



Questions for  
Naples City Council Candidates

Submitted by: Tony Perez-Benitoa

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1. About you:

- How old are you? 61
- How long have you lived in the City of Naples, and where did you live previously? 14 years in City of Naples, over 35 years in Naples. Born and raised in Miami, FL.
- What is your educational background and past work experience? Bachelor of Science and Juris Doctorate. Florida Bar Board Certified Marital and Family Law Attorney and Florida Supreme Court Certified Mediator. I have been a trial attorney in Naples for over 35 years and am also a mediator.

2. What are your thoughts on the proposed NCH Heart and Stroke Institute and its location on NCH's Downtown Naples campus? I am in favor of it and believe they should be granted the 40' parking garage they requested.

3. Do you support the Naples Airport continuing to operate at its current location along Airport-Pulling Road? What are the most important considerations with respect to a potential relocation of the Airport? I do. The airport's economic impact to this area exceeds \$900,000,000.00. Compliance with the airport's voluntary curfew exceeds 99%. Stage 1 and 2 jets do not use the airport and we will not have any airlines using the airport due to runway weight limits. If it were moved, it is reasonable to assume that those 730+ acres would be developed,

thereby creating higher density and traffic. I am informed that moving the airport will cost upwards of a Billion Dollars and could take a decade to complete.

4. What are the most important factors to be considered by City Council as it is asked to approve redevelopment proposals for the 5th Avenue South Extension, Four Corners, and Davis Triangle areas? Code provisions and impacts consisting of specific uses, traffic, parking, density and aesthetics.
5. What are the most important environmental (especially water-related) issues facing the City of Naples? What measures can and should City Council take in the next four years to address them? Stormwater related to lakes, Naples Bay and Gulf of Mexico. Almost 5 years ago the Gulf pipe outfall project was approved. The estimated cost was approximately 30 million. It's still not done and now the estimate is approximately 90 million. This needs to get done. The Four Seasons project has offered to assist and pay—let them. Newer technologies need to be explored including manufactured treatment devices, permeable surfaces and filtration “upstream” and “downstream”.
6. Some people generally want to limit any new development and keep Naples the way it is. Others are generally opposed to any infringement on property owners' rights. Where do you fall on the continuum between the two? There is very little, if any, “development” to be had in the city. The issue is redevelopment, which will inevitably take place to some extent and should be managed carefully. I do not want to see property rights infringed, restricted or curtailed; follow the code. As to variances, not all variances are created equally and should only be granted when there exists a compelling reason(s). A commonsense approach is required attendant to variances, especially residential variances.
7. Was there a City Council vote during the last four years in which you disagreed with the outcome? If so, why did you disagree? Council eliminated the construction of underground parking. I disagree as it was previously allowed and they did not create any “new” criteria to allow it. So they have issued a moratorium. I believe underground parking is a viable alternative to surface and above-ground parking.

8. What three things do you want to accomplish in the next four years? 1. More effective governance. Ten and twelve our council meetings are unnecessary and do not promote citizen involvement. This along with reducing staff turn-over in order to preserve institutional knowledge will promote more efficiency. 2. Provide our first responders the tools/hardware and staff they need to allow them to do their best job for us. As an example, the Naples Police Department is understaffed and does not have take home vehicles for their officers. These items are directly related to response times. 3. Attempt to create a stronger liaison with the county in the hopes that the county will give due consideration to the impact their growth and development has on the city.

**Please email your responses to Sandy Parker, [sandy@sparkers-soapbox.com](mailto:sandy@sparkers-soapbox.com), no later than February 2, 2024.**