

## 2017 Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate's Full Name

Sylvester Williams

Your current occupation

Retired Financial Analyst, Pastor of The Assembly At Durham Christian Center, Executive Secretary of NGO

Have you held an elected position before? If so, please describe.

General Election for Mayor in 2011 and 2013

Have you ever served on a public board or commission? If so, please state the name of the board and the dates that you served.

Youth Services Advisory Board

Have you received endorsements from the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, Friends of Durham, People's Alliance, or any other notable organization? If so, please indicate which ones.

Followers of Christ Jesus the Son of the Living God

1. What do you believe to be the most important job of our Mayor?

A) Promote economic growth through all five corridors in Durham, b) address poverty in a coherent and feasible manner, c) affordable housing and homelessness d) look at ways to reduce taxes, e) demonstrate leadership on racial and religious issues and f) recruit businesses to the city

2. Why have you decided to run for Mayor in the City of Durham?

Poverty is getting worse in Durham. Articles in the HeraldSun, the Indy Week and the UNC School of Law N.C. Poverty Research Fund along with the Federal Reserve out of St. Louis, have written or provided statistics that show that blacks suffer poverty at a greater rate and are not being included in economic prosperity in Durham.

Religious liberties are dismissed by PACs that have way too much influence in the city.

3. Please define the constituency for our Mayor.

The citizens of Durham.

4. Please define the role you believe corporations and businesses should play within the City of Durham.

Corporations and businesses are not moral agents. Businesses and corporations flourish where there is less impediments through laws. However, corporations and businesses have a moral obligation to the city to support zoning and mitigation of racial hiring disparities.

5. Do you support public-private partnerships through incentive opportunities for incubating and recruiting businesses? Please explain your answer.

Yes, if the incentives are applied evenly throughout the city of Durham, especially in the more distressed areas.

6. In 2011, the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce led a sales tax referendum for multimodal transportation. Given recent updates, do you believe the transit plan still makes sense for Durham in 2017-2019? Also, do you believe this plan supports current and future growth patterns? Please explain your answers.

No. To use existing rail for light rail would be counter-productive for people still having to drive to the train stations. Secondly, a 30-year study done on light rail has that it is largely ineffective in reducing traffic and pollution. This has been demonstrated especially in the south where commuters love affair with their cars did not decrease pollution or road congestion. Thirdly, the tax increased tax burden to citizens of Durham. RDU has contracted with a supplier for electric buses. Buses are more flexible, and if electric, as what RDU is using, reduces pollution.

7. Do you support tax or other fee increases to augment revenue growth? Do you feel the private sector should pay a greater cost burden? Please state why or why not.

I support looking closer at the budget to determine a more efficient use of the city's tax dollars. We have \$1.79-cent tax rate increase while the reserves doubled from 2013 to FY 2017-18 budget.

8. Please state the top three infrastructure challenges confronting the City of Durham. If elected, how do you plan to help resolve these challenges?

Roads, downtown parking and aging water lines. Review the budget for waste and prioritize the challenges listed.

9. What should the City's priorities be in working with other stakeholders to develop and preserve affordable housing?

Habitat For Humanity and other agencies should continue to partner with Durham to provide AFFORDABLE housing. Self-Help, which participated in the razing of Southside should also agree not to penalize low income residents.

10. What additional business issue confronting the City of Durham in 2017-2019 do you believe to be the most important? Please explain your answer.

The intimidation of free speech by those that love the Lord Jesus and are willing to follow His teachings. Center For Studies On New Religions and the International Society For Humans Rights reports that 80% of worldwide persecution is against Christians.

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 9/21/17