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1. What is your vision for the Durham community, and what are the specific policies you would prioritize during your term to move us towards that vision?

My vision is a Durham where all have a place to live, where everyone feels safe, that is sustainable and green, and that grows intentionally, with everyone in mind.

To further my priority of no one being without shelter, I plan to work with the County to provide both a day shelter, so unhoused neighbors have a safe place to store belongings, receive mail, charge devices, and meet with social workers, and more nighttime shelter options, creating spaces for safe parking or tents. Because, statistically, remaining in your home gives you a much higher chance of finding new housing, being employed, and staying out of the criminal legal system, I would prioritize coupling these shelter options with continued eviction diversion funding. To make housing more affordable, I plan to focus on incentivizing or funding 100% affordable housing developments, as opposed to relying solely on proffers as part of market-rate housing.

To further my priority of no gun-related deaths, I plan to increase youth programming during after-school hours and over the summer. I also hope to work with DTCC and private-sector organizations to create true pathways to employment. This programming will be holistic in approach, giving our young people the skills, training, support, and hope they need to live fully here in Durham. I am encouraged watching other cities greatly reduce their violent crime by tackling the root causes – investing in young people and ensuring the community is housed, fed, and cared for.

Finally, I will prioritize protecting Durham's natural resources in the rewrite of the UDO. Not only are our green spaces good for mental health, tourism, and the ecosystem, but also maintaining our tree canopy and natural waterways allows us to mitigate the impacts of climate change, making our city safer and more resilient in the long term.

2. Why are you the right person to elect at this moment to guide our city over the coming years?

My years of civil justice litigation practice have provided me with not only a clear understanding of how law is promulgated and applied, but also the skills needed to quickly comprehend and accurately convey complicated topics to those around me. My knowledge of housing and tenants' rights laws and my advocacy in this field have made me well suited to address and create policy to influence the top concerns faced by Durham residents, who

consistently rank housing, affordability, and community safety as the most pressing issues in our city. Finally, I have spent years serving people in Durham who are low-income renters facing housing insecurity. Though I was not a member of their community, my clients shared with me their pain, struggles, and dreams, inviting me into their homes and introducing me to their loved ones. I am committed to approaching this work by holding sacred the trust so many have placed in me. In my time on council, I have brought this community-centered lens to every work session, meeting, and constituent interaction, and I will continue being thorough, transparent, and caring if elected this November.

3. In your view, how do interactions among council members influence the larger health of Durham's policy and political environment? As a council member, how would you seek to contribute to the council's culture? If you are running for mayor, how would your leadership influence the council's culture?

Interactions among council members greatly impact the health of the City's governance. When we can sit down with an intention for coalition-building, we can be extremely successful in affecting change. However, when there is not space for honest conversations, it is easy to dismiss other's views, misunderstand motives, and "drop the thread." When that happens, it becomes extremely difficult to make good policy and the work stagnates. Those poor interactions, even if covered by surface-level niceties, can infect staff and the public, and the divisiveness can build into resentment, jeopardizing our ability to join together when it matters most.

During my time on council, I have sought out conversations with my colleagues and will continue to do so. Even though we do not always agree on certain decisions, I know we are aligned on many other issues, and I want to tap into the power that would come from us united in support of things we are all passionate about, like reducing gun violence. I will continue focusing my energy on asking questions and being transparent in my opinions, respecting my colleagues and requiring that same respect in return.

4. Building and approving an annual budget for our community is one of the most important acts of governance that city council members undertake each year. If you currently serve on the City Council, what informed your approach to the budget process and your ultimate decision to vote for it? If you are not currently on council, how would you have voted on the budget and what would have informed your approach and decision?

During my first budget, I did not have the year prior to hear the community's priorities. In the months leading up to the most recent budget cycle (FY26), I listened closely – to the public, to staff, to city employees, and to community organizers. As I was whittling down the many ideas on my list, I was also engaging with the outgoing and the new City Managers around process, so that I could be very clear on how to move forward. I spent hours speaking with my colleagues about their proposals and thinking through how we might fund our asks. Finally, I researched my top priorities and advocated for them fiercely. I am proud to say that, when ranked, the items I had proposed made up 5 of the top 6 council priorities (fare free buses, homelessness prevention strategy consultant, day shelters, HEART expansion, and cancer screening for firefighters).

Voting on the final budget, too, took a great deal of time and care. The city had raised taxes in the prior year, and the County was raising taxes for the third year in a row. We had just been through a revaluation, and so people were (rightly) concerned about their ability to remain in their homes. However, many of the proposed expenditures in the budget were crucial and some, like the debt services to cover the bonds and city employee wage increases to meet the DMLW ordinance, were required. Durham also offers a tax relief program which should alleviate some of the impact from the tax increases. The final budget presented felt true to our conversations, was balanced, and met many of our collective priorities (except for alternative shelter, which was included in the County's prior budget), and so I voted in favor to pass it.

5. From smoky skies to extreme heat to heavy rainfall events, Durham is already experiencing the effects of climate change – and the most vulnerable people in our communities (including children, the elderly, low-income residents, unhoused residents, and BIPOC folks) are being impacted the most. What policies will you prioritize to reduce climate pollution and help Durham adapt to worsening impacts?

The city passed in 2021 a Carbon Neutrality & Renewable Energy Action Plan with goals around decreasing emissions, though this is more impacted by higher level government. Mitigation of climate change impacts, however, as well as long-term sustainability, is well within municipal power and control. In these times of regularly occurring “once-in-a-lifetime” storms and weather patterns (and, sadly, of federal deregulation), we must focus on these mitigation techniques to ensure our community stays safe. First, I will prioritize environmental protections in the UDO rewrite – increasing tree coverage requirements, adding regulations around sedimentary water pollution, and requiring public park or green space dedication for new developments.

Second, the Environmental Affairs Board recently developed decision-making tool to provide framework to ensure all decisions made align with the City's sustainability goals. The tool incorporates the research behind several adopted plans, including the Comprehensive Plan's goals around environmental justice. It also highlights what types of impacts the decision will have (water/air quality, heat islands, flooding, habitat fragmentation, or biodiversity) and where. I believe this framework should be used in all decisions, from rezoning proposals to seemingly small contracts, to allow decision-makers to have a concise, consistent picture of each decision's impact.

6. Would you be willing to vote for a city contribution to partially fund an expansion of the HEART program into Durham Public Schools? More broadly, how is Durham doing in its approach to community safety, and what if anything would you change?

I support expanding HEART into the Durham Public Schools and think it is a fantastic opportunity to ensure our kids are met with care and support, rather than the criminal legal system. However, I would like to see funding for this coming from the County.

Overall, I think the trend towards expanding unarmed crisis response, which I proposed for this fiscal year budget, is a step in the right direction. However, as discussed above, I believe community safety should be viewed in a more holistic way. I want to do more to tackle the underlying causes of community violence, such as lack of housing, lack of mental healthcare

and mentorship support, and/or lack of real pathways to economic stability. I trust that impacted communities have the solutions to these issues, and, indeed, many individuals and nonprofits are already providing what they can to disrupt these cycles of poverty and violence. I hope to facilitate meaningful community conversations around the underlying issues and change our policies accordingly to better serve everyone in this city.

7. How does equity – including racial equity and equitable services for immigrants and refugees – play into your view of governance? What metrics or indicators would you look to to know whether Durham is achieving more equitable outcomes for underserved populations over time? What do you see as the main policy levers that City Council can use to impact those indicators?

Equity is something I think about a lot, having experienced quite a lot of inequity during my role as an eviction defense litigator in Durham. I understand that discrimination or underinvestment does not exist in a vacuum, and that people often face many other forms of oppression that compound their lived experience. The awareness of these inequities drives me to be transparent and informed in my decision-making, and part of this is being in relationship with Black and brown folks who are directly impacted or historically impacted by any policies being discussed. I am excited that the city is doing more to streamline community outreach and engagement, which is something I have pushed for in my time on council. But simply hearing concerns is not enough; we must also be listening and applying what we learn to ensure that our policies are not having disparate or negative impacts or adding unnecessary barriers to entry.

8. What is the most important thing that is not currently being funded by the City? Would you be willing to raise taxes to fund this item?

The city is not funding 100% affordable housing development. Instead, we are reliant on private developers to proffer minimal units in exchange for massive land usage, and we are losing out on viable acreage inside the city center that could be used to house Durhamites. Housing is becoming less and less obtainable for working-class folks who are being displaced from Durham at alarming rates.

I believe that housing is a human right, and I also know that secure housing decreases crime, increases opportunity for financial security, and improves affordability overall. Because it is the ethical and moral thing to do, I would be willing to raise taxes to fund the building of affordable housing. The economic benefits are an added bonus.

9. Are you satisfied with the Durham Police Department, including its administrative, law enforcement, and security functions? Should the City government increase or decrease resources allocated to the Police Department? Please explain your answer.

In my ideal world, there would not be any armed crisis response. We would benefit from participation, collaboration, trust, and community safety. Though that world does not exist right now, I still believe that it is possible and will make decisions that are both rooted in realism and progress us towards a society that provides other incentives for harm reduction.

I am satisfied by several things that our Police Department does including, but not limited to, diligently assisting victims of violence, being responsive and transparent with residents,

working seamlessly with social workers in the HEART program, and refusing to bring charges for many “crimes” that discriminate against people who are poor or unhoused. However, I do not believe that humans belong in cages, and any money or resources that further invests in the industrial prison complex and divests from Black and brown communities is problematic for me.

10. Please detail your plan for affordable housing in Durham, including a discussion of current programs here in Durham and other programs across the state that have been effective in maintaining and creating affordability.

We have almost no naturally occurring affordable housing here in Durham, and the affordable housing we do have is mostly associated in some way with our local public housing authority. Rent and vacancy rates are both high, and a combination of factors such as price collusion and tax write-offs means that simply expanding the supply of housing has not decreased the cost to the level that will make it accessible for low- and middle-income residents. My plan is two-fold. First, I will work together with the County, for profit entities, and nonprofits to increase the supply of 100% affordable units, whether that means incentivizing those builds with automatic rezoning approval or paying to build housing on land close to public services and transit. Simultaneously, I plan to support alternative structures for renting, creating meaningful competition in the market to lower costs for the homes that already exist. These, coupled with continued investment in downpayment assistance funding and budgeting training, will hopefully allow more Durhamites to access stable, sustainable, affordable and safe housing, whether renting or owning.

11. Describe your decision making process in voting to approve or not approve zoning requests. In particular, what do you look for in a development plan that leads you to vote for it or against it? In your answer, please take into consideration state restrictions on the power of cities to regulate development.

I base my decisions in zoning requests on this question: is Durham getting something in this rezoning that is worth whatever we will lose from its being rezoned? Sometimes, the answer is unequivocally yes; the project provides something extremely beneficial, like a huge contribution to the affordable housing supply or needed commercial in a certain area. Other times, projects are obviously not right for the city or go against the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and the answer is easily no. But many projects offer some benefit and some harm (and a lot of consternation among the council) which makes these decisions more complicated.

For every proposal, I begin by reading the staff memo and the zoning map change report, taking note of the type of request, the size, and any proffers. I compare the proposal to the Place Type Map – a document that is not binding but was adopted by Council to guide our decisions, and see which of the designated Comprehensive Plan policies are met. I then watch the planning commission hearing on the same. This is extremely helpful for two reasons: first, our commissioners are appointed for their knowledge and are usually very informed, helping me understand nuance through their questions; and second, I can get a sense of the community’s thoughts as they often attend the commission meetings. I come to the public hearings prepared with questions for either staff or the applicant (or both) and

ready to listen. Each project is unique, and I do my best to weigh the information that is available to me to determine if the grant of a zoning change is an overall net gain for Durham.

12. Please provide your analysis of Durham's municipal bonds over the past few years.

Because of Durham's AAA credit rating, this type of debt financing is the absolute most affordable way of paying for large, capital improvements or projects, and I am proud that Durham voters overwhelmingly supported the two bonds on the ballot last year. The streets and sidewalks bond will not only allow us to build and repair several miles of city infrastructure, but it will also allow the city to move projects from the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and free up space for even more investment. For example, part of the stretch of Guess Road where I walk to the bus does not have sidewalks. Even though this heavily-trafficked frontage was not in the bond, work will begin to build sidewalks this year due to more capacity in the CIP.

Parks are crucial to the health of a city, and there is no question that Durham is behind its peers and where we would like to be in the designation and upkeep of city parks. The Parks Bond will jumpstart improvements to two parks and provide both a pool and an aquatic center. We know it is getting hotter every year and that drowning deaths are far too common in our community, so having access to places to cool off, learn to swim, and otherwise enjoy time outside is something I am extremely proud Durham wants to provide. Plus, these particular parks embody some of Durham's history of underinvestment in Black communities, and I am hopeful that these improvements will be a step towards righting those injustices.

It is my intention to continue utilizing municipal bonds to reduce long-term costs to Durham residents while still providing high-quality services and investment.

13. Many vulnerable populations in our city are under attack from both the federal government and the state legislature. This includes LGBTQI people and immigrants, among others. What role can the city play in countering these attacks?

Obviously the city is somewhat limited both because of preemption and because of the threat of retaliation, both of which are real concerns that we should take very seriously. However, city leaders have the power to demonstrate our values within our own systems, like ensuring we are a fair and equitable employer, and we leaders have the power of our voice, which can be used to amplify messages to the state or federal government and to disseminate *correct* information to our constituents quickly. This is a really scary and dangerous time for many people. I am listening to those impacted and allowing the most vulnerable to decide the appropriate level of risk tolerance, and, if it is needed, I am prepared to stand firmly and loudly against these attacks.

14. Please describe your understanding of the role of state and federal preemption on local government. Are there any parts of your platform that might run up against preemptions? If so, please explain how you would overcome such obstacles.

Generally speaking, federal laws governing a certain issue preempt lower level governments' laws on the same issue. In North Carolina, we contend with an added layer of preemption because we function implicitly as a Dillon's Rule State, meaning that our local and municipal

governments may only legislate in spaces where explicit permission to do so has been given by the state legislature.

I have stayed mostly within our designated powers with my platform by thinking of creative ways to encourage or incentivize certain behavior or to use the spending powers of the city to fund infrastructure investment or programs like eviction diversion and downpayment assistance. A few things in my platform might be considered preempt, but I have worked to couch them in explicit city powers and have based them off similar laws in other North Carolina municipalities. In this moment where there is not (technically) a supermajority in the state, I believe that it is worthwhile to push the bounds of some of these restrictions, while maintaining flexibility to shift to something different to accomplish a similar goal. In the long-term, it would be great to have advocacy groups like the People's Alliance continue their work in dismantling this chokehold so that local leaders, who ideally have a better concept of what is needed in their community, can pass useful legislation and put our residents' tax dollars to their most effective uses.

15. What guides your decision making process when presented with contradictory views? For example, when advice from city staff contradicts advice from advisory committees (such as the Planning Commission and others), and residents present multiple and conflicting opinions, how do you reach your decisions on how to vote?

There are always contradictory views! This is part of a healthy, functioning democracy, so even if we were rid of the state preemptions and decline of federal protections, I would hope we would still have disagreement on the best ways to approach issues.

If you have watched any council meeting or work session in the past 1.5 years, you will know that my goal is always to get as much information as possible. I spend hours researching, asking questions, and discussing with experts. I prioritize listening to people who are directly impacted and am conscious of when outsiders try to speak on behalf of certain groups without explicit permission. Only when I feel confident that all the information is before me, I make my decision. This is, at its core, the function of representative government. I cannot promise that I will make the same decision that others might have made, but I can commit to making decisions that are informed and aligned with my values via processes that are transparent.

16. How can the city engage with Durham Public Schools and work toward implementing an "Aftercare for All" program that could benefit all DPS families?

I would like to see more collaboration between the County, City, and DPS in general, and this is a great example of something that could really have a positive impact for young people and families and that could decrease gun violence in our community. The city has employees who are skilled, part-time caregivers and provides fare-free buses after school bus hours, which could facilitate a program such as this.

17. What steps would you take to create and improve ways for children to be able to walk or bike to schools?

I participated in the Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day this year with Bike Durham and had good conversations about this very thing with parents, teachers, and advocates. Part of the solution is education – ensuring kids and their adults know about suitable routes and multimodal means of transport. But it also *must* be safe, and that is, unfortunately, not the case for many roadways. Reducing motorist speed is something that can keep pedestrians and bikers safer and is part of the Vision Zero Action Plan intended for roads all across the city. Adding sidewalks, safety measures at high-volume crosswalks, and implementing traffic calming measures can also facilitate children being able to walk or bike to school. Finally, having either a buddy system or an adult to accompany younger folks feels imperative.

My goal is to have a 15-minutes walkable city, which means that everyone could access needed resources within a short walk or ride of their house. With infrastructure investment and community safety advances, we could have this in Durham for all children and adults alike.