



2007 Charlottesville City Council Candidate Forum October 3, 2007

The three Democrats and two Independent candidates looking to secure three open seats on the Charlottesville City Council participated in a forum at City Council Chambers on October 3. Each of the candidates fielded questions about transportation, affordable living choices and City-County cooperation, the majority of which they had seen in advance. The remaining questions came from the audience. This event was jointly sponsored by Charlottesville Tomorrow and the Free Enterprise Forum.

*The **audio** and **video** is available online on the Charlottesville Tomorrow Weblog http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2007/10/city_forum.html*

Complete election coverage is available on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website <http://action.cvilletomorrow.org/cvilleaction/elections.html>

INTRODUCTION

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Good evening. Welcome to the City Council Candidate Forum. This Forum is being sponsored by Charlottesville Tomorrow and the Free Enterprise Forum. I'm Neil Williamson, the Executive Director of the Free Enterprise Forum and this evening I'm ably hosted with our co-moderator Sean Tubbs. We will be having a number of questions for the candidates. First, we'll have opening statements, a number of questions, and then there'll be an opportunity for you to provide questions on the index cards that are out in the audience. Please write your questions carefully and bring them up front and we will select a few questions to be asked near the end of the forum.

Starting off, I'd like to thank the candidates for running, number one, and for attending this forum, and by luck of the draw, we have our first opening statement from Mr. Kleeman.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Peter Kleeman (I): Good evening. Thank you for hosting this and I am Peter Kleeman and I've been living in Charlottesville for 26 years now. I am an Independent thinker and I am an independent candidate and one of my reasons for running is I believe that the City needs some new leadership and I think that I

can provide that leadership. I've been working as a citizen on a variety of issues in Charlottesville related to growth and transportation and environment, many of the topics on today's agenda and I believe that I can move the City forward in a positive direction and actually view the future through a lens of sustainable development, environmental protection and a sensible transportation future for the Charlottesville and surrounding area.

People ask me why I think an Independent is a viable way to become a City Councilor. Well, they say no one has ever done this before in the history of Charlottesville. I think the kind of Councilor that you need is someone who's not afraid of doing things that have never been done before. I do that on a regular basis.

I have been a researcher, an academic, a professor at the University of Virginia and I'm not afraid of challenges. In fact, I welcome them. I like working with other people. I like working with citizens. I've been a champion of public involvement. I would like to open the door to all of the neighborhoods and all of the citizens who are interested in participating in working towards a healthy future for Charlottesville.

I ask you to consider me. I provided some materials to some; there're some others on the table right here and signs in the back you can take home and post and I ask you to give me a fair consideration and hope you'll consider voting for me in the November 6th election. Thank you.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Our next opening statement, Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I found this card in my daughter's room this morning and she says, "My name is Kristin Edwards for those who don't know me. I'm running for second vice president of my class. If I'm chosen I will focus on the problems of people. I will take the ideas that you give me and use them to make Buford a better place to learn." The more I get to know my children the more I want to be like them when I grow up.

My name is Holly Edwards for those who don't know me. I'm a part of the Democratic team for City Council. If I am chosen, I will focus on the problems of people. I will take ideas that you give me and use them to make Charlottesville a better place to live. I can bring a new voice. I can bring the experiences that I've had in the community. I can bring social insight and social justice to the issues of housing and education. I can bring the importance of health care and the importance of having healthy people in our community. Thank you.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): First of all, thanks to the Free Enterprise Forum and Charlottesville Tomorrow for arranging this platform for us to discuss questions. I've been a resident of this community for the last 34 years, 31 of those was Director of Planner and Director of Strategic Planning for the City of Charlottesville. I'm currently adjunct faculty at the University of Virginia Architecture School. I teach a number of courses.

I guess the question for all of us is to decide what qualities make a good Council person and I think they'll speak up on November 6th. I bring a fair amount of experience, creativity, and proven record of service to this community. While I worked for the City of Charlottesville, I was involved in many activities and some of those—I'll just remind you of those—is working on the development of the Downtown Mall, [unintelligible], affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization in Starr Hill, 10th and Page, Belmont, University Corner, Historic Court Square. There're also a number of social programs—Meals on Wheels Program, the Alliance of Interfaith Ministry, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the Mediation Center just to mention a few of those.

Currently, I serve on the Board of JABA, Piedmont Housing Alliance, International Host Program, Social Action Council of the Unitarian Church and Art in Place so even though I'm retired, I'm pretty active. I don't have a lack of work. I also mentioned to you last time is one of my most rewarding jobs is running the soup kitchen on Sundays and [I think there is always] the happy customers where I hope to have all happy customers here also.

If I'm fortunate enough to be elected to City Council, I'd like to focus on five different areas. First, to protect our streets and our neighborhoods which are the building blocks of our community. Second, preserve lands and environment, especially trees and energy and, third, a [balanced] transportation system with good transit for all residents. My time is up so I will stop here.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): Hi, I'm Barbara Haskins. My campaign material is back there. I, too, like Peter have been here 26 years and he said he's running I think as an Independent thinker. I am running as a horrified taxpayer. Believe me, I would rather not have felt compelled to run, but this last budget cycle I became increasingly horrified by financial decisions that the City Council made and made again and made again and it seemed that nobody was actually concerned about the taxpayers and that alarmed me to the extent that I thought, well, somebody needs to be concerned because this isn't making sense financially, so I decided to run and then since I've decided to run, I've gained more knowledge about how the City is set up and I have to say and part of why I want to run is to really encourage people to think about these issues because I personally can't do anything. It's what the citizens and the City want that is going to make a big difference but this is a really odd arrangement how we have this little city with a

very very limited economic base and a mindset on the governing body—City Council—of, gosh, it's nice having this big pile of money here. I wonder where it came from. I don't know but let's figure out how to spend it and there's really homeowner taxpayer fatigue in the community and so I'm here to represent the fatigued taxpayers of the community and then another thing—

Another unanticipated experience is that people start coming up to me and telling me things that worry them and you'd imagine traffic, affordable housing, the environment, but what I hear about is management of the City government and I hadn't anticipated that and if you actually think about how City government is managed, there're some gaps and she tells me to stop, so I'll respect that.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): Okay, I'm David Brown. I was elected to City Council in 2004 so as the incumbent, I'm pretty sure that what I'm supposed to do is to tell you all the good things I've done and all the good things I'm going to do and City Council has accomplished a lot in the four years that I've been on Council—stream protection, Sunday bus service, traffic light synchronization, affordable housing initiatives, youth summer jobs program, increased curbside recycling, just to name a few, but it's not that simple because City Council is a team sport. Our accomplishments are shared. Rarely does a single one of us deserve credit or blame depending on your point of view. That doesn't mean that we all agree on all issues.

For example, neither I nor Kevin Lynch were in favor of putting a million dollars into the City's ambulance services, but there are a few things that I'll take at least some individual credit for. I think we've made City Council more accessible. Council meetings start earlier. They end earlier, generally, and they're more focused and more civil. We have more work sessions and not only are work sessions a time for City Councilors to look more deeply into issues, but it's a time for the citizens to be able to see where we really stand on issues and what we really think. We have more and more information and especially budget information that's readily available on the web or on discs or in the Library. This means that the public has an easier time of being aware of what the City Council is doing and to give us input.

I also think that I've had a positive impact on relations between the City, the University and the City and the County. I've heard it said that relations are better than they've been for a long time and this is really important because the big issues that we face—growth, affordable housing, water, roads, transit—the list kind of goes on and on, they're not City issues and they're not County issues; they're regional issues and they demand regional solutions. I'll stop.

QUESTIONS

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): And we'll begin with the first question which will first go to Ms. Edwards. **With the state unable to fund critical road projects, what will you advocate for to ensure funding of priority regional transportation projects? Would you advocate spending City dollars in Albemarle County?**

Holly Edwards (D): To answer the first part, I'm not sure if the state is unable to or if the Republican majority has hijacked the funds and we haven't been able to adequately advocate for those funds. Secondly, road improvements also include bicycle and pedestrian pathways. Third point—in order for transportation to really be a way that everyone can benefit is for it to be a regional collaboration. It has to be a regional collaboration and the last part, regarding the funding from the City for the County, my key word is going to be symbiosis. The living together of two dissimilar organisms when this association is mutually beneficial has to be mutually beneficial.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): I guess I'm not as generous as Holly is. However, I would be supportive of spending City funds on our work on areas roads, but I tell you, there are ways where we can cooperate. One of the suggestions which I think could be explored is a joint transportation district where the City and County can join and then raise funds for their own projects so that those highways can be built in the County. I don't foresee too many [other] highways in the city of Charlottesville.

Barbara Haskins (I): I found as I reviewed these questions that they're not trick questions but there're certainly embedded assumptions in most of them which make them fun to address. This one says what would I advocate for to ensure funding and the implicit assumption is that advocating will get you somewhere and I think that you have done a good job in other meetings of talking about how unless the State allows us to form a regional transportation authority, we can advocate until we fall over, but that doesn't mean we will gain a new revenue stream to finance new things.

So, no one is against advocating. The issue is how effective it can be. I would certainly not be in favor of spending City dollars in Albemarle County, you can bet on that. Our tax rate is 95 cents, theirs is 68 cents. We're already a third ahead of them in paying taxes. I would totally not be in favor of that.

I guess we're all starting to know each other well. They know that at some point I'm going to mention apple pie and motherhood. There're so many things that everyone's— Who's against it? You know, so, of course, we're in favor of

regional cooperation and better transportation. The whole issue is implementation.

There is already a group formed to work on improving the public transportation system so that's in place and going forward. I can tip my hat to it but that doesn't mean I invented it.

I think the Meadowcreek Parkway, which is a question down here, will open up bike paths and pedestrian lanes as part of the Parkway design and that's an interesting area to traverse. I think one of the nightmare areas is south of town, you know, below Old Lynchburg Road and there's a perfect example. Everybody wants the Sunset/Fontaine Connector Road but how do you push it forward and make it happen with funding is a totally other story. Meanwhile, the people in Fry's Spring are losing their hair daily because of the stress of the traffic, so, again, no one wants them to have that vehicular stress but there's no fast answer to that problem.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): First of all, I agree with Holly Edwards. It's not that the State is unable to fund roads, it's that they are unwilling. We have among the lowest gas taxes in the country. We haven't raised the gas tax in years and years and years, which means that what we get to build roads with just doesn't come close to meeting the needs and so we do need to elect delegates to Richmond who aren't allergic to the word tax.

Secondly, I agree with Huja that we do need to consider with Albemarle County some type of regional transportation district or authority, some way that we can locally raise our own money because even having said that, there's not enough to go around and I think there are ways a regional transit authority could look at assessing businesses, it could look at raising gas taxes locally and I think we need to push to get that to happen.

The third thing, we already are spending some City dollars on transportation in Albemarle County because we jointly funded a study of the Eastern Connector and I think the issue is if we're really cooperating in a lot of areas, I think we can consider that. What I mean specifically is no matter what we do, the City's always going to have more of its share of poverty, people who are low income, who want to live where they can walk and take buses everywhere. If Albemarle County is willing to help us support that burden, the affordable housing for low income, even considering helping pay for things in the City, then I think we can look at the big issue they're facing with maybe roads. I wouldn't think we'd ever be a major part of their funding stream, however.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I would question what the critical road projects are, and I think there's a difference of opinion as to whether roads are the solutions to our transportation needs or not. I know the City has just moved forward trying to push forward a project that may have been considered a critical road project, the McIntire Road Extended and Meadowcreek Parkway. It may have been considered a critical road project back in 1960 when it was originated but looking from 2007, I would consider that to be not even a desirable highway project or road project. I think there are much better investments we can make of our transportation dollars than constructing that particular facility.

I also believe that we should consider transportation as the element of what we're trying to address rather than roads because we have many models of cities that have gotten larger and have tried to build roads to meet the demands of development and we don't see any good models out there of cities that have successfully built roads to meet those demands, so my feeling is we need to husband those dollars for meeting transportation needs which I believe also should be prioritized for transit perhaps even providing better infrastructure to allow more pedestrian and bicycle transportation and getting people to live closer to where they need to work and shop, so my feeling is regional approaches are needed.

I have no problem with City money being spent for the regional benefit and I'm sure that the County would agree with that and they would spend dollars for regional benefit. Clearly, we'll spend some dollars just for Charlottesville but I think some of those dollars need to be considered what is best for our region as a whole.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. The second question will be going to you, Mr. Huja. **Charlottesville City Council has approved the dedication of a portion of the property tax to the creation of affordable housing opportunities. How do you believe the City should address the need not just for affordable housing, but also workforce housing?**

Satyendra Huja (D): As David mentioned, affordable housing is a regional issue, and not just an issue of the City of Charlottesville and so we need to certainly do work on the regional basis on some of these issues. I also believe the City should— It has contributed a fair amount of funds for affordable housing, more in the last two or three years than ever before to help with affordable housing.

As to the workforce housing, I believe that we can assist with down payment programs as well as some funds from housing trust and what I would also encourage private housing developers to provide housing for workforce housing, because there is between 80 and 120% of the median and that I think should be able to be, the marketplace should be able to provide some of those housing with

some assistance in down payment and I also think that some of those would also come through proffers when the special permission rezonings.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): I think this is a complicated issue and you could come at it from different ways but one way to come at is who owns the housing and there're lots of— There's a lot of desire to move people into housing, whether you're talking about workforce or affordable housing and it's a feel good operation, but if you move people into— If you have a developer and you say you must offer X percent of your units below market rate for our targeted group of workforce housing, the first owner wins the bonanza because then it goes to market rate so it doesn't stay at below market. If you transfer the ownership to an individual, it's gone after the first sale, so you may feel good about the first sale but that's it. So a more desirable operation then would be maintaining the ownership of the units, whether it's workforce or affordable and just this week in the paper, they were talking about a community land trust which does exactly that, so if you really want to sort of fight the market forces, I think a community land trust where individuals buy it but when it's resold, the ownership is retained by the land trust so you can continue to sell it at below market rates makes sense.

The City's done a lot for affordable housing. We've put millions of dollars in it cumulatively over the last few years and we do have all the public housing in the area. We just financed the operation to buy the Dogwood Housing units. We co-financed that with a developer. That makes sense to take on that kind of financial obligation. I tend to also— I want to mention that there are many private operations that are working for workforce housing such as the realtors association where they give their targeted group of people—nurses, teachers, firemen, policemen—part of the down payment to buy their homes and when they're sold, that down payment is returned to the trust fund, so that a private organization that does get people in as owners and we can give them money.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): I like the way you phrased this question because the term affordable housing in my mind is somewhat often used just to refer to workforce housing. I think in Albemarle County the discussion on affordable housing usually kind of means housing for teachers, housing for police officers, housing for firefighters. It used to be several years ago affordable housing, it was really clear what you meant. You meant housing for people who were of low income and I think that the City has been addressing, especially with Dave Norris now on City Council who's a strong and knowledgeable advocate for affordable housing, really trying to address issues at all levels. Workforce housing gets addressed through homeowners assistance programs which have been mentioned. It also gets addressed by encouraging a variety of housing stock, encouraging the

market not just to build to where the most profit is, but to build in a variety so that there's a lot of choices in the market.

The other, besides workforce housing, the other couple of areas that often get overlooked are affordable rental housing which the City has lost a lot of it as the City sort of gentrified. If you look in almost all the neighborhoods there's homes that used to be rental. They may not have been high quality rental but now they've been fixed up and sold to someone who's now living there, a homeowner, and special needs housing, housing of people who have mental illness or disabilities. Those are issues I think that the community needs to address. We have set up a task force with Albemarle County to look into what are the pressing needs in affordable housing and how can we as a region address them, so I'll hope to see more cooperation in that area.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I think this is a very complex problems well. I think the issue of having housing being a free enterprise endeavor has led to having a shortage of certain types of houses and a surplus of others and apparently one can make a lot more money as a developer building upscale housing, so there's a large supply of very expensive housing and that cuts the lower end of the market from having opportunities.

If we have primarily homeownership or houses to be purchased, then that puts a huge burden on people who do not want to buy houses and live here. We do need to have more rental properties, etc., so my feeling is that a good role for the City as a government entity is to try to find where the missing pieces are in this free enterprise providing of housing and try to find a way to encourage development of a broader range of alternatives. This can be working with individual groups, be they non-profits, private groups that are interested in housing stock development, perhaps co-housing opportunities where people can share some of the cost of land, have more affordable opportunities, but I believe—

I can't say that I have an answer to this, but I think a strategy would be to try to look into all of those different areas of who is willing to provide housing, what kind of changes might be necessary in zoning or in some of the other city regulations to allow different types of housing that might open the opportunity for just more choices for people who have a broader range of incomes than we have currently, so I think it's a look to find where can we get good change quickly and I think the City needs to accommodate any of those non-profit or profit-making enterprises who are interested in developing new housing choices.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): The whole housing issue I think is one of Charlottesville's biggest economic problems. Workforce housing is affordable housing. Affordable housing is workforce housing and I guess it depends on how you define who the workforce is because housing should be available for teachers in those classrooms. The housing should be available for the custodians that clean the classrooms. Housing should be available for the police that walk the beats. Housing should be available for the people that clean those same streets. I believe that some of the issues that are intertwined with affordable housing also include education that needs to happen, employment opportunities.

Even the social inequities that kind of make us feel uncomfortable with the recent information that there's certain— That African Americans in this city aren't given the same equity for home loans. There're a lot of social issues that need to be addressed that will also help the programs that are available for housing opportunities to be effective and I think housing also should be defined not only as home ownership but rental opportunities and also just being creative about having maybe rent-to-own opportunities where people that aren't able to get the down payment but there're a variety of ways to address the issue and I just think that with the emphasis that the present Council has given to this, it's the best opportunity we've ever had to move forward.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. The next question will first go to Barbara Haskins. **Last year City Council replaced the 7th street vehicle crossing with another crossing at the east end of the mall at the behest of businesses along the mall. Do you support the second vehicular crossing of the mall?**

Barbara Haskins (I): I think that if you want to say was this a good idea or did it work, you need information and I sort of identified three potential constituencies around this subject. One would be the business owners, one would be the drivers, and one would be the pedestrians and as a pedestrian, I myself have not had any problem with that crossing, but pedestrians would be the most likely group to complain about it.

I understand that there was a follow-up study and the study seemed to show that things were going well. Then, of course, people came up to me and told me that the study was bogus and the data were rigged and they were done at the wrong time of day and dah dah . . . , so I would at least want to look at the methodology of the data collection to see if I felt it was valid. I'm a scientist so, take a look at it. I mean, it was done for business people so there should be— Rather than going with impressions, there should be data as to if it increased sales. I personally don't think that's the main reason to do it. I think driving downtown is confusing, especially if you're not intimately familiar with it. The consultants who've looked at this multiple times over the years recommended crossings because it was so hard to get around, so what drivers think about it would obviously be more subjective, so you can't measure what drivers think, but it still

may be helpful for people to be able to cross when they've made a mistake or need to get to the other side of the Mall, so there you have it.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): The issue for me with crossing the Mall is that the City is very proud of and somewhat dependent on the health of the Downtown Mall. I mean, it's a jewel of the City, but the City Downtown merchants can't depend solely on City residents spending dollars there. We have to make it so it's easy for people who don't live Downtown and don't live in the City and may not come here that often to be attracted to find a place to park and that to me— That's the big reason why I supported and I continue to support having that second crossing. I think we need to make it easy for a person who is trying to figure out where to park and where to go to do so.

I thought the first crossing, when that started— the crossing on 2nd Street, I had some concerns about it, but I sort of felt like those concerns really weren't— I've always felt safe and didn't feel unsafe with my kids and I feel the same way about this crossing. To me, the critical issue that we did study and I think we should continue to look at is people who are crossing the Mall, what are they doing? Are they going to find a place to park? Are they discovering the Mall is there? Or are they going from one side of Charlottesville to the other side of Charlottesville having discovered this to be a shortcut?

So far, there's no evidence that people are using this as some type of shortcut. In fact, the evidence points that people are actually coming to a Downtown destination and that's the context in which they end up crossing the Mall, so I did support it and I continue to support it.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): My short answer would be no, I do not support the crossing at 5th Street. I think there's been several problems with just the philosophy behind introducing this Mall crossing. It's a pedestrian area. It's a pedestrian Mall. It is the area focus for pedestrian access, pedestrian mobility and to introduce cars into that is like having pedestrian spaces along 29 in the middle of the road where it would just interrupt the flow of what the purpose is. Some places should be automobile corridors. Some should be pedestrian areas.

I recently traveled in Europe and I've been to several of the major cities that have pedestrian areas which are much greater in size than the size of the Charlottesville Downtown Mall. There would be several parallel streets that would run for many blocks that would be all pedestrian access. There would be satellite parking. People get where they need to go. In fact, they get more easily to where they need to go. In the study that was done after the one-year trial, one of the striking results was that most of the people who were surveyed crossing

the Mall were coming from or going to a destination that was in vicinity of the Mall which meant they parked their car and then they drove to the other side of the Mall and did something else. I don't believe that that's a good use of our Downtown area.

We should have— We should encourage, make it convenient, for people to come to the Downtown, park their vehicle, if they're coming from out of town and do all of their trips in a chain and then they drive off. I think it was a phenomenal number of people were surveyed crossing the Mall at one crossing and then crossing at the other crossing, whether they were going around in circles, cruising, sightseeing, but it didn't seem like it was meeting the intended purpose which was to get people to the parking garages or to a first destination, so I believe that it's been a failure in meeting its targeted goals and the downside is that it has certainly had a negative impact on pedestrianism in our pedestrian-centered area.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I think I can honestly say that of the candidates, I am the only one that has the distinct pleasure of chasing two toddlers across the Mall and the fear of being able to catch them in time before they get to that intersection. So I was initially discouraged at the presence of the vehicular crossing and for the benefit of the businesses. I do, however, think the crossing is a benefit for the elderly in being able to get closer to some of the stores. And I also believe, and this came this morning after watching the children get off the bus at Buford, it is how difficult it was to get the wheelchairs off the bus with the handicapped children and navigate all that, so that crossing has allowed for more handicapped spaces and a way for our future entrepreneurs that may navigate the world in a wheelchair to be able to have businesses. Then I think that it was worthwhile.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you.

Satyendra Huja (D): The Downtown Mall was primarily a pedestrian space but for years and years, no one could find it unless you lived in the town. It was sort of a hidden gem somewhere so I think I used to be opposed to crossings, but I have seen that it works and I think that it will be useful to have one on each side. I wouldn't want to have more than one on each side. It does— As long as the priority is still given to the pedestrians, so even the cars can cross but they're not the priority. The priority is to the pedestrians. It provides better circulation in the downtown. Most people when they come to a new place, where I go I want to see where I'm going before I park or at least to have some idea of it. It allows that opportunity. It especially, I think, it gives more visibility to businesses and ease of – convenience of – separation of Downtown because if you don't have both side crossings, you know, if you come one side, you can't get to the parking garage without going through the Mall or going another a mile of circulation, so I

would say it's a good idea to have two of those as long as pedestrians are given priority.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. The fourth question will be directed first to you, Mr. Brown. **The Meadowcreek Parkway is now scheduled to begin construction in 2008. Do you support the construction of the Meadowcreek Parkway including the grade-separated interchange at Route 250?**

David Brown (D): Thank you. I voted in favor of the Parkway Monday night and so I do support the Parkway. I only support it with in an interchange. I only support it with replacement parkland and I support it because even though we have a great mall now, I worry about what congestion on Route 29 which is going to get worse before it gets better, what Albemarle Place is going to do to our Downtown without the Meadowcreek Parkway. What's going to happen to people who are on 29, it's congested. Are they going to choose to stop somewhere else for sort of an entertainment, restaurant, music kind of place and so for that reason, I believe that we do need the Parkway.

I also believe that there are neighborhoods that have suffered a lot because of cut-through traffic for people trying to avoid Route 29. It's becoming more and more acute, for example, in the Greenbrier neighborhood and Brandywine. That said, however, this isn't an easy decision, and it's not one that I go home and really feel great about. I mean, how can you? I mean, it's parkland. It's building a road through forests is just not something— I think it's the right decision but it's not necessarily something that I leave feeling like it was an easy decision.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I could make another short answer for this one and it would also be, no, I do not support the Meadowcreek Parkway with or without the grade-separated interchange. I think this project, again, was one of those ideas that was a product of the '60s and the fear was that the Downtown businesses would lose all of their business to the emerging mall developments like Fashion Square Mall and that as these developments north of Barracks Road which was the edge of town at the time, there was just a fear that we needed to connect to there to make it convenient so that people would have a choice, either to go Downtown or to these new destinations, but that fear has not been realized.

The Downtown Mall is quite healthy and, in fact, people try to get Downtown and people that I know try to come Downtown and say I can't get down there. I can't park when I get there. They park in my driveway which is not a distant walk to Downtown, but it— I think it's an idea or a solution that has been kept alive all these many years in spite of the fact that it's not a good solution to our transportation needs. Our needs are not to get people into Downtown. Our needs are to get people around the City. Many of the people who are congesting

our Downtown are people who are not going Downtown, so if we can provide ways to have them avoid the areas they do not wish to travel, we could be much better off.

With or without the interchange, if you look at the traffic data that I've looked at, anyway, it's really like bringing a bunch of new traffic into an already congested set of links which is U.S. 250 Bypass going either direction or McIntire Road, both of— all of which are relatively close to their capacities during the peak hours. If we bring another 20,000 vehicles a day and we drop them into that and don't do any other improvements, then we have added to the congestion in the places where people live. It'll add to cut-through traffic and I just don't think it can succeed in meeting its goal. Thank you.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I think this is kind of a rhetorical question because it's already been answered by the present Council, but I support the building and upgrading of our transit system. I encourage the use of alternative transportation. I take every opportunity I can to talk about the benefits of walking and how wonderful it is to walk through parks. I don't support the development because of just the amount of loss of parkland.

Satyendra Huja (D): This issue has been discussed a number of years, I think about 40 years or so. I do support Meadowcreek Parkway as long as it's a two-lane parkway design and has pedestrian and bike access and it has a replacement for the open space that has been lost. I think it will do— One of the things which I do have concerns about is the grade-separated interchange that is being proposed. It seems quite massive but I prefer a tighter interchange which will take less space and less obtrusive.

I think that Meadowcreek Parkway will provide better access to downtown. There are many benefits to this road. It'll provide a better access for the northern part of the neighborhoods in the City. It will also, I think, reduce some traffic on Park Street and people have been complaining for a long time. Then David mentioned, I think also it will help Greenbrier neighborhood cut-through traffic. Right now, I was canvassing yesterday on Brandywine. I saw lots and lots of cars which didn't seem to be neighborhood cars but just passing through and going pretty fast. I think it will help them also. I think it is project which can be an asset to the community.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): My campaign is about getting people to really think about how the City finances itself and why this City is the City. Why do we have this box around us and set up a political entity that's pretty expensive to operate, but that's what we have right now. We can change that. It's up to the citizens, but

given that we have it, the two main sources of revenue for the City are commercial and taxpayer/homeowners' taxes, so I think it behooves us to support the commercial revenue stream. Virtually every business person downtown feels the Meadowcreek Parkway is vital so that down the road it still becomes a reasonable place to visit without too much angst on the road. We need to keep our commercial core viable, and even if people can get Downtown today, that doesn't mean they will be able to in five years. I think there're upsides and downsides. I don't necessarily think I can do them justice in three minutes, but there're pros and cons, but I think for now as long as we're the City with our limited ability to generate funds to pay for ourselves, we need the commercial area to be very vibrant.

In other news, the Parkway is supposed to be a curving 45-mile-per-hour speed limit road with accessory bike paths and pedestrian paths. That's a fairly large distance that people can use for traveling that we don't have now in terms of really bike paths that maybe you wouldn't get dirty riding your bike if you wanted to use it to commute. Most of the bike paths besides the City roads that are set aside with lanes are more for weekends, so this actually opens the possibility for people to commute more in alternatives besides vehicles.

I really think the main issue is how we can afford to stay the City and—

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): The next question will be directed to Mr. Kleeman first. **Some citizens are concerned about increasing cut through traffic through residential neighborhoods. What can or should be done to reduce cut through traffic?**

Peter Kleeman (I): Well, my feeling is that as we have more and more vehicles in the City, we will have more and more cut-through traffic because these vehicles are going to be used to go somewhere and the people who are living in the City will be using them and they're the ones who know how to cut through so the issue is to try to provide opportunities for people who live in the City not to use their cars for doing things in the City and I try to do that. I have a car. I drive it mostly out of town. I have never driven it across the Mall although it's about two blocks away to get to the Mall crossing and I have not once driven across the Mall, so the issue of cut-through traffic even in neighborhoods, if we can reduce the number of vehicles which would be, as related to some of these other questions, if we have more increased housing opportunities in places where people work and shop, they don't need to do those extra trips driving their cars, so basically removing the number of trips that are going on will go a long way toward.

Tying it into the idea of the Meadowcreek Parkway or other major roadway connections like that, those are going to be major sources of cut-through traffic as people discover that McIntire Road as it is congested now will be much more congested. The north Downtown neighborhoods and other neighborhoods where

people can turn off on Perry Drive and cut through to get to where their destination is by the courthouses or east of town, they will become standard routes for many people because they will anticipate being stuck in traffic, so as we have more and more of these connector roads feeding this traffic from 29, the 29 development and from the south coming in, people will look for those alternatives, so in fact, I think there's probably a group of people now when they see the maps on the walls at planning meetings, they go home and they plan their cut-throughs so my feeling is that we just need to change the opportunity set for people to do their daily trips. Transit, biking, walking clearly would do it but I think some of these other things will just add to it as far as new traffic development.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I think ultimately the best way to decrease the traffic is to get people out of their cars to create a culture where pedestrians and bicycles are actually welcomed in our city and I think that just increased traffic management and paying attention to the reasons why people are taking certain streets. There was a period in one of the public housing sites where there was cut-through traffic through the parking lot and over time, and strong advocacy and collaboration with the police and the Housing Authority and actually stopping people and asking them where are you going, do you realize that you're cutting through here is another way you could go. Over time, it actually decreased the cut-through of that neighborhood but it took time and it took conversations.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): Cut-through traffic is a problem in a number of neighborhoods in the community, especially in the north and south part especially, but at least three things which I think could help deal in dealing with this issue. First, I think we can promote more traffic calming in residential neighborhoods which will slow down some of the traffic. If they can't zoom through, then they're not likely to go through there.

Second, lot of cut-through traffic is coming from County and I think I would encourage Albemarle County to build some connecting roads like Sunset-Fontaine, Eastern Connector, Southern Parkway so they can have some other roads to travel on than just going through the City, but I think the most important thing I'd like to promote is a good transit system. If we had a good transit system in the City which was [just fifteen minutes you had to wait]—dependable— you would use it and I think that would cut down on the traffic and I think it will cut down on some of the cut-through traffic also.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): We all know that people do the thing that makes the most sense to them and so if cut-throughs seem like the best choice, they will continue to use cut-throughs until they are no longer seem like the best choice, so you can make cut-throughs more toxic. You can make roads one way. That cuts out half the cut-through. You can put in traffic calming, speed bumps, what-have-you.

Usually when those topics come up, the downside is that it slows down rescue operations like fire trucks. People need to decide what they prefer, a speed bump or a rapid fire truck there, but, I mean, there are options for these kind of things, but until it makes sense not to cut through, people will continue to do that and in some communities, things get so desperate people shift. Around here in terms of the positive thing, we already have the continuously running trolley between Downtown and UVA. UVA is not particularly— It's done to bring consumers Downtown. It may be that a continuously running trolley between the Downtown Mall through the Corner and over to Barracks Road, possibly up through the K-Mart loop would be a reasonable thing that people would actually endorse using even if they had a car.

You always have two target groups—people without a car and people who can choose to drive, but we can all say other people should ride their public transportation but until it makes sense to them, it's not going to happen.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): Probably not too much left to be said on this one. To deal with cut-through traffic you can get people out of cars, as Peter mentioned. You can try to encourage density where people can walk to work or walk to school. You can try to get people to ride bikes or to walk places, to ride buses. You can try to get— And I think we're working on that. I think a Regional Transit Authority in cooperation with Albemarle County could go a long way and then you can encourage people to drive on the roads you want to drive them on and discourage them from being on the roads you don't want them to be on. The things we've done to try and encourage people are things like intelligent transportation systems, in other words synchronizing our stop lights. I think people who use Main Street will notice Main Street's a whole lot more friendly than it used to be because the lights work well together and don't hold people up.

We can also create parallel roads like the proposed Hillsdale Connector so that not everyone has to try to jam onto the same road even if it is kind of one of the bigger roads and then finally there are a wide variety of things you can do with traffic calming to discourage cars from going on the roads you don't want them to be on, but people will— If one road is backed up, they're going to seek ways to go, but I think that the neighborhoods know what streets need attention and we always need to pay attention to the neighborhoods in terms of where the problems are arising.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thanks. One piece of housekeeping before the next question for the folks in the audience. We do have index cards out there if you have a question for the candidates. Please feel free to write down your question and bring it forward. We'll be getting those questions here at the tail end of the forum. Our next question is our sixth question and it's to you, Ms. Edwards. **The City's comprehensive plan calls for increased housing density. How will you balance the goal of increased density with citizen concerns about changing the character of neighborhoods?**

Holly Edwards (D): Increasing the housing density has the advantage of allowing people to live closer to where they work. The concern that I have with the density is making sure that the infrastructure is in place to support it. In regards to changing the character of the neighborhoods, I believe strongly in the power of grass-roots organizing and the ability to have neighbors collaborate and be a part of the architectural planning so that everyone is part of that process to assure that the character of the neighborhoods are being preserved.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): There are areas which in the City that I think I would like to encourage higher density development like on major corridors in Downtown area, around the Mall, but at the same time you want to discourage higher densities in single-family residential areas and that'll also encourage some good transition between high-density and low-density so there'll be a healthy transition. Density in itself is not a bad thing. It's just a matter of how it is used and how it is placed and how it relates to adjacent properties.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): This was one of those semi-trick questions because if I were to just read it again—how would you balance the goal of increased density with citizen concerns. That implies that you can balance the goal and I think to some extent people— If the density is next door to them, there will be unhappiness. Hopefully there is citizen input on facades and size and what-have-you, but generally speaking people don't like it, so I'm not sure when you're talking about density near low density or density where there wasn't density before that you're going to have happy neighbors, which would be different, for example, in developing parts of Preston Avenue which is just commercial right now. It has rear neighbors, but that strip itself perhaps is more open for density right off the bat.

We have zoning ordinances. The question is how do you balance these things. We have zoning ordinances which control building height to some extent so we have those kind of impacts, but I try to keep in mind this notion that there are virtually no decisions in a vacuum so that if you make a rule, there're repercussions. If you specify the kind of façade, you may change the cost of the

building and therefore the rents or the cost to buy into that building then go up. Then you maybe are keeping people out that you didn't mean to keep out economically.

There's some sort of slogan that everybody hates sprawl and density, but obviously density is an antidote to sprawl and I think that to some extent, the prevailing ethic is I want to have my cake and eat it, too. I want to live in the best city in America and I want to keep my place, the neighborhood I know and love exactly the way it is, but I want us to have more density and stop plowing up Albemarle County and at some point reality collides with that and so you do have— I guess it's the whole thing that you can't make an omelet without breaking an egg. You have some very unhappy people in the process.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): Density has a lot to do with sustainability. We talk a lot now— We have a sustainability committee for the City. We signed the Mayor's Agreement on Climate Protection and it's just simply much more efficient, energy efficient, to have people living densely in a city than it is to have people spread out and having to drive places, so density can be a good thing, but it can only be a good thing if it's in the places where it makes sense and the places where it makes sense is to have density in areas where it either (a) supports walkability, walking to work, walking to school, walking to restaurants and entertainments or (b) it supports transit.

Several years ago there was a consultant here really looking at what we could do to improve transit, and the thing he said, the no. 1 thing we could do to improve transit, to really have effective transit, was to have more hubs of density that would actually support a sophisticated transit system. What we don't want, however, is to overwhelm functioning neighborhoods that don't meet either of those criteria with density. It just makes no sense and we have lots of great neighborhoods. They have their own character and their own individuality.

We can encourage things like accessory apartments and accessory buildings, so there's a small increase in housing in those areas, but the last thing we need to do is to change to allow density on a City-wide basis. We need to be very careful about where it is.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I believe all of our neighborhoods are changing in their character. It's a continuous part of being a neighborhood. New people move in. People change their houses. Sometimes there're older people living in neighborhoods because of just when those places were developed. I've lived here for 26 years and I've seen huge changes in places like Belmont or my neighborhood which used to be mostly people who are all living here for 60 years

or 70 years and now it's mostly young families with two children and so I think the demands of each neighborhood changes as time goes by and they should be able to adapt.

I believe that the opportunity for density in areas that are looking for density is a great opportunity. I think the corridors that we have, Main Street and Preston Avenue and other places can support an incredible diversity of uses, more housing, more businesses, more recreational activities, park land, that people would then use those spaces in a different way and I think would improve the quality of life of people living in those areas.

Also, other areas that are well established neighborhoods that are stable as single-family neighborhoods and there's not that much demand for change, I believe that those should be allowed if the neighborhoods want to not suffer, in their terms I guess, spot density, like some of the parcels of land that have been turned into these PUDs, these Planned Urban Developments, which are very high density stuck in the middle of a very low density neighborhoods surrounding area. Maybe if many of those happened over time, the whole character of that neighborhood changed and people would change and it would become a desired addition, but I think we just need to be sensitive to the neighborhood associations and neighborhoods that are established, but I think density is really a good answer to providing more opportunities for people, more diversity, more social interaction, less dependence on automobiles to get to wherever they need to go and so I think placed well, where desired, density is a fabulous opportunity.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): The next question will go to Mr. Huja first. **Looking ahead to the upcoming budget, does City government have the appropriate resources, financial and personnel, to achieve the objectives in our comprehensive plan?**

Satyendra Huja (D): Yes, I think we do have sufficient resources. I think we need to do- I think we're doing pretty well. We have good staff, good personnel in the City. I think it depends on how you use the resources that you do have. I would allocate the funds more to strategic concerns like transit, like environmental protection. I would spend more money in capital projects, drainage, sidewalks, and waterways, water quality, but I would also think that we could do— Make sure that our resources are spent, and monitor how they're spent so they're efficient and effectively used. I think we do have resources to deal with our priorities.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): And Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): Another one of my little trick questions here. This is one where it's exactly backwards where it says do we have the resources to meet everything we want to put on our wish list and I would turn it around and say what are the resources and then what kind of wish list should we develop given that. I

really am saying this because it's difficult to finance the City. We have the commercial and we have the homeowners and that's pretty much the sources of income. And so when we create these big plans, where does the money come from to pay for them and so, again, I really encourage the citizens of Charlottesville to rethink where we're interested in reversion, merger or revenue sharing agreement revisitation.

Having said that, I do think there are some things in the plan that I certainly would not support. I was as tickled as the next person when we won number one city but I'm starting to be concerned that we're so thrilled with having been the best that we can't get off it and move on to fabulous.

Here's what's in our plan. On page 36, it says "create a City-operated urgent care health facility, contract for a turnkey operation that would provide option for employees to get medical care for simple medical conditions or workmen's comp." The City's proposing to set up a City-run medical facility for City employees at taxpayers' expense and part of why you actually win those no. 1 prizes is because you have a very high ratio of doctors to citizens. We're loaded with doctors in this area and City employees have health insurance, so why are we setting up a City-run clinic for City employees.

On page 38, it says "explore the development of a comprehensive community fitness and wellness program as a core business within City government." What is this about? Why are we setting up a health and fitness program as a core business of City government? This makes no sense to me, this page 38.

So, I know the plan is there but I certainly don't endorse all that it's in it and I think it reflects this kind of gosh, gee whiz, Judy Garland, Mickie Rooney let's throw a show kind of operation and I just really think somebody needs to be talking about where— How are we paying for this and can you pay for it when you continue to have this 10 square miles of Charlottesville, the 690 square miles of Albemarle County? No one would set it up like this. It just doesn't make sense as a financial operation. There may be a belief it's a political operation but it comes with a high cost.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): We have lots of different things out there, comprehensive plans, strategic plans, City Council vision and Barbara's a little mistaken in that what she read is not in our comprehensive plan. It's actually the sort of brainstorming ideas that come from staff on ways to get to our 2025 Vision, so our 2025 Vision is very ambitious, you know, big strokes of how we can be a healthy city, how we can be this kind of city, so they aren't proposals, but they're certainly ideas that people have thrown out there and so—

But getting to the question, the resource part is a moving target. The resource part, the financial resource part, is a moving target because of, you know, not just because of our projections of how well we're going to do with sales tax, with our meals and lodgings tax, with our real estate revenues, but because of the uncertainties that develop with state and federal funding. I mean, pretty much every year it's a little bit of a— You hold your breath to see if there's something else you're not going to pay for, so for an example, a year ago the federal government decided to stop paying for child care for working low income mothers, for parents. That was a big thing that we suddenly had to try to adjust to.

I think currently the City does have sufficient resources. I think we have some great staff. Not every staff person is great. We can improve in that regard, but I think we do have good resources. We have to use them wisely. We have to adapt to the train as it changes, but I think it is important that we have— That we plan where we want to be and we figure out what the steps are to take to get there and part of those steps in insuring that we have the resources to achieve it.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I believe we do have a fairly luxurious set-up, that we have some resources and we have some very stable organizations like the University of Virginia in our midst and some large corporations that are moving here because of the amenities that we have here and I believe we have an excellent staff at the City to the extent that I've been able to meet people in the City staff.

What I think is really lacking is some bold leadership and I think people who are sitting on this dais here or whatever, are people who are competing with a different vision of how to lead that staff and to utilize those resources in a bold and dynamic way that we can accept the fact that Charlottesville is the center of our region and that as this central focal point, we need to show the rest of the region how we can work together, how we can move forward, how we can be a more dynamic community, how we can attract business alternatives, how we can integrate the various neighborhoods, the ethnic communities that we have. We're bringing people from around the world who are coming from troubled nations and we have to integrate them into our community and make them productive citizen as well. I think we have the opportunities to do that.

We have great resources that we can play from in the community. We have one of the more educated small-town populations around. I'm just amazed at the number of people who have expertise, who are willing to provide it free of charge to the benefit of the City and I see oftentimes their efforts being turned away because it just doesn't fit into the plan of how things have been laid out to that point or how do we integrate those people with the staff. I think we just need to open our eyes to the opportunities that are there and we can just move vastly

forward without having to bring new resources or provide increased revenues from people moving into our community.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. And Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I certainly think we have the talent and the wealth and the desire to have all the things that have been set forth in the strategic plan. We need more resources, we need to do more work, but I think that plan just created a vision of how hard we need to work. I think that, and especially since I grew up in D.C. See, I grew up listening to the complexities of local government and I grew up in D.C. during the Watergate era, so my— I guess my experience with politics has given me an appreciation for the politics here because people really do work hard. The employees do work with a sense of integrity.

Granted, there's a lot of resources that we need to connect but I really believe there's a desire to do that and even with all the concerns about the budget and how resources are allocated, there're a lot of good things that happened within the budget this year. There may have been things that people didn't agree with, but everybody agreed on the importance of supporting our school system, so as we look at the resources and we look at what needs to be done, I think it's also important to think about the things we that have done and done well with the budget resources and I think the current Council worked hard to keep that vision in mind as they made plans ahead and they worked really hard to make sure that the budget had a vision with objectives and an outcome.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. The eighth question is directed to you first, Ms. Haskins. **How important is creating new jobs to the future of the City of Charlottesville? With the departure of Martha Jefferson Hospital, what economic development opportunities should be explored?**

Barbara Haskins (I): Who's against new jobs? Nobody. I actually think that the more critical issue, again, where does the money come from? It comes from commercial operations and it comes from homeowners and so to me, the issue of jobs per se is less relevant than commercial businesses that supply a revenue stream to the city, so that would be my focus is supporting and maintaining business. The jobs would obviously be part of the businesses and people- We don't really tax income so if people live in the City, let's get rid of that political boundary— If they live in the City and work in the County, I don't necessarily think that matters. What matters is that we keep businesses in the City to generate revenue to pay for this political operation that we're running.

In terms of Martha Jefferson Hospital, I do agree with the idea to sort of dezone or rezone back to housing for the part that are single-family nice old homes so that those would not be vulnerable to being torn down for a more commercial development of the housing area. In terms of how to develop the Martha Jefferson property, that is owned by someone and they are working on it.

They've hired consultants to come up with ideas and make recommendations and their thought is to give the consultants time that they've hired to really see what they recommend before we weigh in, so those people are experts. I'm completely willing to hear what they have to say and how they recommend using that property.

It's a difficult thing because sort of businesses, if you put in housing, especially special needs type housing, you're doing a lot of social good. You're keeping people near the Downtown Mall. You're putting them sort of near health care providers and you may anchor some doctors to stay in the area, so that would be one kind of use.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): As Barbara said, who could be against creating new jobs. The issue isn't— I mean, we want to encourage businesses, small businesses, entrepreneurship, but the issue is not so much the jobs as it is making sure that our school children and our young adults are well-prepared for jobs for the future, that they finish school, that we've identified the skills necessary for the emerging workforce and that we made sure that we can supply that labor and that our kids have jobs that pay well and jobs that have a future. We don't need more low-end service sector jobs, but we do need to attract jobs where people can go somewhere with them.

Martha Jefferson Hospital leaving, it's too bad. I mean, that's a loss. I am positive about the outcome of the consultant. They've been working with the neighborhood and the City, but I also agree that the neighborhood interests need to be protected. Houses were rezoned because the Hospital needed them. It makes sense that they would now go back in the other direction if the Hospital doesn't need them any more.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I believe job creation is just part of the organic life of the City. What we do today probably if you took a poll of people and asked them what do you do today and if you had a job 10 years ago, what did you do and probably looked at the data, you would find that people are doing pretty dramatically different things today from what they did 10 years ago. And that will be true 10 years from now and so I think job creation is like the organic part of a city. I think that we need to encourage it certainly and we have some great job generators.

We have a University that is growing and we see more and more medical research being done, buildings being constructed to do special purpose kinds of medical research but we have this large medical facility that's going to be vacant, apparently, and it would seem to me a great opportunity would be to work with

UVA Medical Center and some of the incubators like the northern— In Albemarle, what's it called, the Research Park, and these people are generating new businesses, some of them are going to be looking for places to actually do research or development, etc., and I think that we can tap into that as a city. I think we should develop a coalition with the University and the scientific community to say we have resources that we can provide to you in terms of buildings like Martha Jefferson Hospital and who knows what else might become available as other corporations merge, move, whatever else happens, but I think it's just an opportunity of being at the front with all the people who are going to be making those new jobs, having a partnership with them, having them come work with the City in some capacity, whether it's as advisors for research or that City people are involved with what's going on in the University so that there's a good communication that when opportunities arise, there's no shortage of people who can take advantage of them in the City.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I'm going to echo the sentiments of Mayor Brown and say that Martha Jefferson will be a loss to the City and as far as the creation of jobs, a few years ago I worked with the Connecting People to Jobs program to prepare low-income residents for the workforce and Martha Jefferson was one of the partners that collaborated. Whenever I was in the Human Resource Office, the frontline staff was always open and friendly and I think that as they collaborate with the consultants, that that same spirit of collaboration with that program will continue with the community with having jobs that will allow people to have a quality of life and have them move forward in the workplace.

Satyendra Huja (D): Quality of life greatly depends upon having a good job and for most people, but I think as David mentioned, who can be against creating jobs. We need to create jobs that are paying well, on which you can support a family, that you can afford to have a house. Well, part of that is in training our job force, labor force, to make sure that they're prepared to take advantage of the new opportunities that will come and there are many opportunities I think can come in this community with the UVA Hospital, research jobs, technical jobs, but also jobs which will meet the needs of our people who are already here. They also need jobs.

As to the Martha Jefferson, I think it is a loss and just a community resource, but it is an opportunity also to have a development which could add to the economic well-being of our community and it should be developed I think from more mixed uses to provide job opportunities as well as residential opportunities, but I agree with David and Holly that you want to make sure that it does not intrude into the neighborhood because it is a very stable and healthy neighborhood. We don't want to do things which will detract from that so you need to make sure, in my mind, that they will be protected rather as those developments are happening,

but I think this is an opportunity for us, our community, to do something good on that property that was Martha Jefferson Hospital.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. We will now move to the first audience question and it will begin with you first, Mr. Brown. **Have you supported in the past and do you now support the consideration of a merger between the City and the County?**

David Brown (D): No, I have not and no, I do not. The City and the County come from very different places and earlier in this room there was a meeting on our pool needs in the City and the fact is, the City has two swimming pools, has had them for a long time. Albemarle County has none, but part of that's because we're a City and we provide pools, we've provided recreation centers, we provide trash pick-up. There are lots of things we provide that the County has not provided. Now, granted, the County is becoming more urban. The County is starting to have— see some of their citizens demanding some of the things that people in the City take for granted, but I think we are a long way from being well suited for a merger.

I do believe, however, there's lots of areas where we could more fully cooperate. I mean, there's lot of chances for efficiencies, the things that stand in the way of those efficiencies often are the people who are already doing those jobs, whether it's competing fire departments, volunteers versus paid employees. I think we have a school system with a superintendent here and a school system with a superintendent there. We need to get everyone talking, working on the same page.

For example, an issue in the City and the County, but especially in the City, is kids who move a lot, you know, families that live in poverty often find themselves frequently moving. We can address this in the City by having our elementary schools have pretty much seamless programs, so if the middle of the year you go from one school to another, the math book is the same and the reading process is the same and the kid is familiar with what they're doing. That doesn't happen if the affordable place they could find to live is across the line in Albemarle County and now they're in a completely different type of educational system and since there's so much movement back and forth, it seems like really trying to get us to figure out how to do things jointly, either in sync or actually start to work together on them, there's lots of opportunities.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): About 15 or 20 years ago, I can't remember how long ago it was, there was the reversion consideration in Charlottesville and I knew many of the people who were involved with that and at the time I actually was I guess

somewhat in support of the idea of having us grow into a region, a self-contained one jurisdiction region at that time. That was a long time ago and I've learned a lot more about cities and county activities since then and at this point in time, I would still be very much in support of us growing toward being a single region.

We do have shared problems to a large degree. I don't think that in the current setup, the way things are happening in terms of growth and other decisions between the City and the County that we have some of the major issues on the same path, so my personal feeling is that this is a great time, as I mentioned before, for Charlottesville to step up and say we're going to be the leaders of what's going to happen in this region and we are going to attract the kind of businesses that need to be attracted and we're going to develop the kind of housing that needs to be developed, that the County will be coming to us and taking from us the models that we are providing for development in the region, that we can do effectively, that we can provide good quality of life for the people that are in this area.

I just don't think that the County Board of Supervisors or even the structure of the County wants to move in that direction. They want to be a diverse, rural community and they want any development to be on cul-de-sacs and they don't want anybody to really connect to them. It's a very different idea from I think what the people who are living in the City want. The people in the City, in Charlottesville, want to connect. They want to be sitting on a café on the Downtown Mall seeing their friends, walking to where they're going, seeing people on the bicycles, etc., and so the kind of growth that the people currently living in Charlottesville or many of the people that I believe living in Charlottesville want, the kind of life that they're looking for is different from the kind of life that the people in the County are looking for, so I think that joining now in other than providing fire services, sewer, etc., I don't think is the right move, but I think it would be in the future but we'll just have to show the way.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I'm going to stay with my same image. The City and the County have been dating for years. I don't think that we should give birth to an idea before we've really planned the courtship. I'd hate to have a shotgun wedding because there's an idea that went into practice before it was really ready to evolve. I do agree with Mayor Brown that there are certain issues as we date we need to continue to collaborate on—the transportation, the fire and most certainly the social services, so I think that this is an idea whose time has not yet arrived.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): The City is a unique entity in many ways. We have certain qualities of life and certain values which are quite different from the rural

community that the County is mostly, except some parts are getting urban now, so I think that character and lifestyle which we have, we need to maintain and I think by merging we would only lose that and I think there's nothing to gain at this stage to me to merge City and County.

Secondly, as David mentioned earlier, there're many areas where we can cooperate. For example, our school population is going down. The County school population is going up and so there are school buildings which could be used by City and County jointly and those facilities could be used. Social services—the same rules are being applied to the City and County and I don't see a reason not to work together, so I think there are areas where we can cooperate but I think we are a unique community and I think an urban community and there is a quality of itself and we should cherish that.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): Its one thing to cherish it, it's another thing to pay for it and this is the second time in a row I've come after Holly so I'm going to use my response. Thank you again for saying it, when she talks about the shotgun wedding, my response to that is why buy the cow when the milk is free? The City is paying for quite a lot that adds to the amenities of our area. And there's just this wee 10 square miles where the money has to come from and, you know, Peter knows some people that are on the Downtown Mall walking around and seeing their friends but the very first day I went to get petitions signed, I went to Whole Foods and this woman was all over me because she was telling me how she had to work two jobs to pay her taxes that kept going up and up.

So, of course, it's a wonderful place but can we afford to stay this way and merge is one of the possibilities, another is reversion to town status and a third is revisiting, if possible, the revenue sharing agreement where we agree to not annex more County land in exchange for a certain percentage of their money. Try to envision what it would be like if that is revisitable and we could annex however much we wanted outside the City boundaries. You really start to change the commercial cash flow for running what is the City, so I just think the status quo is not sustainable and I think there're many things we have in common with the urban ring.

I always find it odd when Charlottesville High School is open and Albemarle is closed and I understand that the buses can't get through those shady roads in the far-flung reaches of the County but when you're in the urban ring, it still is a little odd so—

And I also agree that you should always— We should always be suspicious of vested interests because when you ask two units, like take the school systems, to merge, there's going to be a million reasons why that doesn't make sense to them and so the question is where does the force come from, and probably the

answer is the citizenry, to overcome people's natural inclination to want to maintain the status quo, so I just really hope that we start to become aware of what it costs to stay the City and think about if we want to continue this way or not.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. Our second audience question is directed first to you, Mr. Kleeman. **Over the last five years, residential property taxes have approximately doubled. If you are elected, will you support similar tax increases? Please state your plans to exercise fiscal restraint.**

Peter Kleeman (I): I can't profess to be an expert at taxation and budgeting but I do have some ideas about budgeting and what I have been entertaining and discussing with others is that we keep hearing from existing Councilors, City Manager, etc., that there is a fair bit of revenue that we need to spend on items in the budget just because we are required by the state to do that. We have statutory requirements that we have to meet certain things. Then there're some discretionary portion of the budget and it's really only the discretionary portion of the budget that we can manipulate as a City and that's where the tax money that we raise or don't raise has to be considered and I have not yet seen even the proportion of the discretionary portion of the budget is and so rather than give an answer about this is what I'm going to do, I'm going to give a strategy for how I'm going to address this problem if I'm a Councilor.

I believe that our budget manager who does a very good job in budgeting would be more than willing to provide a breakdown of what we have options to adjust and what we don't, what proportions of our budget are that are going to these various discretionary items and perhaps over the past several years, where have the changes in our budget happened. Has it happened in the discretionary funding or is in the statutorily required funding from the state or however our mandated funding. If it turns out that we have opportunities to reduce our spending and redirect some of the funding to areas that are discretionary that need attention and take it away from other areas don't need attention, I would certainly support that, but there may actually be no opportunity to make significant changes or turnbacks if the State keeps on putting more and more burden on the City to pay for those required expenditures.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I guess what I can offer is my experience as a resident in Belmont and actually experiencing the rise in tax and actually experiencing how that has had an effect and what I would be willing to do and would have to do is to explore all the options that are available so that it wouldn't have to happen, but to really be in a place to ask all the right questions at the right time, to really understand what the options are and to make sure that based on my experiences, the questions that I ask would be of benefit for everyone.

Satyendra Huja (D): As was mentioned that there are a lot of things which are required by law, state or federal mandate. [We have] a lot of those, but there is a discretion in our budget and it seems that many times when we go to budgeting, we decide how much money we have, we find out how much money we have and build the budget around that. I would go a little differently. I would go, well, first to saying what priorities we want to implement, what are the important things you want to pursue and then build a budget according to that and live within our means. A lot of us have to live within our means in our private lives so there's no reason why the City shouldn't do that likewise also.

By that, I mean that there're some incentives that do increase like everything else—cost of living goes up, gas prices go up. Those things have to be readjusted, but I think adjustment should be— We should budget based upon what our important needs are instead of what you would like to have everything.

Barbara Haskins (I): What do you think I'm going to say? I'm the horrified taxpayer. I would like there to be a symbolic year next year where homeowners' taxes do not go up, period, so whatever the adjustment in the rate is, since it went up again this spring, I would freeze them there. We had a nine million dollar surplus a couple years ago, and we still raised taxes the next year. We still didn't give people a break from that and I would tend to disagree with your statement about the budget manager doing a good job or maybe I'll just say when the City Manager writes the budget, this last year, this is what started getting my attention. He noted that we were having, I don't know, a 12% or something increase in revenues and the next line, and we should spend it all, and I simply don't agree with that.

I understand that there's a housing bubble that popped and I understand that the taxes are going to go down because of that. I just think there is taxpayer fatigue. I've had people today coming up to me and saying, well, how about \$3,000 a year for the whale's tail. I mean, that was just in the paper today and people are already coming— And I like the whale's tail. I live in that neighborhood, but there's just fatigue out there and so I'd give us sort of a tax increase amnesty year and I understand— I do understand all this about mandates and things you have to buy and spend. I get all that, but I just think that we're just going to have to be less profligate. I have really been disappointed in the rate of spending increases in the last five years and I would not be sitting here, believe me, if I weren't. I have other things to do.

David Brown (D): It is true we have a certain level of things we're mandated to do. On top of that, pretty regularly, those things we're mandated to do are intended to be cost shares where we pay a portion, the State or the federal government pays a portion and as time goes by, the State balances their budget by decreasing what they will pay which means since it's mandated, we have to pay more and that's been significant in a bunch of areas and a second big area of cost for us has to deal with the cost of salaries, benefits, and retirement

benefits, health benefit and retirement benefit. Those are the same costs that businesses nationwide face; a lot of businesses nationwide have dealt with that by renegeing on the promises they made to employees, so, in other words, employee pensions are no longer what they were promised. The City's not going to do that which means that the City has— And we don't have extravagant benefits. We actually, you know, if you compare us regionally, we do a pretty good job of trying to be careful, but those are also costs. We have to pay for regular employees something like 23 or 24 cents per dollar we pay them goes towards their benefits. For a public safety official, a firefighter, or a police officer, it's more like 34 cents per dollar goes towards their benefits.

There is discretionary spending, but some of the discretionary spending is things we've been talking about we need to do. Transit, for example, I think would fall in the category of being discretionary and what do we want to do to encourage more people not to drive. The affordable housing initiatives that we've enacted on. Those are discretionary.

We're going to have tougher budgets. We're going to have less money coming in and we've got needs we haven't been addressing. The surpluses that were referred to, most of that money has been our way of paying for infrastructure needs, for capital needs— And I'm going to stop.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): And the final audience question will be directed first to Ms. Edwards. **The land around the Ragged Mountain Reservoir is owned by the City. When and if the water level is raised [as part of the 50-year water supply plan] many miles of trails and acres of natural habitat will be lost. Assuming that reparation funds will be made available, how would you propose to use those funds?**

Holly Edwards (D): I think first priority will be to make sure that the land that is lost from the City is replaced by the County because once land is gone, it's gone forever and perhaps use of those funds would be to create settings where people can still appreciate our natural land and you can't ever replace it. It'll never quite be the same, but at least explore how that can be.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Huja—

Satyendra Huja (D): I would say that— if any— when we get the funds for replacement land, I would like to see that land to be near the City or in the City. For example, on the flood plain for the Rivanna River, there's a flood plain land that you could acquire and be easily accessible to our citizens instead of going 10 miles or 20 miles from here to open space, so my inclination would be to protect flood plain land and all the streams in the City— surrounding the City.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Ms. Haskins—

Barbara Haskins (I): I would like to compliment whoever in the audience wrote this one. It's one of those semi-trick questions, I think, because the question is assuming that there's replacement dollars, how would you spend it, and from what I recall, there is actually a struggle going on as to what would be deemed acceptable replacement and that's the reality. What's been suggested may or may not be acceptable to City residents in terms of parkland versus non-parkland and I think this, again, points up the whole— There's a constant push-pull with the County and in so many ways it's an artificial push pull. It's the same community, but it's like, well, no, you have to pay for this. No, you have to pay for this. It's weird.

And somebody was saying how we have so little in common with the County a little while ago and actually, you know, when we're in this struggle together regarding the water supply and how we allocate and who's going to pay for it, in the broader sense, we actually have so many things in common that with— Our community at large has so much in common that to focus on the differences may not get us farther down the road in terms of solving problems.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): Well, I pretty much agree with Mr. Huja. I think that any revenue we get that comes from the fact that we own the land at Ragged Mountain, it would be great to have that loss of natural area be focused on things we can do to improve our urban natural areas and in particular, either by remediating some of our streams that are impaired or develop— creating buffers, acquiring easements, expanding the networks of trails, so I think that it's kind— I don't think there's any way we can exactly replace it, but we can take the spirit of what's being lost and use that and try to replace it that way.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

Peter Kleeman (I): I have never been to that area, so I can't speak from what's being lost there, but my understanding is that it's quite a spectacular hiking area, conservation area, natural area. People go running through there, probably cross-country skiing if we ever see snow again. My skis haven't been used in many a year, but I think the goal would be that if we are losing some natural area, we should try to replace that with some new natural area preservation or certainly recreation conservation areas of some sort. In the urban setting, if we were trying to spend those dollars, I don't know where we would find much in the way of large parcels of land. That's a substantial amount of acreage that's going to be flooded in that reservoir, but we do have recreational and conservation opportunities and we can certainly spend that money in very positive ways towards improving our environment.

The City is a member of the Cool Cities program trying to provide better tree cover and the Mayor has signed the Commission on Global Climate Change,

etc., so we can actually move towards some of the things that are in our strategic plan and our targets that we can say let's go toward our targets. We spent two years developing these targets and we could invest much of that in taking what little land is available and making it as environmentally sensitive land as possible. We could even do tree planting on City properties, we could do tree planting along highway corridors.

We could invest in pocket parks. We have many opportunities that would bring some of that nature into the neighborhoods and I think we've had opportunities, small parcels of land in the past that have been just deeded to the neighbors because the City chose not to keep them or didn't want the liability if somebody tripped and broke their leg on them or whatever their reason was, but I think some of those things could be just converted into replacement natural area and then we could have a fund from these resources to do that.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Thank you. I'd also like to thank the audience for what were very thoughtful questions. We're going to be moving to closing statements but I want to make a quick statement that one of the most intriguing things that Sean and I have found about politics in the region is the interaction between the voters and the candidates. I encourage you, and those at home, to ask your questions via email. You can find all the email addresses on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website and I encourage you this evening after we close, the candidates will be around for a while. If a question that you had did not get answered, please ask them. We have been relatively happily surprised that at the openness and the eagerness to interact with all the voters and I encourage you to pursue that realm.

Starting with closing statement, we will start with you, Mr. Huja, for the closing statement and we'll work our way around. Thank you.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

Satyendra Huja (D): Thanks again for this opportunity to share with you our thoughts and hopes for Charlottesville and the future of our community. As I mentioned before, I bring experience, creativity, results and proven record of service to this community. I would like to make two commitments to you and you can count on those two commitments.

First, that I will listen and learn from you and follow up on your concerns if I was elected to City Council. The second, I work hard and proactively with you to find creative solutions to problems and seeking opportunities because that's how we are going to be a better community, so I urge you to vote on November 6th for strong, experienced and diverse Democratic team that you see at this table of Edwards, Brown and Huja and I think we together, we can build a lot better community than separately. Thank you.

Barbara Haskins (I): I would just point out again that we are a land-locked ten square miles, we have a limited commercial base, we have one in four people living in poverty, and therefore a lot of paying for the City comes from homeowners. We have expensive tastes and we're carrying I think the burden or torch of maintaining the really pulsing heart of our community. This is the unique quality that makes Charlottesville different from so many other places and my question is how is this sustainable. How does this remain affordable for the people who live within the City limits? Only the citizens can decide if they want a fundamental change in how we define ourselves. If we don't change, you should expect this trajectory to continue and the burden on taxpayers to only accelerate, especially if the City Council continues to feel the same way about spending money.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Mr. Brown—

David Brown (D): You're looking at me?

Barbara Haskins (I): I always have. You're on my left.

David Brown (D): I'd like to thank Charlottesville Tomorrow, not just for tonight and the Free Enterprise Forum for tonight, but not just for tonight because I think that people paying attention to this election have a great opportunity to learn about what's going on. All the forums are recorded. There's lots of information out there and I think it's a really great resource. It's part of what I feel like I've tried to bring to City Council the last four years is to try to make what we do more open and more accessible because we really do welcome and need citizen participation.

The second thing is that the theme tonight, I thought, was relations with Albemarle County, how do we interact with Albemarle County. I think it came from almost all the questions. Every question had answers that somehow related back to that. People who live here, you know, they don't really see the line that I think the politicians do. People who live in the County brag on the Downtown Mall. People who live in the City, you know, are appalled when we some big new structure on the top of a mountain, and I think we need to create ways of having trusting relationships where we don't view City-County relationships as win-loses, but we view them as ways we can mutually benefit and I think that's really important.

The third thing is I just want to say I've enjoyed being a member of City Council. I feel like I've worked hard. I've tried to be open. I've tried to listen. I've tried to be responsive even if there are some people who've sent me emails that didn't get one back and I promise to do the same if I'm re-elected. Thank you.

Peter Kleeman (I): I want to thank certainly the sponsors for this. I think bringing forward the issues of growth, transportation, environment, community

design are all key issues facing our City, facing lots of cities around the country. I think it's great to have this opportunity to chat about those with you.

But I think that there's a resource in this community that I look to help solve some of these problems and I look and I see a lot of them right out there in the audience. These are people who I see at City Council meetings standing up for the things that they believe in whether it's housing, schools, environment, planning, and I'm delighted that you took the time out of your day to come here and participate in this forum and I think that what makes our city great, and what makes the opportunities reachable in this City is the fact that we have a wealth of resources here. The citizens' organizations like this and people who will stand up and say what they think, demand what needs to be demanded and people who will reach into their pockets and contribute from their own personal wealth to make some of the things happen in this City, whether it's art programs and children's programs, etc., that bring this City to life, so I as a candidate for City Council think I'm just one of these, what did they used to be called, the points of light. I mean, I don't know how bright my light is, but I would like to be one of the people who can contribute in some meaningful way and to help me contribute, to make my life brighter is to be able to work with each one of you and to be able to energize you and your friends and your neighbors to participate in this great enterprise that's called Charlottesville.

So, I think that we have an opportunity ahead of us for you to select among the people that you've just heard talk to see who has the enthusiasm, the ideas, and the willingness to work with you as an individual or a member of a neighborhood or an organization to try to move forward your issues and to make that a meaningful part of moving all of Charlottesville forward, so I would welcome your vote and I would welcome the opportunity to try to lead this City in that direction and I thank you for your time and participation.

Neil Williamson (Free Enterprise Forum): Ms. Edwards—

Holly Edwards (D): I think the City is a complex puzzle of issues and concern, and the puzzle piece that I hold onto and the strength that I bring to the Democratic team is my experience in education and having a desire to help people. I bring the understanding that roads are important, but it's also important to build roads of social equity. I think that it's important to plant trees, but it's also important to plant seeds of hope that often our citizens don't have because they feel isolated by the politics of local government and I also bring the importance of understanding a balanced budget, but it's also important to have citizens that have balanced, healthy lives. I'm going to hold onto that puzzle. I'm going to hold onto that piece and as I continue this journey, I'm going to continue to find strength in that piece and provide that for the people here that I've chosen to serve as your City Councilor. Thank you.

Sean Tubbs (Charlottesville Tomorrow): And thank you. And on behalf of Neil and myself at Charlottesville Tomorrow, I'd like to thank the candidates for participating tonight and this I believe is one of the only ones that we televised, but we will be continuing to film other candidates' forums up until November 6th. They'll be available on our website at cvilletomorrow.org, so stay tuned there for that, but I'd like to give the candidates a round of applause for participating. And thank you very much for attending and this concludes the forum.