

2009 SPPACE QUESTIONNAIRE

**John Lassiter
Charlotte Mayoral**

- 1. What are the top three issues our community needs to address? How would you propose to tackle these issues?**

Create Jobs –Grow and diversify our economy and make Charlotte more business friendly
Public Safety – Get repeat criminals off the streets through more officers and more resources

Low Taxes / High Quality Services– Treat our city budget like a business avoiding the pattern of tax increases in Raleigh and Washington.

- 2. Do you support the adoption and use of transfer taxes and/or impact fees as a way to overcome budget shortfalls? Why or why not?**

Transfer taxes or impact fees would create disincentives to the private investment needed to grow our economy possibly pushing jobs across the state line. These fees would also make it harder for first time homebuyers to qualify for a loan and realize the dream of home ownership.

- 3. How do you believe Charlotte should fund school capital costs, parks, roads, transit, police and fire protection needs for the city? Should purchasers of new homes be responsible for funding these services for the entire city? Do you believe that these types of proposals are a fair way to pay for required services to existing taxpayers?**

City taxes should be focused on core services: police, fire, roads and clean water. Property tax is the most equitable way to shoulder the costs. I will support a project that wants to accelerate the construction of a new school or park through a voluntary contribution of land or money.

- 4. How would you encourage our community's economic growth while including a variety of housing types and prices?**

Charlotte needs to be business friendly – easy to start a business or invest in a project. The needed range in housing price and type can be encouraged through a range of densities, flexible zoning regulations for mixed use developments and limiting the cost of compliance with city and county regulations.

- 5. Recently adopted ordinances and policies have increased development costs and as a result will increase prices for office, industrial and retail space, as well as housing. What could be done to lower development costs in order to prevent families and businesses from relocating across county lines?**

We need to relook at all our regulations to make sure Charlotte is not at a disadvantage in recruiting new businesses or encouraging investment in our city. Compliance costs are becoming a disincentive to the private sector and a barrier to new home construction, commercial development and affordable housing.

- 6. Charlotte's City Council sets priorities but staff controls work flow. How would you ensure that staff remains, per city code, focused on Council goals and provides a wide variety of solutions to address Council's priorities?**

As chair of the Economic Development and Planning Committee, we will continue to look at how staff processes permits and approves developments. I encourage flexibility that does not endanger health and safety as well as exploring ways to speed up the review time and insure consistent application of ordinances.

- 7. Would you support a cost/benefit analysis for existing and proposed land use regulations in order to ensure that the purported benefits outweigh their negative impacts on economic development and housing affordability?**

Yes. I have worked on this issue with the joint Land Use Committee of the Charlotte Chamber and REBIC as well as citizens concerned with keeping our housing alternatives affordable, regulations reasonable and business investment competitive in a difficult economy.