

People's Alliance PAC 2008 Questionnaire Durham Board of County Commissioners

Michael Page

I. I feel that Durham County has exhibited an adequate response to the drought, while we are still not out of danger, we must continue to push water conservation in our homes, businesses and community. Durham County was instrumental in finding ways to share with its employees and citizens' methods for water consumption and conservation. We must remain in the forefront in addressing this concern as we seek to respond to the drought.

II. I am aware that the Department of Homeland Security has chosen Durham/Granville as one of the possible sites for a facility to study dangerous and poorly known viruses and disease. I am not able to determine my position on this facility however I am not inclined to support this site for the following reasons:

- 1) Lack of adequate information has been provided to the community and to elected officials on the matter therefore I am unable to make a decision.
- 2) There seems to be far too many hazards that we must contend with to support this facility in our community
- 3) The area where the proposed site is being considered is a public health issue and I would not desire to risk the environment and its citizenry in this manner.

I believe the burden of proof lies within the public health concerns in our community. We should never risk the health of our citizens nor the environmental concerns to promote an economic development.

III. Children are ready for and succeeding in school

- 1) Challenge---Getting children into quality childcare programs that will raise expectations, I will continue to support research based childcare initiatives for the Durham community that will give every child an opportunity to succeed.
- 2) Durham Citizens enjoy a healthy environment
Challenge- Keeping our streets and communities clean, I will support the Durham Keep America Beautiful program and Recycling initiatives to focus on resources (i.e. grants, private and public funding) that will assist us in maintaining a clean and vibrant community.
- 3) Durham citizens enjoy a community that is vibrant, rich in aesthetic beauty and embraces and promotes its cultural heritage, Challenge is providing cultural opportunities to meet its diverse community, I am willing and committed to ensuring that Durham will seek programs and

activities that will appeal to the greater community and enhance our respect for citizens heritage.

- 4) Every citizen in Durham has access to adequate, safe and affordable housing; Challenge is that many citizens do not have the resources to live in safe communities, (i.e. homeless, mental ill etc.) I will continue to work with agencies such as Durham Affordable Housing, Durham Housing Authority and others to promote a safe environment, clean communities, elimination of slum lords and boarded up housing and the promotion of the Campaign for Decent housing.
- 5) Durham enjoys a prosperous economy- Challenge for Durham is that all citizens should be equipped with adequate training to obtain employment. I am in favor of new companies coming into the area to provide skill-based training that will allow our citizens to compete for employment.
- 6) Durham citizens are healthy- Challenge for Durham is that there are several health issues our citizens are struggling with such as diabetes, hypertension and heart conditions. I will support greater participation from our local health department to continue to promote wellness and healthy living for our citizens and encourage prevention programs that will effectively address the health concerns of our youth.
- 7) All Durham citizens are safe ---Challenge for Durham is CRIME, I want our community to review how we address crime, we MUST be proactive with our neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch programs, create positive alternative programs for the perpetrators of crime which are the 17-30 year old and find a effective strategy to combat the gang problem before it escalates any further.
- 8) Durham citizens enjoy sustainable thriving neighborhoods with efficient and well-maintained infrastructure. Challenge is that Durham is limited for growth in many of our communities however we lack sufficient infrastructure to maintain well-developed communities.

I pledge to continue to work to improve the quality of life for our citizens by engaging in discussion of the needs of our community, attend more neighborhood meetings, support development that will be sustainable for our community and

- IV. The above does not imply in my opinion to the residents who are not citizens. If you are going to live in Durham then we want you to follow the guidelines as all citizens would follow, as I believe Unhealthy citizens makes an unhealthy community. The county does face challenges as we continue to meet the needs of these individuals, many do not have adequate

documentation for gaining citizenship, the well being of these immigrants are at stake in finding the appropriate resources and the lack of services is critical to the success of serving this population.

- V. I certainly believe that we should always be open to forms of consolidation for City and County Government. It is incumbent upon our leaders to search for ways to effectively and efficiently serve our citizens. We can work better together by looking at the welfare of our citizens and determine a solution to address community concerns that will benefit us all. I believe some obstacles to making these changes happen is bringing together departments that are closely aligned such as police and sheriff department, incorporating a dual management among the departments that will effectively address crime. Other obstacles are resistance to change, territorial issues and lack of cooperation among stakeholders.
- VI. We should continue to focus on housing for the mentally ill, placing infrastructures that will support those who are mentally ill, providing supporting networks for families that struggle with mental illness.
- VII. While I would have supported a land transfer tax, I now have reluctance for this legislation due to not involving the input from our citizenry. I would not place either item on the ballot until we had a task force comprised of individuals from throughout the Durham community to make a recommendation to elected officials regarding this important issue. I do believe that placing it on the ballot will give the citizens the opportunity to speak about whether they would like it or not.
- VIII. I do support increased mass transit; we must recognize that many citizens are without adequate transportation. The form of mass transit that would have been an asset to Durham, Raleigh and Chapel Hill is the light rail system. I firmly believe that we must continue to advocate for funding from the federal level to assist in this effort.
- IX. I do support the County strategy for luring companies into the Durham community. I believe that the plan that is currently in place needs some modifications that would respond to the citizens concerns. I would like to see tighter restrictions on how these companies can assist our citizens in obtaining employment, promoting quality child care facilities and being more community friendly. I do believe that we should have a requirement for a certain number of jobs for our citizens. Companies should have a training program in effect that will give our citizens equal opportunity for employment. I do support the county providing incentives to Green fire and Scientific Properties provided that it will be beneficial to our tax base. I am delighted to know that we have the opportunity to go into the downtown area and make significant changes that will improve the beauty of downtown as well as make Durham downtown experience a complete makeover. These innovative projects can greatly improve the image of downtown Durham.

- X. The primary issues facing Durham county in its land use policies is that we do not have the infrastructures to support many of the new developments being proposed, being able to provide space for schools, recreational and other needed facilities. While our tax base could use the boost in the economy, we must be proactive in slow growth and maintaining the areas we currently are responsible for. Durham has a great deal of potential for growing but we must be smart in our approach to moving ahead to ensure the necessary elements for growth.