

1. Supporting Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs

What specific policy or program would you champion to reduce administrative burdens (such as complex permitting processes or restrictive zoning) for new and expanding small, locally-owned businesses and entrepreneurs, especially those creating a more diverse mix of retail and services in Charleston?

As a small business owner myself, I've seen how complex permitting and outdated zoning rules can discourage entrepreneurs. I would champion a "one-stop shop" business resource center within the City of Charleston to streamline permitting, licensing, and inspections—making it easier and faster for local businesses to open and grow. I'd also push for zoning updates that encourage a diverse mix of retail and services while protecting neighborhood character. Supporting local businesses means cutting red tape and giving entrepreneurs the tools to succeed right here in Charleston.

2. Quality of Life for Local Residents

Charleston's growth has intensified traffic congestion and contributed to high housing costs. What is your plan to improve the daily quality of life for residents by addressing the intersection of transportation and housing, specifically to enable local workers to afford to live closer to their jobs and reduce reliance on long-distance commutes?

Charleston's growth should never come at the expense of our quality of life. To ease traffic and housing pressures, we must plan smarter—building housing that local workers can actually afford, closer to where jobs are located. I'll push for mixed-income and workforce housing incentives, better coordination of development with infrastructure, and expanded transit options that reduce long commutes. By aligning housing, jobs, and transportation, we can make daily life easier for families, workers, and businesses across District 6 and the city as a whole.

3. Maximizing Local Impact of City Spending

How would you reform the City's purchasing and procurement policies to prioritize and increase the percentage of municipal contracts and purchases awarded to qualified local businesses and suppliers, thereby recirculating tax dollars within the local economy?

City spending should work harder for Charleston. I would push for procurement reforms that give preference to qualified local businesses and suppliers, making it easier for them to compete for city contracts. That means simplifying the bidding process, breaking up large contracts so smaller firms can participate, and increasing transparency so opportunities are widely known. By keeping more tax dollars circulating in our local economy, we strengthen small businesses, create jobs, and ensure residents see the direct benefits of their city government's investments.

4. Diversifying the Local Economy

Recommendations to update the City's 10-year old Tourism Management Plan kicked off earlier this year in partnership with Bloomberg Associates. How do you believe the implementation of this revised plan, in partnership with other local policies, can help address the loss of neighborhood businesses and ensure our commercial districts remain diverse and vibrant?

Tourism will always be part of Charleston's identity, but we can't let it overwhelm our neighborhoods or push out local businesses. Updating the Tourism Management Plan is a chance to set better balance—supporting visitors while protecting residents' quality of life. I'll advocate for policies that preserve neighborhood character, limit over-saturation, and create space for diverse retail and services. By pairing this plan with stronger support for local entrepreneurs and smarter zoning, we can keep our commercial districts vibrant, diverse, and rooted in the community.