimination not just on the basis of sexual orientation, but also gender identity and gender expression. In particular, any ordinance must include protections for transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary members of the community. Non-discrimination protections are especially critical in three areas:

*1. **The workplace.** It should be illegal to fire or discriminate against someone because of who they are or who they love -- both on the job and during the application process. Employment discrimination is a serious problem: more than 40% of LGB workers report harassment, mistreatment, or discrimination at work, and a shocking 90% of transgender employees report the same. These numbers are even worse for LGBTQ+ people of color. The urgency of these protections was underscored this July by the Justice Department's outrageous claim that LGBTQ individuals are not protected under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Durham's leaders must take action against these policies to the fullest extent possible.*

*2. **Public Spaces.** LGBTQ+ people must be protected from nondiscrimination in all public spaces including parks, restaurants, retail stores, service centers, and bathrooms. This certainly includes the right for trans community members to use the bathroom corresponding to their gender identity. But other areas are also important. For example, given the epidemic of queer homelessness, particularly among youth, these protections must include homeless shelters (nearly 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ kids). With respect to criminal justice, incarcerated persons should be assigned, when necessary, to sex/gender-segregated facilities according to their gender identity -- both as a matter of principle and to ensure safety. Discrimination protections must extend to all levels of public space, services, and criminal justice.*

3. Housing. A 2014 study found that, among LGBTQ+ adults searching for housing, 13% were discriminated against due to their sexual orientation, and 25% were discriminated against due to gender identity. Not only must Durham prohibit this discrimination, but the city's leadership must use its network and voice to communicate inclusive policies with stakeholders -- particularly landlords, the DHA, and community groups.

Under current law, local nondiscrimination ordinances are not permitted in the near future. But that does not mean Durham's leadership should remain quiet or passive. I will use my voice and position, when elected, to promote justice and equality.

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.*

NO

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.*

Barak Obama (twice)

Kay Hagan