County Council Questionnaire

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Each of the following questions includes a 100 word limit

**Briefly describe why you are seeking public office:**
I have served in leadership roles at non-profit organizations since 2005. Since moving to Greenville in 2014, I have heard repeatedly that Greenville County Council would not work collaboratively with the residents of Greenville County, municipalities, other elected officials, or the non-profit community to serve the needs of our County. It is past time that our neighbors in Greenville County are represented by someone willing to do that hard work, and to help non-profits achieve the goals pertaining to the needs of our County, including affordable housing, transportation, inclusive diversity, the environment, child care, and health.

**Briefly describe a significant accomplishment that would reflect your ability to lead our community:**
I have created and led two non-profit organizations since 2007. Both organizations were built by understanding systems, and by researching evidence and best practices to influence their components, work, and composition, in addition to providing services needed to enhance communities and achieve outcomes. Both organizations brought diverse stakeholders together to achieve their goals. One of the goals achieved was the return of child care for 25 families a year—response to the stated need from the community. The other’s goal was adopted by the Medical College Public Health Department to continue to serve the community.

**If elected, after your first 12 months on Council, what do you hope is your most significant achievement?**
Our County Council has remained stagnant for years on issues that are important to me, and important to the voters I’ve spoken with. Of immediate and utmost importance are 1) implementing the Comprehensive Plan and 2) adopting the anti-bias ordinance. The global pandemic has revealed and exacerbated fissures in our access to childcare; we should build a coalition for child care innovation and affordability to
start work in Greenville County to address this issue. Child care is one important piece in the system that affects families, children and employers; and affordable housing, transportation, employment, and health are also impacted.

Greenville County is home to nearly 500 nonprofits, ranging from small community centers to large institutions that provide health care, housing, food support, education, arts programming, and so much more. Most recently available data show that nearly 90,000 people in our state are employed in the nonprofit sector and one in three South Carolinians volunteer in a nonprofit organization. Nonprofits and the foundations, companies, and individuals that support them are vital to Greenville County.

**Tell us about one of Greenville County’s non-profits that you think is doing important work in your community, and what you have done to support this organization’s mission?**

The Institute for Child Success (ICS) is doing great work. I collaborated with ICS while serving as the project coordinator for the Nicholtown Child and Family Collaborative, and later joined ICS as a research associate. It was there that I learned more about the complicated child care systems in the US, which guided my policy research and analysis to advocate for child care improvement. Kindergarten readiness is workforce readiness. I continue to focus on child care, and am grateful for my tenure at ICS and the lessons that have contributed to my abilities to help solve problems in this area.

**How could County Council and Greenville non-profit community better support one another in our shared goal of improving the lives of people in Greenville County?**

The work of our myriad non-profits should inform the policy and practices of the County. As previously noted, the work of the Institute for Child Success will improve the lives of children and families; other thought leaders to inform County policies include the Greenville Housing Fund, The Greenville Homelessness Alliance, the United Way, and PRISMA Health. All of these organizations have robust data and can bring direction on housing, health, and other social determinants facing Greenville County residents. In turn, the County should prioritize best practices that will benefit Greenville County in their budget and ordinances.

**Housing**

What would you do to encourage the production of more affordable homes for these families? What would you do to support to local Affordable Housing developers, including community organizations and private developers (e.g., incentives such as density/parking bonuses, reduced fees)?

Developers should be encouraged to take advantage of the new SC State tax incentives (signed by the Governor on 9/28/20) that support rehabilitation of existing homes, as well as construction of new homes. All municipalities should participate in the Greenville Housing Fund (GHF). GHF provides rental assistance to low-income individuals, boosts owner-occupied rehabilitation of housing, acquires land to be used for mixed-income housing, and advocates for mixed-income housing on parcels of land that are currently owned. Finally, we must implement the County Comprehensive Plan regarding density, housing, and growth.

**Transit**

Describe the role you believe transit plays in our community’s future growth and success and what role should County Council play in supporting public transit demands?

Transportation is crucial to the infrastructure of our County. It is the County’s responsibility to adequately fund Greenlink. When envisioning public transportation, we must design a
system for everyone—that will inspire people to leave their cars at home and take public transportation. Public transportation done well not only benefits the sustainability of the system, but also 1) encourages interaction between diverse community members and 2) improves the environment through a lower individual automobile footprint. Environmental considerations should also be made by providing electric plug-in stations for electric cars across the County—not just in the City of Greenville.

Growth

How will you balance the interests of private property owners with the community’s broader vision for how to manage growth across the county (i.e. the future land use map)?

I will engage with private property owners to understand the totality of their concerns about new ordinances. I am in full support of implementing the Comprehensive Plan, as it was laid out thoughtfully with many stakeholders, experts, and community members in Greenville County. If considerations are needed to ensure the implementation works better for all members of our community, we must be receptive to those and include them in the action.

Arts

How do you believe the County can further support the arts now – during our economic crisis – and in the future?

We should utilize the CARES funding to benefit all who need it. Of the $90,000,000 granted, only about $15,000,000 has been distributed to community organizations. We need to reduce existing barriers so that those in need of funding can efficiently know whether they qualify and apply for assistance. The arts community has expressed needs in the areas of funding and building relationships with the business community—both are areas in which the County could facilitate. The County should create its own Arts Commission to help support the arts in the County.

Municipalities

What steps will you take to ensure open communication between these diverse entities, many of whom are independent of Greenville County Council governance authority?

We must have open, accessible, and inclusive Council meetings. We could enhance our communications through the distribution of periodic newsletters to constituents with plain language describing what is happening at the County level. Along with mass communications, I will personally respond to emails, calls, and community requests. I will hold regular meetings with leadership of special districts, municipalities, and community members; establishing relationships will help us ensure we are coordinating as effectively as possible. Our residents deserve elected officials who are responsive, collaborative, and willing to advocate for them on different levels of government to ensure their needs are met.

Citizen Engagement

Greenville County Council represents more than 10% of the population of South Carolina. With that comes an incredible diversity of thought and experiences shared by our citizens.

I seek input from people with different perspectives regularly. The two non-profits I have built are a testament to my
Do you seek input from people with different perspectives? In what way and to whom do you turn for input?

One of the priorities of the Greenville Nonprofit Alliance is an increased involvement of non-profit leaders and board members in shaping policy at the local level. If elected, how will you ensure local non-profit leaders have the opportunity to provide a voice in the decisions being made throughout the county?

purposeful inclusion of people with different perspectives. Throughout my campaign, I have sought input and taken careful notes to learn and understand what is most important to District 24 residents. These conversations have given me direction for actions when I am elected to County Council. I will be more than happy to hold meetings with non-profit leadership so that I will continue to hear, learn from, and work with them to make Greenville County the best it can be.