

1How specifically are you going to address the local impact resulting from the coming drastic state/federal budget cutbacks?

The most immediate would be unfunded capital projects and funded projects that have not begun. Prioritize other projects in terms of urgency based on need. Necessary public safety and education are off the table. Secondly, tough decisions need to be made regarding the budget and trim what is considered “fat,” and there is some there. Other considerations are consolidating and merging department...which in many cases should be accomplished anyway.

Like much of the City, the Shore Drive area is beginning to see the signs of gang activity in our neighborhoods. Could you please comment on the extent of the expanding gang problem in VB and what the city is/should be doing to diminish it?

The most difficult part of this question is that there is no specific plan that will fit all areas of the city. What would work for one area (depending on the variations of criminal events and indications of gang activity) would not be completely effective in another area. This has to do with the make up and involvement of the specific neighborhood, whether the gang members are in fact a part of the neighborhood, the facilities available that would be an alternative to gang participation.

The above being said, I would say that gang activity exists in most areas of the city in varying degrees. The most heavy activity is in those areas that have traditionally been underserved. The “birth and growth” of gangs in these areas are driven by factors that most likely don’t exist in other areas of the city. In that regard, they need to be treated differently, i.e., a more “directed” heavy hand by law enforcement, development and involvement of neighborhood leadership, inclusion of neighborhood businesses, and development of activities that would tend to remove elements of gang members to activities more productive.

As you might imagine, most of what is listed above would also be used in any neighborhood but probably in a variance of methods with more or less emphasis on certain parts.

Currently the City tax breakdown percentage is 87% Resident and 13% Business. It has always been the goal of the City and residents to shift this percentage to a 70/30 ratio and help lessen the burden on the residents. If elected, what would you do to make this happen? The key is involvement, inclusion of all elements of safe neighborhoods and planning. (Recognition, Collaboration, Planning, Action)

I am currently drafting a plan in collaboration with “community think tanks,” local university sociology, social work, urban planning, etc. student projects, setting up seminars to bring together elements of safe neighborhoods [community leaders/civic leagues, activists residents, police units, and city council members [specific to that neighborhood] to joint draft and action plan. While I anticipate I will be elected, I will pursue the plan either way. As you can see, it is much more of a process that is allowed for in a brief answerbut it can and should happen NOW!!

Do you support the extension of Light Rail along the abandoned Norfolk Southern right of way (ROW)? Please explain why or why not.

First word: Transparency of any and all figures, pro and con statements and both short and long term planning. Taxpayers must know the true costs....up front!

**Current financial crisis will effect future planning, particularly in the short term.

That being said, I support light rail (with a qualifier) because traffic is getting exponentially worse as housing is developed without concern for transportation and economic development may rest on quality transportation.

However, it support it as a "piece" of a larger overall transportation plan which includes adequate transportation to/from the rail, increased use of electric buses with expanded routes and times, etc.

If the bus system doesn't closely coordinate with light rail, don't bother with light rail.

We need forward thinking, innovative thinking, committed thinking and courageous thinking. People just will not sit and wait for either very long (nor should they). Also, the bus schedule needs to be much more frequent than now. This is especially important in the current under-served areas of the city. An alternative short term thought is "The WAVE." It would be an excellent idea if expanded with more of them, extended schedules, and more/better routing. Get rid of those costly, out of date, environment damaging, oversized buses. Get smaller environment friendly and energy saving buses on the road with much greater frequency. Negotiate with HRT to offer a greater variety of passes, so residents and tourists alike won't have to bother with daily purchases. I won't go so far as to say "No matter the cost," but we need to get a light rail or monorail system *or something* going at the ocean front, connecting 90th street with Rudee Inlet. Tourists and residents are getting fed up with the traffic mess there. This is in conjunction to the primary system.

Additionally, an honest look at long term road maintenance vs. cost of transportation upgrade is required. (maintenance of transportation vehicles is also required...what is that long range cost?)

This must be accomplished with the proper analysis but not to the extent that we watch the cost go up as we Astudy.@ Final word: There must be transparency regarding costs so that taxpayers are abreast of development and cost issues.

Our city is rich with history; some examples include the First Landing, several colonial period houses and various other sites. If elected, what would be your commitment to historic preservation in the city?

I am an advocate of historical preservation as I believe history is a necessary social must. Most historical sites and building fall under special protection, however, I would be open for citizen ideas and/or proposals with regard to preservation.

Given the most recent U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Hurricane Evacuation Study (March 08), how would you provide for the timely evacuation of Shore Dr. and North Beach areas if residential building and population densities are further increased with Indigo Dunes and other proposed properties?

As you know, there has been several studies in this regard. The recent one (which took several years) by the Army Corps of Engineers indicates areas for concern. Any local map will show the difficulty from anywhere at the ocean front and along Shore Drive.

However, my first statement is that I WILL NOT VOTE FOR ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENT, such as Indigo Dunes attempts. The area is already too densely populated and it has all the earmarks of a catastrophe if evacuation was implemented.

The first problem after having an over-populated area, is that there are only two main roadway exits from the Shore Drive area. (1) Shore Drive to Northampton Blvd. or (2) Shore Drive to Great Neck Road. Option one would be complicated by the merging with traffic from Little Creek base and housing developments in that area. Option would be effected by traffic coming from the North end of the ocean front and Fort Story.

Without further study, the short answer is by area (grids) evacuation requirements in stages by areas from the most effected and closest to the shore line to those increasingly distanced from the actual shore line.

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