



Durham City Election Recommendations

Prepared for: October 10, 2017 City of Durham Municipal Elections

Prepared by: Muslim American Public Affairs Council Political Action Standing Committee

October 8, 2017

Table of Contents

Summary.....1

 Offices on the Ballot in 20171

 Synopsis of City Services and City Operations.....1

 Recommended Candidates1

Analysis and Basis for Recommendations2

 Election Mechanics.....2

 What You Are Really Voting for On October 10th3

 City Issues.....4

 Candidate Evaluations5

 Mayor5

 City Council Ward I8

 City Council Ward II10

 City Council Ward III11

SUMMARY

Offices on the Ballot in 2017

The 2017 election is what is known as an “off year” election, so called because State and Federal offices do not appear on the ballot, nor, in 2017, do any County wide offices appear on the ballot. The 2017 election is confined to municipal offices. Voter turnouts during “off year” elections are typically low, and, because of this low turnout, smaller, but well organized and/or well financed groups are sometimes able to exert influence far out of proportion to their size. A single voter’s influence is greater in a low turnout off year election than in any other election.

Synopsis of City Services and City Operations

The City of Durham is responsible for providing water service, sewer service, garbage collection, police protection, fire protection, parks and recreation, land use regulation, community development services, and some roadway construction and maintenance. While day to day operations of the City are the responsibility of the City Manager and a professional staff under the Manager’s supervision, the City Council can hire and fire the City Manager, The principal role of the Mayor and City Council is setting City strategic goals and directions, making budgetary decisions, including setting tax rates, water and sewer user charge rates, and other schedules of fees and charges, and appointing members to various quasi administrative, planning and judicial boards and commissions.

Recommended Candidates

The Muslim American Public Affairs Council recommends that its members vote for the candidates listed below. The basis for these recommendations, as well as more detailed explanations of City provided services, the mechanics of the election, and current City issues can be found beginning on the next page.

Mayor	Steve Schewel*
Durham City Council Ward I	Cora Cole-McFadden
Durham City Council Ward II	Mark-Anthony Middleton
Durham City Council Ward III	Don Moffitt

*The asterisk next to Steve Schewel's name on the Mayoral recommendation is there because MAPAC was divided in support between Mr. Schewel and his opponent, Mr. Farad Ali. MAPAC Members in Durham are encouraged before making their voting decision to read the discussion about Mr. Ali beginning on page 5, and that about Mr. Schewel on page 7, the comparison of the two Mayoral candidates on page 8, and the reference material about the two candidates for which links can be found on page 8.

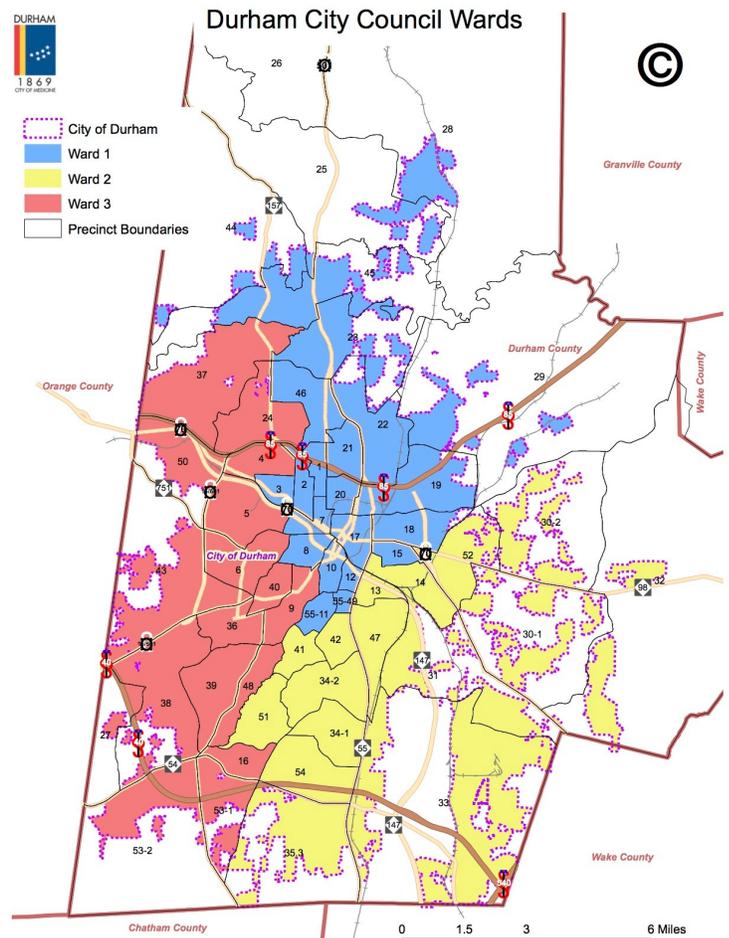
ANALYSIS AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Election Mechanics

Durham, like most local governments in the Triangle Area, elects its City Council Members for 4 year terms, and staggers the election dates so that in any given election year half of the offices are on the ballot. Durham elects its Mayor for a 2 year term, so the Mayor's office is on the ballot in every municipal election. City elections are "non partisan", meaning candidates do not run according to political party affiliation, and there are no political party primary elections as there are with State and Federal offices. While most candidates are members of one or the other of the political parties, their party affiliation will not appear on the ballot. Since there are no political party primaries, the number of candidates running for each office is limited only by the number of people who registered to run for that office. While there are no political party primaries in Durham municipal elections, the City of Durham uses a two step election process so that any time there are more than 2 candidates for a single office, there is in effect a primary election, followed by a runoff election. The first step election will be held on October 10, 2017, and the final, runoff, election will be on November 7, 2017.

The Durham City Council is comprised of 7 members, consisting of 3 members elected from specific wards, 3 at-large members, and the Mayor. Candidates for At-Large Council seats appear on everyone in the City's ballots, and are elected to serve the City as a whole. Ward council seats are elected only by voters within the geographic boundaries of the ward they represent. The map at right shows the ward boundaries. While ward council persons are expected to represent the City as a whole, they are also expected to make sure that the views and interests of the residents of their respective wards are always heard and considered, and to serve as a check against a majority demographic or special interest group advancing its interests at the expense of the other residents of the City.

This year the Mayor and the 3 ward council members will be elected. There are 7 candidates for Mayor. Under the City 2 step election process, even if one Mayoral candidate achieves a clear majority of more than 50% of the vote in the October election, the two candidates receiving the most votes will still face each other in the second, and final, step November 2017



election. Therefore voters should be aware that even if their preferred candidate “wins” by a large margin in October, they will need to vote for their Mayoral candidate again in November if they want to be assured that that candidate will be Mayor in 2018. There are 4 candidates for the Ward I seat, 6 candidates for the Ward II seat, and 4 candidates for the Ward III seat.

What You Are Really Voting for On October 10th

The October 10 election in Durham only concerns the Mayor and half of the City Council of Durham. The types of services provided by municipal governments, and the revenue sources available to those governments, vary greatly from State to State, and even within the same State, from City to City and Town to Town. The City of Durham is responsible for providing water service, sewer service, garbage collection, police protection, and fire protection. City services also include development and maintenance of a Parks and Recreation network, development and administration of land use plans and controls, including zoning, building permitting and inspection. The City is also involved in community development, operates programs that try to assure an adequate supply of housing for low to moderate income families, and funds various activities and construction aimed at providing more employment opportunities and generally improving the quality of life in Durham. While in other States construction and maintenance of roads within City limits is nearly exclusively the responsibility of local governments, in North Carolina most roads, even those within City limits, are the responsibility of the State. There are, however, some City owned and maintained roads. Durham also appoints 2 of the 8 Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority members, and operates the GoDurham (formerly Durham Area Transit Authority (DATA)) bus system. The City of Durham does not operate any schools, and the public schools within the City of Durham are owned, operated and controlled by Durham County.

While the types of services the City offers to its citizens are largely decided by the Mayor and Council, day to day operations of the City are the responsibility of the City Manager and a professional staff under the Manager's supervision. The City Council can hire and fire the City Manager, but the Manager is the only City employee (other than the City Attorney and City Clerk) over which the Council can exert that power. The Council also has the power to appoint members to quasi-administrative and quasi-judicial bodies such as the Raleigh Durham Airport Authority, the Planning Commission, the Workforce Development Board and the Board of Adjustment.

The type of amenities available to Durham residents and the conditions in which Durham residents now live were in large part determined by the budgetary decisions and priorities of previous Mayors and City Councils. The next Mayor and City Council, by deciding how much and on what the City spends, and the means by which the City funds that spending, will be a major determinate in how Durham residents will live in the future. City services can be funded through various combinations of property taxes, user fees, special assessments and impact fees, sales taxes, revenue bonds (bonds that must be repaid from revenues of activities specified under the terms of the bond sales), general obligation bonds (bonds that can be repaid from any number of sources, but whose repayment is guaranteed by the taxing authority of the City), and various State and Federal loans and grants. Tax rates, user fees, impact fees and special assessment charges are all set by the City Council. The City, by State Law, must have a balanced budget, even if vital services must be cut to achieve it.

City Issues

Durham is a relatively new City by North Carolina standards, not being incorporated until 1869, and unique in the Triangle in that it developed with a heavy industrial manufacturing base and with a larger minority population than neighboring communities. Textiles, and to an even greater extent, tobacco products manufacturing, were keys to the City development. The combination of manufacturing wages, “Jim Crow” era segregation, and a large minority population led to the formation of a large African American middle class and a successful African American entrepreneurial class in Durham. Parrish Street was once known as the “Black Wall Street”. African American owned businesses, including banking, insurance, and publishing thrived for a time in Durham. The decline, and ultimately the closure of the textile and tobacco plants in Durham eroded the economic base for African American prosperity in Durham, and the progress made in desegregation during the Civil Rights era ironically dealt another economic blow to minorities in the City. White owned businesses which had shunned the business of African Americans were opened to them by progress made through the Civil Rights movement. Residual, separatist tendencies on the part of non-African American populations deprived black businesses of their potential patronage despite the official end of segregation, and the resultant lack of economies of scale made it difficult for black businesses to remain competitive with white owned ones. While the City of Durham economy was declining in the late 1960s and early 1970s, development of the Research Triangle Park was generating unprecedented growth and prosperity in the Triangle Area as a whole. Durham only belatedly benefited from this growth, and much, if not all, of the benefits from that growth accrued to an affluent professional class moving into the area, rather than to the former textile and tobacco workers and their families. It is estimated that 17% of the population of Durham County lives below the poverty level, compared to only 10.9% and 15.5% in Wake and Orange counties respectively. The situation is even worse than these figures indicate, since Durham is the only City in Durham County, Durham County is the smallest county by area in North Carolina, and much of the “rural” population of Durham County consists of upscale subdivisions, while Wake and Orange Counties are much larger in size, and contain large, rural, less affluent populations. Put another way, of the three municipalities that form the Triangle Area, many of the poor in Wake County live outside of Raleigh and the “Triangle Area”, most of the poor in Orange County live outside of Chapel Hill and the “Triangle Area”, while most of the poor in Durham County live within the City of Durham. The Raleigh News & Observer reported in 2015 on a study that highlighted that Durham, and the Triangle Area as a whole, was one of the most difficult places in the nation for the economic under class to break into the middle class or beyond. Even cities like Washington, DC, with blighted neighborhoods and a seemingly permanent underclass, abandoned by the affluent for tony neighborhoods like Georgetown or prosperous surrounding suburban communities in Maryland and Virginia, offer the poor a better chance to succeed than does Durham.

Durham elections are really about choosing those most likely to be able to affect positive change for the substantial minority of the City population that has not yet been able to enjoy the prosperity of the Triangle as a whole. Durham has succeed in turning around its fortunes in many ways, and is now among the fastest growing cities in the United States. A now thriving commercial base and revitalized downtown have created a tax base that allows the City to invest in its own future. There are major problems though, and these problems largely relate to the residual poverty in the minority areas left from the near total disappearance of the manufacturing base that historically powered the City. Solutions to concerns about education, (now a County Government responsibility

MUSLIM AMERICAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

since the City Schools were folded into the County school system years ago), crime, police effectiveness, etc. all really turn upon finding the jobs and economic opportunities that will allow the Durham poor to elevate themselves into the middle class and beyond.

Candidate Evaluations

Long time Mayor Bill Bell is not seeking reelection. Mayor Bell has been such an extraordinary leader that any successor is almost certain to pale in comparison. It is therefore surprising to see 7 people willing to try and fill his shoes. One former and one sitting Council person are running for reelection. One other sitting Councilor whose seat is up for reelection has decided not to seek another term of office. The Muslim American Public Affairs Council (MAPAC) generally is inclined to support incumbents if it feels they have been doing a good job, but feels challengers should always receive a fair hearing. Evaluating incumbents is in many ways easier than evaluating challengers, since there is a clear record on which to judge an incumbent. Being an incumbent is, however, not without disadvantages, since any one who is in office long enough is eventually going to be forced into taking a position on an issue that will alienate a large number of constituents, no matter which side of the issue the incumbent takes.

The Mayor and the City Council together constitute only 8 people, who by necessity must sit and work together on a regular basis. There are always opportunities for disagreements on particular issues to become “personal”. If that happens Council Meetings can become acrimonious, and City government can suffer as a consequence. The ability to disagree without becoming disagreeable is therefore something that should be valued in an elected official, and in a candidate for elected office. Ideally, a working elected government consists of people with the ability to agreeably disagree, who come from a variety of different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints, and who are open to considering different approaches to any given issue.

Mayor

There are 7 candidates running for Mayor. Long term incumbent Bill Bell is not seeking reelection. One of the challengers is incumbent councilor Steve Schewel, while challenger Farad Ali is a former City Council member. Challenger Sylvester Williams is a pastor who unsuccessfully ran for Mayor in 2011 and 2013. The remaining candidates are new to the election process. Challenger Tracy Drinker is a retired Police Officer. Challenger Pierce Freelon is a former political science professor, turned activist, artist and rapper. Challenger Michael Johnson is retired from his own cab business. Challenger Shea Ramirez is a tax preparer, owner of a model and talent agency, and founder of a nonprofit.

Farad Ali: Mr. Ali has extensive experience in public service. A member of the Durham City Council from 2007 to 2011, Mr. Ali is Chair of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority Board and has served on the Triangle United Way Board of Directors, John Avery Boys and Girls Club, Triangle YMCA Board of Directors and Duke University Hospital System Chancellor’s Community Board of Advisors. Mr. Ali also served as the Chair of the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Mr. Ali moved to Durham as a child, graduated from Jordan High School, and earned an B.S. in Finance and an M.B.A. preparatory to more than 30 years work as a banker and consultant in both the private and non-profit sector. Mr.

MUSLIM AMERICAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Ali is now president and CEO of The Institute, a Durham-based consulting and services firm focused on business diversity. Mr. Ali is a strong backer of outgoing Mayor Bell's multi-prong strategy of recruiting and encouraging high end development and using the resulting affluent growth to provide the economic base for improvements in housing, public transit, and economic opportunity for the less fortunate sector of the Durham population that has been left out of the Triangle Area prosperity. Ali wants to build on and expand Mayor Bell's "Transition in Ten Poverty" program to address disparities between socioeconomic groups in education, jobs, affordable housing, transportation and health. Mr Ali's campaign slogan of "One Durham" reflects his plans to continue Mayor Bell's strategy of uniting government, community, and organizational, business, religious and civic organizations around a common platform of continuing Durham economic growth while expanding the benefits of that growth to include all of the Durham citizens. Mr. Ali proposes taking more positive steps to mitigate impacts of one unfortunate side effect of increased prosperity, the reduced supply of affordable housing and displacement the poor and elderly from their homes caused by gentrification. Ali's call for a bond referendum around affordable housing and establishing a housing trust fund is just one part of that plan.

Tracy D. Drinker: Mr. Drinker, a retired police officer, is running a relatively low key campaign in what is proving to be for others an expensive Mayoral election, Mr. Drinker's position statements on various issues indicate a thoughtful approach generally aligned with continuing the program and plans put in place by outgoing Mayor Bell that are also favored by most of the other candidates. A board member of the National Alliance for Mental Illness Durham chapter, Mr. Drinker differs from other candidates running on similar platforms by the greater emphasis he places on addressing the mental health of the low-income population in the overall City-County-Non-Profit-Community effort to lift up all of Durham's residents.

Pierce Freelon: Mr. Freelon is 33 years old, and is evidently of the opinion that this is a strong plus and that age should be a campaign issue. The son of a Grammy-nominated jazz singer mother and of the architect who designed the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Mr. Freelon has already made a mark on the City through his Blackspace, a digital maker space in Durham where young people learn about music, film and coding, his work as a frontman of the local jazz hip-hop band The Beast, and his co-founding Beat Making Lab, an Emmy-Award winning PBS web-series and social entrepreneurship community program. Mr. Freelon is the youngest person to be appointed by the Governor to serve on the North Carolina Arts Council board, and has also served on the boards of the Durham Library Foundation and the Nasher Museum of Art, KidZNotes. Mr. Freelon has taught music, political science, and African American studies at UNC Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University. The affordable housing, mass transit policies and other economic development policies Mr. Freelon advocates are similar to those put in place by the Bell administrations, but Mr. Freelon advocates the City go further and guarantee jobs for all Durham residents. Mr. Freelon also seemingly advocates the City defy State and Federal laws restricting its ability to act as a sanctuary City and implement anti-discrimination measures. Mr. Freelon also supports the City doing more in a wide array of areas, offering ideas to better engage the younger generation in Durham, to further enhance arts in Durham, and to create more opportunities for public involvement in the governing process in general, and the budgetary process in particular.

MUSLIM AMERICAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Michael Johnson: Michael Johnson, a retired cab businessman who told the Durham Herald Sun that he wanted to run for office because of corruption within the Police Department and the state of public parks, withdrew from the election.

Shea Ramirez: Ms. Ramirez has been a resident of Durham since she graduated from North Carolina Central University in 1995 with a BA degree in Public Administration. A long time community activist with no prior political experience, Ms. Ramirez thinks City Government is “moderately on the right course” but “could do more in the areas of policing, affordable housing and economical equality.” An outgoing mother of 6, Ms. Ramirez also thinks elected City Officials should do more to engage with the public they serve. Ms. Ramirez’s civic activities include working with the annual Back To School Drive servicing The Genesis Home, Damar Court and several other communities, being a National Night Out sponsor for the last four years, focusing on curbing violent crimes in Durham, and conducting mentoring workshops in Durham Public Schools with programs like the Bridge The Gap program and working with the Ascend program. A self-employed tax preparer who runs a model and talent agency and who started a community service non-profit, Ms. Ramirez’s advocating “to have a police oversight board made up of residents and city officials that would have hiring and firing abilities”, and advocating putting more funds into public schools, does indicate that she lacks some critical knowledge about what actions a City can legally take, and about which functions are City functions and which functions are the responsibility of the County.

Steve Schewel: Mr. Schewel has been a City Council member since 2011. His service as a Councilor is only one of many civic service accomplishments. Other accomplishments of Mr. Schewel include past membership on the Durham Board of Education, including a stint as Vice Chair, founder and former board member of Crayons2Calculators (C2C), a non-profit supplying \$1 million in free supplies to Durham Public School teachers for the past ten years, 21 years of service on the Board of Directors of Durham Tech Community Foundation, including service as the Board Chair, and time spent on the Board of Directors of the Urban Ministries of Durham, the Board of Directors - Durham Arts Council, the Board of Directors - Durham Public Education Network, the Board of Directors - N.C. Museum of Life and Science. and time spent on the Community Advisory Boards of both WNCU Radio (N.C. Central) and WUNC Radio (UNC-CH). Mr. Schewel founded the Independent Weekly in 1983, a publication which has become a journalistic institution in the Triangle Area. Mr. Schewel has a BA and a Ph.D. from Duke, and is currently a visiting professor at Duke University. The Durham City Council passed an anti-Islamophobia resolution authored and introduced by Mr. Schewel during a period when some national leaders were fostering fear and mistrust of Islam. If Mr. Schewel wins the Mayoral Election, the City Council would vote to appoint a replacement to his At-Large Seat, but if he does not win, he will continue to serve on the Council. Mr. Schewel has been an ally and supporter of outgoing Mayor Bell, and can be expected to continue the programs and directions Mayor Bell set for the City. Mr. Schewel has written, *"I spent the next twenty years helping to create the black-white political movement that gradually defeated the white conservatives who had ruled Durham for decades and replaced them in office with the progressive biracial majority we have now,"* and the record backs him up. As far back as the seventies, Mr. Schewel helped a successful fight against a highway plan that would have devastated an African American neighborhood and has consistently worked across racial and ethnic lines for the common good ever since.

MUSLIM AMERICAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Sylvester Williams: A retired financial analyst Sylvester Williams is Pastor of The Assembly at Durham Christian Center and has served on the Board of Directors for Durham for Jesus Ministries; Meals on Wheels Outreach Rest Home Ministry; Ellison's Rest Home, Durham, NC; C.A. Dillon Youth Detention Center Prison Ministry, Butner, NC; Youth Advisory Board, Durham County; and the Mayor's Advisory Board for Gang Violence in Durham County. Mr. Williams is also the Executive Secretary for an international NGO that feeds and clothes people in Ivory Coast, and worked with the Church for which he is Pastor to build an orphanage in India and multiple churches in the Philippines. Mr. Williams is the only candidate who opposes the Durham light rail project. Other areas in which Mr. Williams differs with the other candidates is that he favors more aggressive use of tax revenues, fund balances, and bond sales to produce more affordable housing, reduce employment, and improve infrastructure than the other candidates deem financially prudent.

Three candidates, Pierce Freelon, Farad Ali, and Steve Schewel stand out from the others. Mr. Freelon has the energy and the passion for the job, but ultimately we think he does not have the experience or the gravitas to keep the broad coalition for progress that Mayor Bell created intact and continuing to work. Mr. Freelon would make a fine Councilor, but that is not the office for which he has chosen to run, and it is the opinion of MAPAC that he needs more seasoning and more experience in the actual business of government before his suitability for the Mayor spot can be determined. There is little if any difference between the positions of Farad Ali and Steve Schewel, and much to like about the past records and accomplishments of both men. It appears that either man would do a good job, and both would enter the office with a broad base of support. MAPAC's Board was divided on which candidate to recommend, but ultimately **MAPAC has chosen to endorse Steve Schewel by a split decision. MAPAC suggests that its members may want to study the candidates more closely before making the final decision on how they will vote. Links to information to assist in that regard follow:**

Farad Ali related links:

<https://faradali4mayor.com>

<https://www.indyweek.com/indyweek/farad-ali/Content?oid=8186755>

<http://clarioncontentmedia.com/mayorup/farad-ali-mayor-up-questions-and-answers/>

Steve Schewel related links:

<https://www.stevefordurham.com>

<https://www.indyweek.com/indyweek/steve-schewel/Content?oid=8186939>

<http://clarioncontentmedia.com/mayorup/steve-schewel-mayor-up-questions-and-answers/>

City Council Ward I

The contest for Durham City Council Ward 1 has 3 candidates challenging incumbent and Mayor Pro Tem Cora Cole-McFadden. Ms. Cole-McFadden had been expected to be a serious candidate for Mayor, and many were surprised when she decided to run for re-election to the City Council instead. She is being challenged by Brian Callaway, DeDreana Freeman, and John Tarantino.

Brian Callaway: Mr. Callaway is a 34 year old newcomer to politics who works as the coordinator of energy and sustainability for Durham Public Schools. While new to the election business , he is not new to City government, having worked previously with the Manager's Office at the Town of Chapel Hill. Mr. Callaway advocates the selected use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund affordable housing near light rail stops, fix the downtown loop, and bring the Duke Beltline Trail into existence. Mr. Callaway also calls for ending subsidies to for profit developers on the theory that the original purpose of the subsidies has been met, and Durham is now such a desirable location that subsidies are no longer necessary.

Cora Cole-McFadden: Incumbent Cora Cole-McFadden has been on the Council since 2001, the same year she retired from working with the City, and also serves on the Durham Convention and Visitors Board of Directors. Her other responsibilities and accomplishments include serving on the Board of Directors for the National League of Cities and serving as Mayor Pro Tempore for Durham. The 71 year old Ms. McFadden, a lifelong native of Durham, was one of 4 students that desegregated Hillside High School, and she has continued working for the betterment of Durham ever since. The number of “firsts” attributable to Ms. Cole-McFadden include first African American woman department head in the City of Durham, the first African American woman to be named Mayor Pro Tempore in the history of the City of Durham, and the first recipient of the City of Durham’s Diversity Change Agent Award, which is now named in her honor. Ms. McFadden has been part and parcel of the City turnaround achieved under Mayor Bell, and looks to use her position if reelected to the Council to keep those programs going for the purpose of achieving the goals of economic and social justice and equality that she has been pursuing in one form or the other her entire life.

DeDreana Freeman: Ms. Freeman is the 39 year old special assistant to the president for East Durham Children’s Initiative (a nonprofit focused on college and career access), and a Masters of Public Administration student who has been on the Durham Planning Commission since 2014. Ms. Freeman has also been president of the InterNeighborhood Council of Durham. Ms. Freeman is active in Democratic party politics, having been elected Chair - Durham Democratic Party Precinct No.17 from 2012-to the present; elected Durham Democratic Party 3rd-Vice Chair for 2014-15; elected as N.C. Democratic Party convention delegate from 2014 to the present; and elected to the N.C. Democratic Party State Executive Board from 2016-to the present. Ms. Freeman is a strong advocate for affordable housing and maintains that the one cent property tax increase passed 2012 to fund affordable housing is not large enough.

John Tarantino: Mr. Tarantino is a retired school teacher and Army National Guard retiree, A candidate for city council in 2015 and for a senate seat in the North Carolina General Assembly in 2010. Mr. Tarantino’s campaigns tend to be so low key that they are almost invisible. Mr. Tarantino has written, “I want to be the voice of sanity in support of the taxpayers who are opposing the light rail boondoggle. I would like to address the issue of unaffordable affordable housing.” It is difficult to find anything else about Mr. Tarantino, and therefore hard to take his candidacy seriously.

While there are 2 other good candidates, Ms. DeDreana Freeman in particular appears to have much promise, none has the proven history of service and the outstanding track record of Ms. Cora Cole-McFadden. MAPAC is of

the opinion that as long as she wants to work for the City, the City should be happy to have her, and **MAPAC endorses Cora Cole-McFadden for City Council Ward I.**

City Council Ward II

Eddie Davis, the incumbent for Ward II, is not running for reelection and 6 people have filed to fill his position. There are enough candidates with significant public support to make it all but impossible to predict which 2 candidates will make it to the November final election.

LeVon Barnes: A 34 year old teacher from New York who moved to Durham, Mr. Barnes is a Democratic Party precinct chair with a passion for helping the young, which led him to found the Young Male Achievers Program to teach about civic duty. Mr. Barnes wants to improve wages and opportunities for those who have not yet benefited from Durham's resurgence. Mr. Barnes no doubt has energy and passion, but compared to some of the other candidates he is not as strong on the specifics of how he would accomplish the goals he establishes.

Robert Fluet: Mr. Fluet is a 33 year old transplant from the small town of Greenfield, Massachusetts who moved to North Carolina in 2009. The problems Mr. Fluet sees are the same as those the other candidates see: the inequality in opportunity and income in Durham with the attendant problems of homelessness, crime, uneven healthcare, etc. Mr. Fluet does a good job of identifying the problems, but seems unaware of the long, hard work that has gone on before that has provided a foundational base for addressing these long term problems, and offers few specific solutions of his own.

Deanna Hall: Ms. Hall is a 40 year old IT Business Analyst, an Interplan administrator at Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina, who also serves as Secretary of the Durham Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission, Ms. Hall generally believes the City is moving in the right direction but well aware of the magnitude of problems that remain. Offering few specific remedies for on the ground problems, she has offered up many thoughtful ideas for improving communication between City officials and their constituents,

Mark-Anthony Middleton: Another New York transplant to Durham, Mr. Middleton is a pastor and radio talk show host. Unlike many of the candidates new to politics, he offers many specific solutions that are both "activist" and practical. The State Legislature has made it illegal to remove offensive statues, so Mr. Middleton proposes the City cover them with blankets, a sort of off-beat pragmatism that colors much of Mr. Middleton's suggestions. Mr. Middleton is definitely one of those start where you are, then use every tool you have to get to where you want to be, kind of persons. A 23 year resident of Durham, Mr. Middleton offers a potent blend of idealism and realism for addressing the City's problems.

Dolly Reeves: Ms. Reeves is a 27 year old, self styled "stay-at-home mom, grad student, part time nanny" who has never held elected office. Ms. Reeves' campaign offers too few specifics to have confidence that if elected she would be more effective than other candidates for the same office.

John Rooks Jr.: At age 48, Mr. Rooks is a 30 year resident of Durham who has held no previous elected office. Mr. Rooks support in the community is extensive, and based in no small part on his work with Love over Hate N.C.

and R.E.A.L. Kids United which he co-founded in 2012. His campaign material offers little in the way of specifics, but clearly many who know him have confidence that Mr. Rooks would be a great asset for the City.

MAPAC believes that Mark-Anthony Middleton of all the candidates for Ward II would be the best asset for the City of Durham. While a council full of Mr. Middleton's might be too exciting to bear, one Mark-Anthony Middleton may be just right, and **MAPAC endorses Mark-Anthony Middleton for Durham City Council Ward II.**

City Council Ward III

The election outcome for City Council Ward III, even with fewer candidates running for office than Ward II, is more difficult to predict. Incumbent Don Moffitt is facing 3 challengers, 2 of whom enjoy significant support and would offer significant potential benefits as Council members.

Vernetta Alston: Ms. Alston, a 35 year old attorney with the Center for Death Penalty Litigation, Inc., has held no prior elected office, but is a member and secretary of the City of Durham Citizen's Advisory Committee. Ms. Alston has served on the Board of the Durham People's Alliance since 2016 and on the Durham Citizen's Advisory Committee. Important issues for Ms. Alston include policing, economic development, affordable housing and supporting immigrant and LGBTQ communities. Ms. Alston has written that "Durham must be the standard-bearer for our progressive values". The measures Ms. Alston supports for issues like affordable housing and creating equality of economic opportunity are largely consistent with the policies the City set in place under Mayor Bell.

Sheila Ann Huggins: Attorney Sheila Ann Huggins, 49 years old, is a Democratic Party activist, having been elected at one time or another to the Democratic National Committee, the N.C. Democratic Party State Executive Committee, the Durham County Democratic Party African-American Caucus, the N.C. Democratic Party African-American Caucus, the Durham and Wake County Democratic Party and having served as precinct chair and vice-chair for the Durham and Wake County Democratic Party and as the Wake County Democratic Party, third vice-chair. Ms. Huggins has also served on the N.C. Central University School of Business Board of Visitors. Ms. Huggins worked as a City of Durham employee, working in three departments and working with numerous other departments. Ms. Huggins duties with the City included budgeting, development, operational management, personnel management, environmental issues, neighborhood projects, and strategic planning. Her positions generally align with the directions the City established under Mayor Bell.

Lenny Kovalick: Mr. Kovalick is a pediatric nurse practitioner with no previous elected office experience. The 35 year old Mr. Kovalick is, however, a member of the Appearance Commission. Mr. Kovalick thinks a light rail system is premature at this time, but his views otherwise generally align with the direction in which the City is already heading. Mr. Kovalick does, however, offer less specificity with his ideas than do the other candidates for Ward III.

Don Moffitt: Incumbent Don Moffitt is finishing out his first term on the City Council. The 61 year old business development consultant for cooperatively owned grocery stores wishes to stay on the council to follow through on the ongoing initiatives the City has launched on affordable housing and homelessness, neighborhood stabilization, transit, community/police relations, racial equity and land-use planning. Mr. Moffitt also demonstrates a thorough

familiarity with those issues and an in-depth understanding of the legal retractions the City faces, and of the tools it does have available to it.

Ms. Alston, Ms. Higgins and Mr. Moffitt are all strong candidates. However, Durham has been prospering and making substantial, well thought out, strategic long term moves to eliminate the inequalities within its citizenship. Under these circumstances, MAPAC believes the benefit of the doubt goes to the incumbent, and **MAPAC endorses Don Moffitt for Durham City Council Ward III.**