

KIDS VOTING DURHAM CITY COUNCIL AND MAYOR CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What are two specific reasons you want to serve as a leader of Durham?

I want to serve on city council because I want to be involved in shaping Durham's future at this critical point in our development. Our city is changing quickly, and the decisions we make now are going to affect the way the city looks and feels far into the future. I believe that we need to make the right decisions now about keeping housing affordable for working people, bringing living wage jobs to our community, keeping our city safe, and ensuring our police department is accountable to the community. We need to make sure that Durham stays diverse and is affordable for working people and their families.

I also want to use my skills as a community organizer to bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to the city council. I have strong ties to the community and have worked on many grassroots campaigns for racial, social, and economic justice. I have experience building diverse coalitions and bringing people together to work for a common goal. I believe the city will make the best possible decisions when more of the community is involved in shaping those choices.

2. How will you ensure just and fair policing, especially for Durham's youth?

I hope to be part of implementing an ordinance recently proposed by Southerners on New Ground called the "Durham Community Safety Act," which would ban bias-based policing against African Americans, Latinos, immigrants, youth, and queer, trans, and gender non-conforming Durham residents. I believe that vigorous enforcement of this ordinance would have a significant impact on the safety of our young people during interactions with the police.

I support the city's council's decision to implement 4 of the 5 recommendations that were proposed last year by the FADE Coalition, a community group that focuses on public safety, and I look forward to making sure these recommendations are fully implemented and strengthened as a member of council. Those recommendations were 1) mandate written consent forms for all vehicle consent searches, 2) implement a policy requiring mandatory periodic review of officer stop data, 3) reform and strengthen the Durham Civilian Police Review board, and 4) mandate that the department participate in formal racial equity training. I will also work to implement the last remaining recommendation to make misdemeanor marijuana enforcement the department's lowest law enforcement priority.

With the recent resignation of Chief Lopez, I feel that we have an opportunity to bring someone to that position who can change the culture within the police department and set a different tone for police interactions with the community.

Finally, I support strengthening the Civilian Police Review Board and giving them direct oversight powers over the police department.

3. Young people rely heavily on walking, biking, and buses. How will you make those safe and affordable for Durham's youth?

Pedestrian and cyclist safety is a huge issue in Durham, and I know a number of people who have been in serious bike accidents in just the last few years. There have also been a number of tragic deaths of pedestrians and cyclists in that time. I believe that we must improve our infrastructure for walking and biking in order to improve safety and promote healthier and environmentally friendlier ways of getting around. As our city continues to grow, we need to prioritize urban planning approaches, such as “Complete Streets,” that take all of these different needs into account, rather than prioritizing access and convenience for drivers.

Regarding affordability, I support maintaining bus rates at the current \$1 level and improving bus service throughout the city. I believe that with the right priorities and investments, Durham could one day transition to a fare-free bus system like our neighbors in Chapel Hill-Carrboro. I also support the plan to bring light-rail transit to Durham over the next 10 years, and look forward to being part of the conversations with the community to work out all the details regarding where to locate stations and other facilities.

4. Many kids in Durham would like more youth programs and activities for them to be involved in. How would you inform youth about what is available through the city and make those programs affordable and accessible to all youth?

I believe that educational, economic, and social opportunities for youth should be one of our highest priorities as a community. I fully support providing more free and low-cost youth programs throughout the city, as well as supporting nonprofit programs with city funds. We certainly need to do a better job spreading the word about the programs that already exist to a diverse group of young people so that everyone has the opportunity to participate. Working with a focus group of young people to develop new communication strategies would be a great way to increase participation in these programs. Using text messages, social media, and other communication methods that are targeted for youth, I believe we could make sure that all our young people know about the opportunities that are available.

5. Durham has recently experienced a great growth in business but much of the growth is in high end markets. How can City Council make sure that all part of Durham and especially low- and medium-income families have access to grocery stores with affordable, fresh food and other businesses needed for daily life?

I am also very concerned that much of the economic growth in Durham is not benefiting low to moderate-income working people and their families. I would like to see the city help by targeting city support to those projects which best address unmet community needs. The city provides grants, loans, and tax incentives to businesses, but these incentives are not always going to those who need them the most. We should be looking at where critical amenities, such as grocery stores, are not being provided and finding ways to encourage and incentivize providing these services in a way that is affordable and accessible to our communities.

6. The environment and recycling are important to many young people. What would you want Durham to do differently in its current recycling program, and how would you inform as well as engage its Durham's citizens in it?

As our city grows, appropriate waste management solutions will become more and more important to our quality of life and our environmental footprint. I am glad that Durham has a curbside recycling program, and I would love to see Durham implement public recycling in downtown, the 9th street area, and in city parks. I am also excited about us having municipal composting one day.

7. How are you involved with youth in Durham?

I am on the adult board of iNSIDE oUT, which is a youth-led LGBTQ organization that links together middle and high school students in gay/straight alliances around the Triangle. I also work for a nonprofit that works primarily with youth through three projects: Youth Organizing Institute, which is a youth leadership development program, Ignite NC, which is a youth civic engagement program, and the NC Student Power Education Fund, which funds work with college students on campuses around the state.

8. What is your favorite thing to do in Durham?

I have two kids, ages 18 months and 8 years old, and we love going to the NC Museum of Life and Science. My favorite area is "Into the Mist," and I am really excited about the new nature playspace that is opening up this fall!