

## Capital City Hues

1. What steps would you advocate for to ensure that people of color are proportionately employed in all city departments and employment classifications?

Ensuring diversity among city employees, in all departments and at all staff levels, is key to improving the effectiveness and responsiveness of our city government. If elected, I will work with fellow Alders and city departments to prioritize the recruitment and retention of people of color in the city's workforce. The City Council can have a positive impact by publicly flagging the need for greater diversity, by stressing diversity goals in its review of upper-level staffing decisions, and by providing adequate support and oversight of the Department of Civil Rights. While the formation of the Department was controversial, we must now help it live up to its promise. The Department has the ability and responsibility to ensure that job openings are promoted widely, that new staff are chosen from a diverse applicant pool, and that the city provides a healthy and supportive workplace for all its employees, including by recognizing and rewarding their contributions.

2. What initiatives should the city undertake to expand the level of the purchasing of goods and services of minority business enterprises (MBEs) by private and public decision makers?

The city's purchasing decisions must reflect the needs and priorities of our community. I'm a strong supporter of "buy local" initiatives, and of the city's current programs to support minority- and women-owned businesses. I believe that the city must do more to pursue "high road" economic development, by recognizing the value of small and locally owned businesses, targeting job training for local residents, and promoting worker policies that encourage productivity and long-term investment. These initiatives must be designed and implemented in a way that fully involves and benefits minority- and women-owned businesses. While private entities have their own purchasing procedures, city policies can help make minority- and women-owned businesses stronger competitors in the private market.

3. To what extent should undocumented workers be allowed to access and utilize goods and services provided by city government?

It is not the role of local government to enforce federal immigration policies. Attempts to do so are likely to divide and harm our community. For instance, when a crisis occurs, everyone – including undocumented workers – must feel completely comfortable with contacting the police or calling an ambulance. Moreover, it is simply not fair to deny local services to people who pay city taxes.

4. How should the city-owned properties on Allied Drive be redeveloped and what would be the guiding principals that would influence the decisions you would make.

The most important principle is that we respect the desire of the residents of Allied Drive to “move forward, not out.” The city must involve Allied residents in every step of the redevelopment process. To prevent gentrification and displacement, the city must retain quality affordable housing in the area, produce new affordable housing, and help build the assets of current residents so they can remain in the area, even if housing prices rise. I disagree with proposed benchmarks for homeownership, as I believe the focus should be on ensuring that current residents can stay in the area, either as renters or homeowners. I also believe that the city should not just develop the physical properties in Allied, but also invest in the community. We need to work with the community to provide childcare and after school programming, job training, public health and other needed services. Lastly, having efficient and affordable public transit service to the area is key, as transportation is often the second largest household expense, after housing.

5. In light of its historical funding levels in an age of declining public revenues, should the funding of the programs funded by the Office of Community Services be decreased, remain the same or increased? Why?

The programs funded by the Office of Community Services help build healthy communities by meeting the needs of children, families, seniors, and survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, as well as strengthening neighborhood associations and other community groups. I support increasing the city’s funding of the Office, as long as its programs continue to be effective and serve unmet needs, instead of duplicating services. While it is true that city finances are tight, the Office’s programs actually save taxpayers money, in addition to being the right thing to do. That’s because investing in these programs now helps reduce the need for costly services, such as law enforcement, later.

6. What initiatives and programs would you undertake to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing for low-income families that meet or exceed city housing codes?

There are a number of ways to provide more affordable housing for low-income families. We should start by fully funding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, so that it can work as intended. I supported the Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) ordinance, and worked in support of its passage and opposed the attempt to repeal it. I also supported ending Section 8 discrimination at the county level. The city should explore using TIF funding to encourage the creation of permanently affordable housing units. The city should also support programs that help people find and keep housing by preventing discrimination and reducing evictions. In addition, we need to do more to increase local economic and workforce development, so that residents can better afford housing. Lastly, we need to realize that what’s affordable in terms of housing for any family depends on their other expenses. Transportation is often the second largest household expense, after housing. That’s why one of my campaign priorities is an affordable, accessible public transit system. I also support high quality, affordable childcare.