

2009 SPPACE QUESTIONNAIRE

Warren Cooksey Charlotte City Council District 7

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

For our community as well as others, the top three issues are fairly constant: safety, education, and growth. From the City perspective, we must support sufficient police and fire departments for safety, and we must focus on the transportation and utility infrastructure needed to support growth.

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?**

I do not. I generally oppose increasing revenue by taxing fewer people. If the referenced budget shortfall is due to poor economic conditions, raising taxes is a poor response. If the shortfall is due to optional (not core) programs exceeding revenues, then the programs must be abandoned.

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?**

I repeat: I generally oppose increasing revenue by taxing fewer people. All Charlotteans should pay for those capital and operating costs that serve all Charlotteans. I do make exception for certain taxes, such as hotel-motel taxes, that fund tourism-related projects.

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

Though from time to time there are opportunities for the City to act creatively in the areas of economic development and housing, I am generally suspicious of such activity. Instinct and study suggest that a low-tax, low-regulatory government serves the people best.

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?**

Any regulation or ordinance ought 1) to be regularly studied to ensure that it is delivering the proposed benefit without creating unbearable costs and 2) contain a sunset provision to require a deliberate decision to continue applying it in the future.

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?**

The two best ways for the Council to do its job in that respect involve evaluation and education. The Council's annual review of the City Manager's performance should guide the staff's work flow priorities. Individual Council Members should also seek information outside of staff presentations.

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.