

Charleston Mayoral Candidate Forum Transcript
Monday, October 23, 2023

Speaker Name	Start Time	End Time	Text
Cashion Drolet	00:00:00;15	00:00:24;29	<p>Good evening, I am Cashion Drolet, Chief Advocacy Officer with Historic Charleston Foundation, and I'm excited to welcome you to HCF's City of Charleston Mayoral Forum. Our goal this evening is to provide the community with the opportunity to hear directly from the candidates on some of Charleston's most acute challenges and opportunities through the lens of preservation and livability – so that you can make an informed decision in the voting booth. Tonight, the candidates will be asked to respond to a thoughtful list of questions, based on what we've heard from you are the most important issues affecting our city – development, flooding, housing, tourism, urban planning, and infrastructure. As this is one of the final forums before election day, we've had the benefit of watching other forums and listening to the candidates along the campaign trail so that we could carefully craft questions that dig in a little deeper on these issues. As a reminder, Historic Charleston Foundation is a not-for-profit charitable organization. As such, HCF does not endorse, oppose, or fund candidates for any office. Tonight's forum is intended for educational purposes. Without further ado, HCF welcomes the mayoral candidates: Representative William Cogswell, Community Activist Mika Gadsden, Law Professor Debra Gammons, Public Servant Clay Middleton, Councilman Peter Shahid, and current Mayor John Tecklenburg.</p>
Cashion Drolet	00:00:30;29	00:00:54;04	<p>Now I'd like to introduce tonight's moderator, Christian Senger. Christian is the founder and editor of Holy City Sinner, Charleston's most popular blog, news aggregator, resource and hub for day to day activities in Charleston. Thank you for being here tonight. Christian, so let's begin.</p>
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:00:54;06	00:01:02;25	<p>All right. Thank you all so much for being here. And I think start talking foundation for inviting me here.</p>
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:01:11;01	00:01:29;17	<p>Thank you so much for being here. I'm honored to be here to moderate the panel today. First, I'll go over some of the rules. Just so everyone's aware the candidates are made aware of this prior. But just so you all know as well. So this is a forum, not a candidate debate.</p>
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:01:29;20	00:01:48;25	<p>Candidates will be asked the same questions in a randomly generated order. If you're wondering, we get it through a random dashboard. Candidates will have 90 seconds to respond to each question and there will be six questions in total. Candidates will be asked a one minute follow up question at random, and each candidate will only receive one follow up question.</p>
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:01:48;27	00:02:14;24	<p>Our official timekeeper here is Natalie Miller. She is located in the front row. She will give candidates the 30 second warning, followed by a stop, Natalie, where a remark you made right there and at the conclusion candidates will be given 2 minutes to make a closing statement where they can say whatever they like during that time period. For our audience, I also mentioned it before, but I ask you to refrain from any cheering, applause, or any other audible responses. We appreciate your cooperation. Before I dive in real quick, again, thank you for letting me host this or moderating this, rather, for those who don't know, Holy City Sinner is just a website. It's all about Charleston. Fun things going on in town. I heard some people like, what is that? So for those who don't know, that's what it is. Please check it out after.</p>

Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;02;35;10	00;02;55;18	So now you're all here for, the actual candidate forum. So we're going to do this with the six questions. Each candidate's going to have 90 seconds to respond. And then a 60 second follow up for that one specific question I mentioned before, and then the closing statements will be 2 minutes. Those will also be in random order.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;02;55;18	00;03;29;17	So I'll be calling out candidates names. All right. So that will do it for the intro. So we'll get going with the first question. I also am multitasking. Okay. Go.
Christian Senger (Moderator)		Question 1	Many argue that developers are not paying their fair share and need to be contributing more to infrastructure improvements, the public realm and livability in Charleston. Others counter that more fees just make development more expensive and results in more value engineering and less affordability. What are your thoughts on this and what will your approach be to assessing the appropriateness of development proposals?
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;03;29;19	00;03;45;06	Ms. Gammons was supposed to go first. We'll move her to the end, if she comes in during this question. So Ms. Gadsden, you are up first.
Mika Gadsden	00;03;45;10	00;04;17;23	Okay, can everyone hear me well? Thank you. Good evening. For me as an organizer, the bulk of my work recently consists of advocating for the folks on the West Side. I'm a co-chair with the Friends of Gadsdens Creek, and while that hasn't environmentalists of our core goal, we also care for the community there. And so to our research we found that development has been has had a relationship with the West Side, with the residents of lower and working class residents.
Mika Gadsden	00;04;18;00	00;04;42;09	That has been adversarial. Practices like paying fees in lieu of taxes have really have really set our community back. And I suspect some areas of Charleston as well as mayor, I think we need to do away with filing, I think also more than just getting rid of the fees, holding development to account is important. Look, developers are not a monolith.
Mika Gadsden	00;04;42;12	00;05;02;01	They are not. They're not all, you know, evil and maniacal. Right? We can woo small scale developers to Charleston to take on small scale development projects to create more truly affordable housing. These are not going to be the only way to get there. We have to find all our area are alternative ways to get there.
Mika Gadsden	00;05;02;01	00;05;16;05	But these the loophole has been exploited. It's not leading to more affordable housing options. So I do believe that we should do away with that whole development accountable, but pursue small scale developers to help us create more affordable housing options.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;05;16;07	00;05;23;15	Thank you. Next up is Councilman Shahid.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;05;23;17	00;05;51;27	So thank you. The issues is always going to be a balancing act with as if the initial reaction is going to be, yes, let's pass the expenses all to the developer and we know what's going to happen if the developer is tasked with these fees and costs, the developers going to pass it on to the ultimate user. And that's going to drive up the cost of that unit or that housing complex and the person who is trying to buy that is going to be tied with that expense.

Councilman Peter Shahid	00:05:52;00	00:06;14;29	So it's going to get paired down to the ultimate users sooner or later. So it's always going to be a question of balance. Yes. So the developer should be tied with a certain portion of that, but not overtaxing that so that it is going to be passed down to the ultimate user, what is going to happen to however, is once that property is developed.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:06;15;01	00:06;40;14	We know this is going to happen, the property value is going to go up and the property value goes up. Then the real property taxes come into the coffers of the city. And once we get more tax dollars into the city than goes into the general fund, then helps to offset the expense of those impacts that it has on that property being developed is one thing we need to take into consideration as well.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:06;40;21	00:06;56;28	That commercial property has a bigger bang for the buck as opposed to residential property, because with commercial property there are going to be taxed at a 6% tax rate as opposed to a 4% tax rate. So we're getting more money into the coffers with that that ring. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:06;56;28	00:07;02;13	All right. Thank you. Okay, Mayor Tecklenburg, you were up next.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00:07;02;16	00:07;26;15	Well, thank you. We all relish the livability of the public realm and the beauty of the public realm of Charleston. So every development that comes along my eye always goes to the property around the development. What can we add to the public realm? What would be reasonable for this development that I'll pay for? I'll give you a couple examples.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00:07;26;18	00:07;52;17	One is the Cooper Hotel down there, the old Port Authority office site, when they bought the property and they came to talk to us. I mean, the waterfront park is right next door. And I was like, let's see if we can extend Joe Riley Waterfront Park around the front of this development and extend the public realm and access to the water.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00:07;52;20	00:08;19;09	The same with Morrison Yard over there in Morrison Yard, Although we all disagree with the BAR, what they proved with the way the building looked. Right? Or most of us. They agreed or procured another piece of property that is going to create this little finger Park walkway down to the water's edge on the marsh. That's an example. As far as fees, we we don't add fees.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00:08;19;09	00:08;40;07	In fact, we we remove fees from affordable housing, bona fide projects, but we're looking to add fees whenever else we can for other development. We've added affordable housing fee for hotels. We've had a mixed use fee - TIME EXPIRED -
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:08;40;10	QUESTION 2	Thank you Mayor. Since we're halfway through the question and since Ms. Gammons is here, I will reread the question and then we'll keep going back and order. Mr. Cogswell you'll be next. Many argue that developers are not paying their fair share and need to be contributing more to infrastructure improvements. The public realm and livability in Charleston. Others counter that more fees just make development more expensive and results in more value engineering and less affordability.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:09;06;05	00:09;12;02	What are your thoughts on this and what will your approach be to assessing the appropriateness of development proposals? Mr. Cogswell...

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William Cogswell	00;09;12;02	00;09;39;03	Yep, Thank you. Absolutely. I think developers should and can pay their fair share. What I would say is that what we are doing right now clearly is not working. The past eight years we have seen a lot of development that's not of character with the city of Charleston. It's not on scale. It doesn't really fit the DNA that we all know and love about our city.
William Cogswell	00;09;39;06	00;10;06;04	And so I think first and foremost, that needs to change in the way that changes with vision, leadership and being proactive, particularly with larger projects, because you're not seeing any guidance coming from city hall, you're not seeing that leadership on that track. And it shows. It shows in the architecture, it shows in the quality of development. And again, ladies and gentlemen, this is a world that I know pretty well.
William Cogswell	00;10;06;07	00;10;30;09	I know that makes some people nervous that I'm in the development business. I appreciate the shout out, that we're not all the devil. But in any event, you need to understand that because what's happening right now, folks, is that the private sector is running circles around the public sector, and that is what you see in our city.
William Cogswell	00;10;30;09	00;10;47;22	And we need to change that. We need to have a lot more control. And the way you can do that is by focusing on, for example, air development that would occur in TIF districts like the ones, the two that have been set up in West Ashley that have been basically neglected for seven years.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;10;47;24	00;10;49;27	All right. Thank you, Mr. Middleton. You are.
Clay Middleton	00;10;49;27	00;11;28;08	So we do not have to say yes to every development. And the approach that I would take you, the people of Charleston, elect me as as this next mayor would have community benefit ordinances and agreements so that when a development is proposed that we ask some questions on the front end, not hoping and wishing and praying that they do right on the back end, I do believe is very important, especially when we think about the effects of the have community, whether that be in housing and transportation affordability.
Clay Middleton	00;11;28;10	00;11;52;27	Again, you can have some unintended consequences of a development. Well, let's discuss that now. Certain developments have taken place throughout the city of Charleston that has caused further gentrification, and we did not plan for life after gentrification. So how do we take a look at having a state put initiative that would prevent our seniors or those on a fixed income from being displaced?
Clay Middleton	00;11;53;03	00;12;04;20	How can we also take a look at opportunities to connect things like the environment and job opportunities into all the developers so that those that live in the impacted areas,
Clay Middleton	00;12;06;01	00;12;17;02	actually reap the benefit of it on the front end, not hoping and wishing on the back end. So the true input of the community is needed. And I think those are some of the things that I would do as mayor of the City of Charleston.
Speaker 1	00;12;17;02	00;12;18;24	Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;12;18;26	00;12;21;07	Thank you. Ms. Gammons, you're up next.

Debra Gammons	00;12;21;09	00;12;46;29	Thank you, good evening and its so good to see everyone here. Yes, developers need to share in that cost developing here and a way they can do it, I would emphasize this, mayor, and I would work with you to make sure that happens, is that they share in the expenses of road repairs, sidewalk repairs - that they also preserve our natural environment.
Debra Gammons	00;12;47;02	00;13;12;18	We live here because of that natural environment, we're going to talk about water later, but that access to our rivers, our marshes and our creeks, those are so important and our trees are so important. So they need to think meaning developers need to share in that, maintaining that if they are building over something, there should never be building over any marshes or any creeks.
Debra Gammons	00;13;12;19	00;13;37;10	We have to agree to that and I will ensure that as mayor. And then also in order to do that, we need a clear, comprehensive plan that involves all areas of the city of Charleston. And I will work with everyone - neighborhood associations, those who are not involved in neighborhood associations, to come up with a clear, comprehensive plan that involves development.
Debra Gammons	00;13;37;10	00;13;53;24	And the development should never, never put on the part of or second, those people who are residents. Preserving our historical homes and our buildings is super important and I will work for that. Zoning ordinances changes and amendments to those.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;13;53;27	FOLLOW UP QU	All right, Thank you. The follow up question for this round is for Mr. Middleton. Many residents lament that Charleston's culture is being lost as Charleston gentrified and has become an investment destination for developers and isn't an attractive place to relocate. As mayor, how would you address gentrification to keep legacy families in their neighborhoods and make it possible for the children to call those same neighborhoods home?
Clay Middleton	00;14;17;15	00;14;43;22	Yeah, this goes back to having the right accountability. I want to work with, we ought to work with developers and want to do well and good at the same time and have community interests at first. That's important. My mother, who's here, my grandmother's here, they have been gentrified from the city of Charleston. Fact, not opinion. So when you think about a state put initiative - that development...
Clay Middleton	00;14;43;29	00;15;15;26	When I moved to Rosemont and bought my first home and there was going to be development to take place there, a state put initiative was floated as a way to pay for any increase in property taxes for those that lived there, meaning seniors on fixed income or anyone on a fixed income, but in particular seniors. Now, we also need to look at having the first right of refusal ordinance so that if you are renting and you are in that home, the owner has to offer that to you first. And it may be now you're ready to buy or maybe stop. -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;15;21;15	00;15;48;07	Thank you. All right. We'll move on. And question number two, tourism has recovered beyond expectations from the pandemic. 2022 is a record breaking year for tourism in Charleston. And just about every month there is an article in the Post and Courier setting a new record number of passengers at our airport. No doubt tourism plays an important role in our economy, but it's also has impacts on residents' quality of life, particularly for the lower part of the peninsula.
Speaker 3	00;15;48;10	QUESTION 3	Do our tourism management policies focus enough on livability for city residents? What will your approach to tourism management be if elected? And we have council Member Shahid, up first.

Councilman Peter Shahid	00;16;03;02	00;16;31;13	There's no question that tourism has a huge economic impact on our community. The number of tourists have rebounded significantly since the COVID pandemic. The numbers are 12 million, 8 million tourists and the collateral benefit to other workers and income coming into the into the tri county area of the city in particular. So we do want tourists. We want to keep the bulk of that out for tourists
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;16;31;13	00;16;58;21	But we want to balance out visit to the overflow of toursits has an important negative impact on livability. And we, if you live downtown, if you live on the peninsula, you feel that on a regular basis. So you want to make sure that while we have a welcome mat out, we also want to make sure that tourists are staying within the confines of the zone of the laws that we have on the books today, which is to make sure that we're not over bringing tourists into the community.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;16;58;23	00;17;31;07	One of the things that I would do to manage tourism better is to split the department that we have in existence of livability and tourism apart and create just a division of department dealing with tourism alone to make sure that our ordinances are being enforced effectively and fairly and across the board, around the table, and to make sure that we're managing the tourism to the existing laws and increase the staff numbers that we have a number of police staff that is present time to make sure we have enough of those officers out there enforcing those laws.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;17;31;10	00;17;32;16	Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;17;32;18	00;17;38;28	All right. Thank you, Mr. Middleton. It is your turn.
Clay Middleton	00;17;39;01	00;18;11;28	Residents and tourists should coexist. And right now you have a tourism management plan that's dated 2015. There have been some some updates to it, but that's the latest and greatest that we have. So things important that we update that, especially the section of it that calls for quality of life. On the other side of that, that's the goal in terms of the focus on livability for residents, for our citizens first.
Clay Middleton	00;18;11;28	00;18;48;14	But again, I do think that we do not have the right kind of building. Our city is drawing more people are coming here. Do we have the right staff in place? Are we engaging with neighborhoods? Are we engaging with the residents as it relates to what problems are you having day to day? So that means we have to rethink, reimagine, reshuffle, how we truly engage in thatdepartment, so we can be responsive to individual complaints to prevent bad things from happening, or people doing illegal tours and going to people homes because they think is is a destination.
Clay Middleton	00;18;48;14	00;19;07;25	I think for Charleston, we need to make sure that our city does not become a destination, that it is home. And we have to be respectful of that and making sure that that department and those that are walking day in and day out, regardless of the weather, that they will be responsive to the needs of individual. That communication goes both ways.
Clay Middleton	00;19;08;02	00;19;13;03	And as mayor of the city, Charleston, I will do that.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;19;13;05	00;19;17;25	Thank you. Ms Gadsden, you're up.

Mika Gadsden	00;19;17;27	00;19;38;00	It's probably well documented my feelings on tourism, but I think some folks have a misunderstanding as to what my feelings are about tourism. I love this city. I chose to live here as an adult because of the rich stories that are being told here. Sometimes we don't tell enough of the stories from enough perspectives. Back to, I say this about the question because I'd like to see us balance our tourism in a way that we're telling more stories and not just in one centralized location. We are seeing about 7 million visitors annually during our peak visitors or tourism season. I love to see some of that volume in other areas so that folks on the peninsula specifically don't bear the brunt of that burden.
Mika Gadsden	00;20;01;15	00;20;22;05	And that involves also making sure that we update and offer more mobility options in public transit. I'd also like to see our tourism industries work for us. I'm a renter. I'm a working class candidate. 44% of occupied housing in Charleston are renters. That's your workforce for tourism. We need to we need to make sure that we're aggressive.
Mika Gadsden	00;20;22;05	00;20;40;05	The next leader of Charleston need to be enthusiastic about making sure that the new changes to the accommodations tax actually works for Charleston. Yes. So that means that we have more discretion over where that money goes and that can go toward affordable housing. Need to also demand more transparency with with our taxpayer dollars with regard to tourism.
Mika Gadsden	00;20;40;10	00;20;48;11	And I think that's something that a lot of communities have been clamoring for for quite some time now. So I'd like to see tourism work for the working class more.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;20;48;13	00;20;53;15	All right. Thank you, Mayor Tecklenburg. It is your turn.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;20;53;17	00;21;23;07	So, as noted, tourism is an important leg of our economic stool. I think there's 51,000 hospitality jobs in the Lowcountry. So it is important that you all know. Actually, our visitor count went down a little bit last year, but our economic impact was up. So what we're trying to do is maximize the economic benefit. It's about quality, not quantity.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;21;23;13	00;21;46;01	We don't want as many visitors as they have Myrtle Beach, but we do want them when they leave here, have a good impression of Charleston. And that's why we keep making these number one rankings and magazines, because people actually enjoy coming here and think they're seeing good hospitality. They have a good time while they're here. So there's always this balancing act, y'all.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;21;46;03	00;22;14;21	We were the first city to have a tourism management plan. We would constantly review that we are fully staffed now with our tourism officers. Last year, thanks to the historic Charleston Foundation, we have a review of our current tourism management practices right in this room. I do believe it's time to have a major citizen engagement about the tourism plan, because the last major update was in 2015.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;22;14;23	00;22;33;07	So I think every ten years it's reasonable to do that. We could start that next year and have kind of a full blown review of the tourism management plan and any changes that need to be done. And we could do that in the meantime. - TIME EXPIRED
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;22;33;10	00;22;39;05	Thank you, Mayor. And next up is Ms. Gammons.

Debra Gammons	00;22;39;08	00;23;15;19	Tourists, remember when Joe Riley was mayor, he said their visitors say changing that name, that concept, they are a part of Charleston, yet they should not be first before our residents. And so as mayor, I will make sure that residents come first and then tourists are visitors. And they are allowed at this this access to our beautiful city. And so in doing that, the visitors, the tourists, need to share teh cost. When they come here they use our water, they use our sewer system, they use our roads.
Debra Gammons	00;23;15;24	00;23;55;07	So they need to share in that cost. So as mayor, I will develop and work with different agencies. Are state legislators, even federal government, to find a way for them to pay for their state here. And also when it comes to moving around, adding more bike lanes is super important. Having a place where people can park and then take a shuttle or a bike and to the different areas of the city, working with neighborhood associations, working with the tourism associations is super important and then making sure that we pay attention to what you're saying.
Debra Gammons	00;23;55;14	00;24;06;16	The mayor works for you. As your mayor I will work for you and I will listen to you to find out what works best and inviting people here to see what we have. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;24;06;18	00;24;11;23	Thank you, Mr. Cogswell. You're up.
William Cogswell	00;24;15;24	00;24;46;07	Thank you. So, I think we all know for 50 years, probably more than that, the main economic development initiative in the city of Charleston and really the region was to bring more people here. And I think we can all agree that mission accomplished. Right? We have seven, 8 million people visiting a city of less than 200,000 and a MSA of less than a million people. And I agree with the mayor that we need to make sure that we are focusing on quality, not quantity.
William Cogswell	00;24;46;07	00;25;11;20	I think we probably should have made that call at about two or 3 million visitors, but here we are. So where I am on it is I think tourism is an important part of our industry. I do think we can coexist. I was a tour guide for every summer in college, and I think the people that come here, it's it's there's a reason why we're the number one city.
William Cogswell	00;25;11;22	00;25;34;15	But the reality of it is we need to diversify our economy into other sectors. And in terms of what the tourism industry can do for us, I do think that, you know, we should look to the food and beverage industry and the hospitality industry to give back a little bit more. And that's not just, you know, financially, but how hard is it to get a reservation for anyone in this room?
William Cogswell	00;25;34;15	00;25;47;21	I mean, its damn near impossible, there are cities like New Orleans after take care of the people that live there because they're their biggest ambassadors and they're the biggest salespeople. So that's an idea that I have that as mayor, I think that I could do.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;25;47;24	00;26;05;24	All right. Thank you all. The follow up question for this round is for Councilman Shahid. Would you support the development of a new and resident focused tourism management plan, especially since the city sees more than 2 million visitors since the last plan was done in 2015?

Councilman Peter Shahid	00;26;05;27	00;26;31;17	Do you just want a yes or no response? Certainly I think that...it would help if I were to also use the microphone, right, I apologize. So the simple answer to that question is yes, I would certainly want to make sure that we have an updated tourism management plan, and I think that is part of that conversation, I would want to invite a diverse group of folks to that table to offer their input and suggestions.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;26;31;19	00;26;58;09	And you've heard a lot of good suggestions from this table tonight about that. And I incorporate right along with that idea. But you need to have a diverse crowd of folks. You need to from the industry, you from people who live downtown, you need the people who live West Ashley and other parts of the community, because you need the input of folks who have to see this from a different lens, just from a narrow section of folks, because it is an important part of our economy.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;26;58;09	00;27;09;07	This is an important part of our livability issue. And the only way you're going to get to the balance part of all of this is to have divergent ideas at that table.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;27;09;10	QUESTION 4	All right. Thank you. Our next question, Our city faces severe challenges due to flooding and sea level rise. Water negatively impacts our economy, mobility, access to health care and education, as well as our property. Consequently, the next mayor is going to have to make some tough decisions regarding development in areas with high flood risk and how we allocate limited resources for flood mitigation.
Mika Gadsden	00;27;34;22	00;27;53;10	We've heard the seawall discussed ad nauseum in prior forums that, project aside, what are your specific infrastructure recommendations to address flooding and what policy recommendations do you have regarding our building and development practices? We're going to start with Ms Gadsden.
Mika Gadsden	00;27;53;12	00;28;19;18	Yes, as I mentioned earlier, I'm a co-chair with an environmentalist group called the Friends of Gadsdens Creek. And one thing I love about working with that group is that it doesn't consist of just, you know, loud mouth gadflies like myself. We actually are in community with engineers, hydrologist, scientists, educators, people, you know, people you you revering admire. One of those people is a friend of mine and Joshua Robinson of Robinson design engineers.
Mika Gadsden	00;28;19;20	00;28;38;14	He wrote an op ed a while back, was published in the Post and Courier. And he was he was opposed to the seawall. And that really helped me make my decision. I agree with Joshua. I think the seawall is not the direction we need headed, primarily because it is an older approach. It just doesn't work. It doesn't meet the moment.
Mika Gadsden	00;28;38;16	00;29;02;20	We're facing an existential crisis, which is the climate change crisis, and that requires us to be innovative in our solutions. So that means incorporating green infrastructure. I'd love to see Charleston spearhead projects like the billion oyster project, right, where you create certain types of protection, basically based on the use of oysters, things that get more generative over time, get better over time.
Mika Gadsden	00;29;02;28	00;29;26;11	They help slow sea level rise and they also help with erosion. I'd like to also see us, you know, stop building in flood prone areas, like to see us reinvest in our green garden programs so you can get a grant to turn your yard into a rain garden to help help with the absorption of stormwater. I'd like to see us also not fill the Gadsden Creek and revitalize that area so that they can perform a drainage feature.

Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;29;26;13	00;29;31;04	All right, thank you. Next up is Councilman Shahid.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;29;31;06	00;30;04;04	Thank you. So when I got elected to city council, I was assigned to the Public Works and Utilities department and realized immediately that that department was covering too many tasks. The public works utilities was addressing issues dealing with sidewalks, garbage pickup, loading control and fleet management. And I introduced and we got adopted immediately an ordinance that addressed and created a stormwater department - that stormwater department has one mission - to address these flooding issues.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;30;04;06	00;30;31;05	So out of that department you will see that increase in the attention that's being placed on stormwater management projects and that's a critical thing that's happened to the city over the past seven or eight years. In my district alone we have increased the number of projects dealing with stormwater projects that may impact a smaller geographical area that has a huge impact on the property owner's livability.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;30;31;07	00;30;56;00	It's keeping that floodwater out, keeping that water out. We have over 200 other projects that needed immediate attention throughout West Ashley and on particular James Island. So our resources are limited, our options are limited. We need to be paying a whole lot of attention to these smaller projects throughout the area in addition to the Church Creek Basin and to Calhoun West projects, first. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;30;58;25	00;31;01;25	Thank you, Mayor Tecklenburg, it is your turn.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;31;01;27	00;31;25;28	So first, on the policy front, I think, most of you all know, we're rewriting our zoning code to be reflective of our comprehensive plan change. We will be one of the first cities in America that bases zoning on elevation - we will be reducing density in low lying areas. And so that's the policy side of it. I wish I could have an hour to talk about our projects we're working on.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;31;25;28	00;31;50;21	Many on the peninsula, one of my favorites is cleaning out the old Archway tunnels we've started on the one that comes from Limehouse Street all the way up upcoming street to College of Charleston. There's about nine miles of Archway tunnels on the peninsula that can be cleaned out, fortified and maximized for both storage and conveyance. Speaking on the core of engineers, I won't talk about the sea walls since you asked me not to,
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;31;50;27	00;32;23;14	But working with them is the way y'all to get federal dollars to help pay for flooding projects in the Lowcountry. So in addition to the seawall, we've started an additional effort with them to study projects for Tidal and inland stormwater. Okay, Eastside, we got a project planned there. Funded by the way, you got to think about how you're going to pay for all these things, funded by our Cooper River Bridge District on the West Side, funded by our West End.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;32;23;14	00;32;35;06	We just passed a bond for that. On Jane on West Ashley Windermere Project. It's underway. It's being planned right now. We just got approved another \$2 million for the Ninth Ward. I could go on and on. I got to stop. - TIME EXPIRED -
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;32;35;08	00;32;36;29	And thank you, Ms. Gammons.

DebC	00:32;36;29	00:33;18;00	Okay first. Water is good. Too much water is not good. So water. We rely on water. We need water. And when it comes to flooding, particularly in the peninsula, there is flooding all over the country. But why the cleaning drains on a regular basis to cleaning our streets on a regular basis is necessary. Raising the level of streets in these flood prone areas again with engineers and having those studies done, looking at what what has been done in other jurisdictions and removing concrete from these unused lots, we need to take a survey.
Debra Gammons	00:33;18;00	00:33;44;10	And as mayor, I will take a survey of dilapidated buildings, unused lots and pay attention to that because we have the constitutional power to purchase these lots and use it for the public good and also having open retention ponds and this living shoreline that was mentioned earlier is necessary as far as policies meet development and with building, making sure that we agree.
Debra Gammons	00:33;44;10	00:34;11;14	And the city says you cannot fill in any more creeks and not fill that any more marshes, any low lying areas, you cannot pave that over. Second thing to do is to remove these impervious surfaces. We need to let the water come down. When it comes to from the, the clouds and coming up from the river and then planting more trees, working with all levels of the government agencies in order to maintain them.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:34;11;17	00:34;15;14	All right. Thank you, Representative Cogswell. You are up now.
Speaker 6	00:34;15;16	00:34;48;03	Yeah, I've been pretty consistent on this because I do believe absolutely that we do face an existential threat with sea level rise and for that I'm all about less talk, more action. Right now we have five studies listed on the city's website, very detailed studies across the city that address flooding we are currently contemplating are in the process of doing a more holistic water management plan.
Speaker 6	00:34;48;05	00:35;28;28	And now we are also looking at not only the sea wall study or pad, but also another Army Corps of Engineers study that would be for the entire region or city wide that would deal with flooding. So again, that's eight studies. I feel like there could be some consolidation there because I think time is of the essence. I think I appreciate the fact that you need to do studies to get federal funding, but we also need to get our share of the funding and we need to get organized on how and where we're going to get that, folks, because it's going to be hundreds of millions of dollars to address our needs, hundreds of millions
William Cogswell	00:35;28;28	00:35;40;28	of dollars, and we don't have it in the city's budget. So we've got to start working with the county and the state legislature and looking for grants in order to make sure that this threat is addressed. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:35;41;01	00:35;43;26	Thank you, Mr. Middleton, You are up.
Clay Middleton	00:35;43;29	00:36;09;22	As mayor of the city of Charleston, I would create a city infrastructure coordinator - this person would be proactive in applying for federal resources for a bipartisan infrastructure law in 25 competitive branch within that just for cities not a pass through from the state. Part of that includes flood mitigation projects that we could fund it with complete projects and jumpstart projects as well.

Clay Middleton	00;36;09;27	00;36;34;29	That infrastructure coordinator would also be in applying for resources from the Inflation Reduction Act. Those resources sunset the fiscal year 2026. So time is ticking would also apply for the \$1.8 billion that FEMA announced last week that the funding ends, excuse me, the application ends, the end of February being able to apply for those resources is right there.
Clay Middleton	00;36;35;02	00;36;45;09	But we have to be proactive in doing that. Now, as it relates to the policy, net zero construction goals decarbonize public buildings and explore green bonds.
Clay Middleton	00;36;45;09	00;36;45;24	I got you.
Clay Middleton	00;36;45;29	00;37;14;02	And then we'll also do a whole of community approach in order to reduce carbon emissions, we would reduce a getting to zero to get for residents and businesses, retrofit Charleston plant, plant or save 2500 trees annually. And we would also work with a, establish a green infrastructure portfolio standard in all development throughout the city of Charleston.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;37;14;04	00;37;38;27	All right. Thank you. All right. The follow up for this round is for Representative Cogswell. You've previously talked a lot about flooding solutions and have been critical of the proposed Army Corps project, instead favoring extending the battery. How can the city afford to do that on its own, and why would you not want to cost share those construction costs with the federal government?
William Cogswell	00;37;39;00	00;37;54;13	Quite simply, I think you can do both. I mean, you have two corps studies and this requires getting in the weeds. And I want to take a little bit more in a minute, I guess. But the reality of it is both studies allow for federal funding. One study is specifically for storm surge, and that is the wall that only projects the peninsula.
William Cogswell	00;37;54;13	00;38;18;12	And, I think we will have an extremely difficult time getting passed by city council because who's going to vote for the rest of the city from the rest of the city to protect just the peninsula? It's been, you know, \$300 million of city money that they don't have, whereas you can do the Corps study that is more incorporating all of the of sea level rise needs and probably incorporate an elevated edge.
William Cogswell	00;38;18;12	00;38;34;24	You won't be able to stand a 15 foot storm surge, but it will definitely help and help solve daytime flooding. So again, I think you can consolidate a lot of these efforts into one, get organized about it, figure out your sources and uses, otherwise, I think you're going to have a lot of distractions. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;38;38;22	QUESTION 5	All right. Thank you. We'll move on to question number four, plans for the redevelopment of Union Pier Terminal were paused this summer to allow time for a community driven visioning process. Some residents have criticized the city for not taking a more proactive role as the initial plans for Union Pier were taking shape and zoning applications were being developed.
William Cogswell	00;39;00;03	00;39;10;18	What is your take on this? What do you believe is the role for the city and City Hall specifically in large projects like this? Representative Cogswell You are first.
William Cogswell	00;39;10;21	00;39;34;19	I thought I was always going to go last. Yeah. Look, I think Union Pier was a mess. I really do. I think it is an incredible opportunity. I think that I know that the city has known that it was coming for quite some time. It wasn't incorporated in the last city's master plan and as a result it was a blank slate for the South Carolina Ports Authority and LOWE, its developer.

William Cogswell	00;39;34;22	00;39;51;03	And so what did they do? It was the tail wagging the dog. They were trying to get to a number. They designed something that they call Charleston. And you and I know that it had nothing to do with Charleston, didn't look like Charleston, didn't feel like Charleston. And they can put as many watercolors in front of you as you want.
William Cogswell	00;39;51;03	00;39;53;23	But it wasn't Charleston, Right?
William Cogswell	00;39;53;25	00;39;56;21	So it's a great opportunity.
William Cogswell	00;39;56;21	00;40;24;08	It is going to be a complicated plan. But I think the the idea of basically an extension of Ansonborough, that neighborhood, that is what Charleston wants, that would be a character enhancing development, adding more green space. It can be done. It will be complicated. But bottom line, folks, is that the financial needs of the South Carolina Ports Authority should be borne by the entire state, not the residents of Charleston.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;40;24;09	00;40;30;16	Thank you. All right. Thank you. We'll move to the other end of the table. Mayor Tecklenburg, you are up.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;40;30;18	00;41;06;04	So on Union Pier, I said early on at the start that it was what was proposed was to tall, to dense, too many hotel rooms and not enough affordable housing. And by the way, just to explain to everyone, since the days of Mayor Riley back in 90, in the nineties when the city first encouraged the Port Authority to redevelop the property and the comprehensive plan of the city, it was dubbed urban core, which means the most dense development possible in the city.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;41;06;07	00;41;30;13	And when we did our comprehensive plan review just a couple of years ago, councilmember Seekings and I realized that this was not headed to a good place if we left that urban core designation in the comprehensive plan and all. That's why we removed it. So the Port Authority didn't care. They came forward with their plan, they're a private property owner.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;41;30;17	00;41;50;22	We had to accept their application and start process and on it we started negotiating with them, but it became crystal clear when many of you all along with yourself were at the Planning Commission public hearing. And I called Barbara the next day. I said, Barbara, you're not going to get my vote. I don't think you're going to get the support of city council.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;41;50;27	00;42;06;09	You need to start all over again. And that's what led to us working now with the Riley Center over at the College of Charleston. We've got all the groups that were engaged, a part of -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;42;06;11	00;42;10;13	All right. Thank you, Mr. Middleton. You are up.

Clay Middleton	00;42;10;16	00;42;40;24	If it were not for the this organization and the historic society and the Coastal Conservation League, there would have been no no real movement. Fact, no an opinion. The city did not include Union Pier in its comprehensive plan in 2020. As soon as the Port Authority said, hey, we're really going to develop this thing, I would have immediately had a task, a task force in place in order to focus on those issues regarding Union Pier. You woke up, you went to bed, you ate, you slept, you brief Union Pier, 70 acres, the most pristine, valuable piece of waterfront property on the East Coast. We cannot delegate that to someone in staff that's already overworked and do not have the autonomy. So the thing that we did on the back, yeah, we should have been doing as soon as they said, Hey, we're going to really develop this, so we got to get the plan right.
Clay Middleton	00;43;08;00	00;43;24;14	I went to every single public forum that was in person or online for eight months and I learn something new every single time. There was no way this was going to be done in the timeline a lot. No way at all. It took the Johnson place nine years. You think we want to do 70.
Clay Middleton	00;43;24;14	00;43;25;02	Acres.
Clay Middleton	00;43;25;05	00;43;44;01	In a year? Impossible. So all the things that I would do as mayor of the city just really get the fun, right? Wasn't it? And the comprehensive plan and I think is in a better position now because we'll include more organizations, people that do not always agree with us that will yield a better product. -TIME EXPIRED-
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;43;44;04	00;43;47;22	Thank you. Next stop, Ms. Gammons.
Debra Gammons	00;43;47;24	00;44;20;24	As mayor, I will represent you. I will be your voice. It is so important that city, the city represents the people and going to the people, having the people come, inviting them to the table and listening and that's what I will do as mayor. And getting the input from residents is super important. We are mindful and need to continue to be mindful of what has happened to our city, the gentrification, the displacement of long time residents of black and brown people who are no longer here.
Debra Gammons	00;44;21;02	00;44;46;09	So in that in that mindfulness, making sure that we have a clear vision, we have access to the river, we have access to that water where people can relax, where they can fish, where they can shrimp, where they can read and just be a part of that. Having access to that water is super important. And then affordable housing, making sure that that's part of whatever that development
Debra Gammons	00;44;46;15	00;44;49;21	Development is, workforce housing, affordable.
Debra Gammons	00;44;49;21	00;45;13;11	Housing, tight restrictions on that area. I talked about that earlier, about having a plan, a comprehensive plan. So that will involve Union Pier and then these bike lanes. I talked about that earlier, building these bike lanes so that we have less traffic on our streets is super important that we incorporate that area with all of the city of Charleston.

Councilman Peter Shahid	00:45;13;13	00:45;18;17	Thank you. Next up, Councilman Shahid.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:45;18;20	00:45;45;12	This was a missed opportunity of a colossal 70 acres of land that is primed for development. And just think about the impact, what's going to happen to this property once it changes hands out of this quasi public/private ownership of the SPA and immediately is going to be on our tax rules. And then think about the possibilities of this property after its developed - the property taxes alone.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:45;45;15	00:46;05;07	Then if you've got commercial property on this part of this area, think about the business license fees that come out of this as well, plus accommodations if accommodation a a hotel, you can't just come out of this post business license the whole gamut. And what's going to happen with this property in an impact it's going to have in our community, particularly on our economy.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:46;05;09	00:46;24;15	It's enormous. And no one thought beyond that. It was an opportunity for the city to be the tip of the spear, to say, this is our vision for developing this property, but putting it on the tax rolls, making sure that we were the voice to direct the development of this property. We didn't we didn't do that. So here we are.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00:46;24;15	00:46;53;05	This is an example of lack of leadership. Here's what you should do as mayor. Sit down with the SPA and say, this is my vision for how I want this property to be redeveloped and of course incorporate the local neighborhoods, incorporate the community stakeholders who are involved in this process. But the mayor is the chief executive officer who leads the city and should have come up with the plan to say this is the path forward that we want to use to redevelop Union Pier and we simply just didn't do that.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:46;53;08	00:46;57;20	Thank you. Ms Gadsden, you are up.
Mika Gadsden	00:46;57;22	00:47;22;18	From that from the beginning. I'm suggesting from my vantage point for one moment and then broaden it out a little bit, disrespected by the process. I participated in a number of the hearing sessions. I also sat with a group of citizens from the area that would be directly impacted by the development of Union Pier. Some of the listening sessions were held during a tropical storm event.
Mika Gadsden	00:47;22;21	00:47;50;24	Sometimes that the input from the public wasn't take seriously. They would collect input on post-its, but no one knew where that information went to. I felt disrespected. I felt like the process was just some sort of kabuki theater, sort of perfunctory process where it really wasn't going to take into account what folks felt about the project. I think that whenever we we dream of large scale projects like the Union Pier, it has to start with the people.
Mika Gadsden	00:47;50;27	00:48;13;02	It's the public private component of it is their right. But we have to get back to a more democratic way of creating policy and navigating our land use policy. We have to lead with the people. And while I agree with some of what my contemporaries have in terms of the media having a strong vision and leadership, the mayor's vision is not the vision, it's your vision.

Mika Gadsden	00:48;13;04	00:48;31;11	And that should be at the forefront of the decision making process. We have an opportunity to really do something amazing with this area, a create a third place for our community, for our kids, not just another place where the wealthy, the top tier, the elite, park their wealth.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:48;31;13	00:48;51;10	Thank you. And Ms. Gadsden, you are actually the follow up question for this section. On your website, you referenced your commitment to transitioning from an extractive approach to development and planning to one that is community driven and focused on economic diversity beyond tourism. How could that philosophy apply to the redevelopment of Union Pier?
Mika Gadsden	00:48;51;12	00:49;22;03	Yeah, let's start with affordable housing. I believe that the projected affordable housing for that project really missed the mark and a lot of you are you understand what affordable housing is, but from a renter's perspective, we really have to drill down and read the fine print. So sometimes when developers in the city say affordable housing, they mean you have to earn 80 to 120% of the area median income, which is \$94,000, which means I probably have to earn 70 plus thousand dollars.
Mika Gadsden	00:49;22;06	00:49;43;05	I wouldn't qualify for some of that affordable housing and projects like at Union Pier. I again, I don't believe that a lot of these visions really don't incorporate working class folk. And that's why, it's one of the reasons why I'm running primarily is to represent the working class folk that help, you know, help our tourism industry and help our workforce thrive.
Mika Gadsden	00:49;43;07	00:49;59;15	The extractive part is how we navigate TIFs, right, our tax incremental financing. And while they're not not, not on their face or on the surface bad, they're not inherently bad. They've been abused in places like the West Side, the horizon TIF, there's a lot of extraction going there -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:49;59;17	QUESTION 5	All right, thank you. Time to move onto question five. Our success as a tourism destination and desirable place to live and work can be attributed to the exceptional preservation of our historic city. Yet preservation ordinances in Charleston and around the country have been criticized as an expensive mandate and a barrier to attainable housing. How do we balance historic preservation with the most acute challenges that Charleston faces like equity and affordability?
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:50;27;01	00:50;29;11	Mayor Tecklenburg, you are first.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00:50;29;13	00:51;07;09	Oh, so thank you. We're proud to have the country's oldest preservation ordinance to help keep Charleston what it is. But sometimes you got to make some changes and adjustments. And we've been doing that recently north of Line Street. We've been adjusting the requirement for window doors rules to allow folks who have been owner homeowners for a long, long time and and maybe can afford the kinds of specifications that we in the past put on them to loosen it up a little bit and let staff have some more flexibility.

Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;51;07;12	00;51;28;08	We've been doing that. I couldn't believe it when I became mayor and after the first storm or two that the BAR was basically turning people down who wanted to elevate their homes, you know, to get it out of the floodwater. So we came up with guidelines to instruct people on how they could get that done in the historic district.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;51;28;10	00;52;00;24	Same thing with solar panels, people being turned down right and left about solar power. We have to adjust and make the changes in our BAR law that are reasonable, the BAR ordinances, that allow elevations, alternate energy and renovations to occur without breaking the bank and additional affordable housing. Just like you know, we've been cutting red tape. We are concerned to help affordable housing project through through the process.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	00;52;00;26	00;52;06;07	We've cut fees for affordable housing. -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;52;06;10	00;52;12;04	Thank you. Councilman Shahid, you're up next.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;52;12;06	00;52;38;07	I experienced this personally. I owned a piece of property at 89 Broad Street was my office for about ten years and had an easement with the historic Charleston. And while I was, hamstrung a little bit on some of the things I wanted to do with the property, I felt like I was a steward of that building and could not do violence to that building and tried to make any major changes or adjustments - it was too valuable a piece of property.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;52;38;09	00;52;59;25	This historic fabric was important to the community, and so that's the mindset you have to have if you own property in the city of Charleston, particularly historic property, it's going to be expensive to own. This could be expensive to maintain. It can be expensive with your taxes to come along with it. That's a problem. And my solution was to sell it - to pass it to somebody else that inherited that problem.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;53;00;04	00;53;21;00	But that's not the answer that you want. The answer that you want is what are some of the things that we can do to tweak to make that ownership of that property a lot easier, including giving tax breaks to that that homeowner as you would that probably would increase because my taxes on ended on Broad Street were approximately \$7,000 a year.
Councilman Peter Shahid	00;53;21;02	00;53;39;29	That was a heavy burden for me to have to be on a regular basis. So you want to find other incentives and ways that you can lower the cost of maintenance of that property in order to keep it, in order to make sure that it keeps this heritage in its fabric and has cultural integrity. Throughout the years.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;53;40;01	00;53;45;12	All right. Thank you, Representative Cogswell. Well, you were up next.
William Cogswell	00;53;45;14	00;54;08;24	I think I would just say that I'm a big fan of preservation, and it's a world that I've been very involved with for 20 years in my business career, renovating things like the Cigar Factory. And I also understand how difficult it is and frankly how expensive it is. And so when it comes to affordability, there's no question folks need help.

William Cogswell	00;54;08;24	00;54;35;22	Typically folks that live in these older homes. I think the Historic Charleston Foundation has done an incredible job with their revolving fund and the efforts they've put into restoring a lot of these homes, because as I mentioned earlier, I mean, we are our built environment. We are known for the the the efforts that have gone before us in protecting what makes Charleston, Charleston today.
William Cogswell	00;54;35;25	00;55;03;00	And that is, again, our buildings that have been preserved for so many generations. So one idea is again, to work with the revolving fund. And I think the city can have a pretty active role in that. It doesn't need to compete with organizations like the foundation. I also think that if you look at gentrification and the idea of people being pushed out, a lot of times that happens because of taxes.
William Cogswell	00;55;03;02	00;55;17;12	And as I mentioned earlier, I think putting a millage cap on long time owner occupied residents can help solve that so that people aren't taxed out of their homes because of development happening around them. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;55;17;15	00;55;20;18	Thank you, Ms.. Gammons. You are up next.
Debra Gammons	00;55;20;20	00;55;44;22	Preservation is part of who we are as Charlestonians and our city is different. And I love that Charleston is different. Part of that difference is from our history, the good and the bad part of our history. Having enslaved people, native tribes that helped build our city and were a part of our city and still are part of our city.
Debra Gammons	00;55;44;25	00;56;12;04	So finances is key, our key. In order to maintain this balance, preservation and affordability. I as mayor, as I stated earlier, will work with neighboring municipalities, with counties, with the state government, the federal government to work for grants and incentives in order to allow people to see in their homes, to repair their homes that.
Debra Gammons	00;56;12;04	00;56;13;22	They don't have the finances.
Debra Gammons	00;56;13;22	00;56;38;22	To do so do have that financial assistance for them. Public private agreements are necessary in order to help with this preservation and also maintaining the quality of life for our citizens and then working with lending, excuse me, with banks and lending associations, because historically we know that black and brown people were denied loans, females were denied loans historically.
Debra Gammons	00;56;38;22	00;56;55;10	So working with them to encourage loans to help people maintain their homes and working with all of these institutions levels of level of government in order to maintain who we are as Charleston, maintain our existence.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00;56;55;12	00;56;59;04	All right. Thank you, Mr. Middleton. You are up.
Clay Middleton	00;56;59;07	00;57;29;11	We have to change our behaviors. We have to think with the end in mind. It is a true balance. And I think for the city of Charleston as mayor, working with not just this organization, the Charleston Foundation, but making sure that those that are impacted part of the decision making process, not just on the menu. That's very important.

Clay Middleton	00:57;29;13	00:57;53;23	We have to include people that are going to be, as I canvased I say, that used to be there, so-and-so used to live there. We got a whole bunch of "used to's" around here. And for me it's like, Oh, we will need the International American Museum to remind people that black folks were here, A marker is good. It has its place. Oral history is good. it has its place.
Clay Middleton	00:57;53;26	00:58;22;03	But can we be proactive and engaging to provide the resources to provide the rules and regulations, but get the input of those that have been displaced, those that may be displaced to no fault of their own of what happened, but let's include them into that decision making process. That is how we will get a better outcome. That is how we can all be a new brick in an old foundation.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:58;22;06	00:58;48;09	Thank you, Ms. Gadsden, you will wrap up this section.
Mika Gadsden			Will you repeat the question?
Christian Senger (Moderator)			Yes, sure. All right. Our success as a tourism destination and a desirable place to live and work can be attributed to the exceptional preservation of our historic city. The preservation ordinances in Charleston and around the country have been criticized as an expensive mandate and a barrier to attainable housing.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	00:58;48;11	00:58;55;16	How do we balance historic preservation with the most acute challenges that Charleston faces, like equity and affordability?
Mika Gadsden	00:58;55;18	00:59;23;00	Yeah, one thing's for certain, and it's been mentioned by the incumbent, we need to really reevaluate the way we conduct business at the city level with regard to folks who have demonstrated a desire to either renovate their homes or modify their homes. I have a dear friend. Her name is April McGill. She's an architect with roof down designs.
Mika Gadsden	00:59;23;03	00:59;42;16	She had a client, Mr. Don Edwards. He had a home on Pointsett Street and been in the family for years. For generations. He tried on multiple occasions to try to update that property, renovate that property that was almost falling down, still currently almost falling down. It took a former mayor pro tem. It's a civil rights icon, Nelson Brown.
Mika Gadsden	00:59;42;24	01:00;15;14	It took a current city council person and a whole host of other people to advocate for him. Advocate at a BAR presentation to present before the BAR. It shouldn't take a Herculean effort for you to modify your home to create affordable housing, which is what he was trying to do. We need to deregulate where possible. Charleston has a real has to come to a decision whether or not they want to be Venice, a museum that's locked into the past, or do we want to embrace a more flawed we move forward, way forward for people.
Mika Gadsden	01:00;15;20	01:00;27;21	And it doesn't mean we sacrifice historical character. It doesn't mean that it means that it makes sense. We modify and we grow as a city, and we make sure that people who want to create affordable housing can do that.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01:00;27;23	01:00;47;19	All right. Thank you. The follow up question in this section is for Ms. Gammons. You've talked a lot about the importance of preservation of our city's history and culture on the campaign trail. If you were elected mayor, would you like to see the city expand its preservation oversight to areas not on the peninsula, such as African-American settlement communities or historic neighborhoods in West Ashley?

Debra Gammons	01:00;47;19	01:01;14;23	Yes, it's so important and I mentioned this earlier, that we look at all at the city of Charleston, which includes west of the Ashley, part of James Island, part of John's Island, Daniel Island. And we include all of that in our history. And that is important. We need to know everyone needs to know. Residents and those who visit need to know what our history is.
Debra Gammons	01:01;14;23	01:01;38;17	It's important to know from where we've been in order to know where we are going. And so letting them know that the good and the bad is super important. The cemeteries - making sure that they are preserved. They're sacred, sacred places are preserved. There's a cemetery on Daniel Island that's preserved it. And I run by there on a regular basis and I am grateful for that.
Debra Gammons	01:01;38;17	01:01;51;26	I am grateful for that part of the history of our beautiful city to maintain that and making sure we do that. And as mayor, I will work with everyone, all organizations, to do that.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01:01;51;28	QUESTION 6	All right. Thank you. We'll move on to our final question of the evening. How do we balance the economic needs of the peninsula, which is the economic center of our city with the vast majority of the voter base which being located off the peninsula? How can the next mayor focus on the so-called goose that lays the golden egg without alienating off peninsula residents?
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01:02;14;10	01:02;17;01	Mayor Tecklenburg, you are up first.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01:02;17;03	01:02;38;12	So you got to take care of the peninsula in the central business district. It's the heartbeat of our not just our city, but really the whole region. That being said, we have to continue investments in other parts of our city. And I'm going to give one example, and that's our parks referendum that many of us today showed up together to support.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01:02;38;14	01:03;01;03	And if you look at the \$70 million, we're proposing to spend that first of our parks, most of it is West Ashley, James Island, and Johns Island, honestly, there was a couple of parks on the peninsula and we have other things happening on the peninsula, like the wonderful charitable creation of a park at 141 Meeting Street, which is happening in the Lowline.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01:03;01;03	01:03;34;14	So not that there aren't great park improvements coming downtown, but the majority of the investment for like swimming pool John's Island rec center, will be in other parts of our city and we also have to continue to invest in the storm water improvements, infrastructure. West Ashley, as I mentioned, some of those projects already, like Windermere, the doo-wop area, by the way we created downtown, has had TIFF districts to help fund infrastructure for a long time.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01:03;34;16	01:03;58;25	In the last eight years, we've created the first two TIF districts in West Ashley, one runs up and down Sam Rittenburg, and the other is out in Bees Ferry. We today came to an agreement with the developers of Citadel Mall on the stormwater improvements there that will enable that to continue. -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01:03;58;27	01:04;05;01	So thank you, Mayor. Ms. Gadsden, you are up next.

Mika Gadsden	01:04:05;03	01:04;25;14	I think we need to one thing I'd like to see is this for leadership in Charleston, is to model a little bit of courage there was showed a little bit of courage with regard to other economies and well, you brought it up earlier that we thought, well, Chris, you call that the goose that lays the golden egg. And the question we need we need more than geese, chickens, quails.
Mika Gadsden	01:04;25;16	01:04;47;07	You think they can lay an egg? We need it. We need to diversify our economy. And I'm a proponent of trying to figure out what that looks like. Other blue collar cities have done it. You know, Cleveland, Ohio, has had a city led co-op where workers own a business that services, you know, some of the city operations. We can do that.
Mika Gadsden	01:04;47;07	01:05;10;24	We can actually create those economies and we can sponsor those things. We just have to demonstrate the political will to do so. I just don't want Charleston to be locked into a mindset and a way of life that is just so wedded to the past that we forget that we're we're facing new challenges, we're embracing new communities, and we're inviting so many different diverse voices here.
Mika Gadsden	01:05;10;26	01:05;35;24	We don't have to lose much of our built, our built environment. We don't have to sacrifice our social character either. But we need to figure out new ways to diversify our economies so that everything is not reliant on tourism, especially given the impacts of the climate crisis that makes it even more discretionary. So we need to figure out a way forward to generate revenue in new and innovative ways.
Mika Gadsden	01:05;35;24	01:05;39;06	And I think the next leader needs to demonstrate courage in that way.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01:05;39;08	01:05;43;00	All right. Thank you. Mr. Middleton, you are up.
Clay Middleton	01:05;43;03	01:06;05;09	As mayor of the city of Charleston, I'm not going to put one part of the city against another. I'm from downtown Charleston. Both, my wife and I, we live in West Ashley. My great granddad, my daddy mama, my daddy, was from Johns Island, out in Wadmalaw, I have great friends out in my in-laws lived in James Island. You know, I got it so easy, its great to be part of this family.
Clay Middleton	01:06;05;12	01:06;27;16	I have great friends that live in Daniel Island, so I'm not going to put one part of Charleston, against another. We all can be one Charleston, Be honored the seven times in the year that we want to hold hands. As mayor of the city of Charleston, we have to make sure that we focus on our people, our greatest asset, transportation, the economy, whether it's jobs, whether it is housing.
Clay Middleton	01:06;27;18	01:06;58;04	All of those things go the city. It's not just locked in one particular area. So goes back to how we're planning, how we have the right minds and efforts in place and alignment on those activities. We have to collaborate and communicate so that all parts of our city, which have different needs at different times, making sure that we are proactive in addressing them, working with council and their respective districts, working with the various neighborhood associations as well.
Clay Middleton	01:06;58;07	01:07;17;05	So I believe we can not put ourselves against each other. And as mayor of the city of Charleston, that would be very much a focal point that we can coexist together and truly be each other's brothers and sisters, regardless of what part of the city you live in.

Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;07;17;07	01;07;22;29	Thank you. Next up, we have Representative Cogswell.
William Cogswell	01;07;23;02	01;07;37;00	I agree with Clay, the mayor of Charleston, needs to be the mayor of the entire city. And I agree with Minka that we need more chickens. Except for maybe the alive part.
William Cogswell	01;07;37;02	01;07;38;09	In all seriousness.
William Cogswell	01;07;38;12	01;08;04;04	It is important that the peninsula remain a living city. Mika mentioned Venice, and that's an example that's been used before. It's important to have, again, a living city on our peninsula and have families that can come there because that's what people love about Charleston. They love the fact that people live downtown and it is a living and breathing city.
William Cogswell	01;08;04;06	01;08;48;03	And so that is why we have the goose that lays the golden egg, so to speak. But we also can't ignore of the rest of of Charleston. I mean, Mayor mentioned the two TIF districts over in West Ashley and those are ripe opportunities for redevelopment that have been dormant for seven years. Seven years. And you know if you want to make West Ashley less mad on the peninsula, well work on some of those opportunities over there and work diligently because, you know, that helps bring everybody together.
William Cogswell	01;08;48;05	01;08;58;03	You also have issues on Johns Island, James Island, in terms of traffic. And so what you have over there -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;08;58;05	01;09;01;09	Thank you. Next, Councilman Shahid.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;09;01;12	01;09;21;17	Not going to talk about chickens. I promise you. West Ashley has not been dormant for 7 years, it has been dormant for 70 years. It's been a huge problem over there. When you look at the balance of power, what's going on in the city of Charleston, we're doing something terribly because the city's population on the peninsula is dwindling.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;09;21;20	01;09;48;16	And just recently we had to do a redistricting and the city of peninsula lost another city council representative. They're down to three. The majority of city council representatives are on West Ashley. And if West Ashley was a city of its own, it'd be the fifth largest city in the state of South Carolina. So the population is trending towards West Ashley and then Daniel Island and Johns Island and some to some extent James Island as well.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;09;48;19	01;10;23;18	So we've got to reverse the trend because we need permanent residents on the peninsula. And as soon as you start thinking in that mode, it's going to change the complexity in the culture of what we're talking about right now. But at the same time, you need to make sure that as you redeveloping West Ashley and you just follow plan West Ashley, which is a wonderful plan, if you just follow plan West Ashley you conclude that the first thing that is calling for including more commercial component into that plan, you need to do the same thing on Jones Island and the same thing on Daniel Island.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;10;23;21	01;10;28;17	You can't make these outlying areas just residential communities.

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Councilman Peter Shahid	01;10;28;25	01;10;38;03	That is the death of those communities. And you need to make sure that you diversify all these communities into you have this wonderful balance of commercial residential together.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;10;38;05	01;10;41;27	All right. Thank you, Ms. Gammons, you are up.
Debra Gammons	01;10;41;29	01;11;19;24	It's important to remember that we are all connected, all of the city of Charleston. I mentioned to you earlier the different areas and assure mayor I will represent all these different areas. I will have a mayors advisory task committee of representatives and volunteers from all the different areas. John Island, James Island, Daniel Island, West of the Ashley, the Peninsula, and these volunteers will help assess what is needed in that particular area and also the need for this understanding of education.
Debra Gammons	01;11;19;26	01;11;49;05	We have all these colleges and medical university here and using that as a means of finding out what else can we do in order to generate income for our beautiful city, our high school students working with them with these for these innovative ideas and also supporting entrepreneurs, doing all of that in order to engage everyone. And I will be your voice.
Debra Gammons	01;11;49;05	01;12;15;10	I will be the mayor of the people, engaging everyone in order to bring the economy to this area. And along with this comprehensive plan, including all of the different areas that make up the city of Charleston, that comprehensive plan includes listening to everyone and getting your ideas in order that our city maintains its beauty, its charm and its hospitality.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;12;15;12	01;12;31;27	All right. Thank you the follow up question for this section is for Mayor Tecklenburg. How would you formulate and advance your vision for the future of our city utilizing the one two punch of the forthcoming new Peninsula plan and overhaul of the city's zoning code?
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;12;31;29	01;12;34;04	Give me that again.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;12;34;06	01;12;43;20	How would you formulate and advance your vision for the future of our city utilizing the one two punch of the forthcoming new Peninsula plan and overhaul of the city's zoning code?
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;12;44;24	01;13;08;26	Okay So those are happening right now. At the same time y'all. The peninsula plan, our downtown plan hasn't been looked at in a number of years, and we're doing that right now. So please be engaged with that. It includes all these some of these topics we're talking about, like tourism management, Union Pier, flooding and drainage improvements.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;13;08;26	01;13;37;05	So I, I think, I ask everybody to be involved in that. And the second part was the city zoning codes, the new zoning codes. So I mentioned already to you that will be one of the first cities to have elevation based zoning. On the peninsula, there's not too many places under six feet of elevation above, meaning sea level, but there's a few.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;13;37;12	01;13;56;04	So that will be some impact from a density point of view. But we will also be addressing of affordability in that zoning rewrite. Things like how we allow accessory dwelling units, other zoning incentives -TIME EXPIRED-

Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;13;56;06	01;14;13;11	All right. Next up is our closing statements, which again are in a random order. The candidates will have 2 minutes, they can speak to whatever would like, whether it's just a general closing statement, respond or expound on anything that we talked about tonight. First up, is Mr. Middleton.
Clay Middleton	01;14;13;13	01;14;14;22	Thank you all for this.
Clay Middleton	01;14;14;25	01;14;42;02	Opportunity. There are no shortage of issues that are facing us as a city. I just believe we need a better shared vision and bold servant leadership at City Hall in order to meet the challenges and opportunities that exist. I'm 41 years old. I remember at age of ten or 11, my mother was picking me up from my grandmother's home a few doors down.
Clay Middleton	01;14;42;04	01;15;07;03	Must have been a bad day for her because we stopped right here on John Street, corner of Meeting Street. And I'm like, you know, you could turn, turn right on red. And she said to me, Son, while you are sleeping there, thinking, they were working. I did not know what she meant then, but over the years I figured it out that you have to, if you believe in something, you have to work hard at it.
Clay Middleton	01;15;07;05	01;15;27;22	You have to work with people, You have to collaborate. You, you have to do whatever it takes to make sure that you do not leave anyone behind. And then when I joined the military, I learned this on a soldier's freedom, not leave any neighborhood, community or resident behind. Not only me, a fallen comrade behind. Again, there no shortage of issues.
Clay Middleton	01;15;27;24	01;15;58;05	We just have to elevate our way of thinking and not settle for minimal standards in thinking that minimum standards are works of excellence when they are not. As mayor of the city of Charleston, my, my plan, my shared vision, I will do everything in my power to create a Charleston that works for everyone. To create a Charleston that is more affordable, more accessible and more livable for all, not just one part of our city and not another.
Clay Middleton	01;15;58;08	01;16;17;11	That equity and all the issues that we laid out today are embedded not only in our ordinances but in our daily practices. So I thank you again for this time. I hope to earn your support. You can go to ClayMiddleton.com, where I outline very specifically what I would do and what we can accomplish together. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;16;17;13	01;16;21;12	Thank you. Next up is Councilman Shahid.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;16;21;15	01;16;47;14	Thank you for the opportunity to be a candidate for mayor for this wonderful city. I remember back in 1988, between then President Carter and then Governor Reagan, Ronald Reagan ended it by saying are you better off now than you were four years ago? That's the question you need to ask yourself today. Are we better off now than we were eight years ago, four years ago.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;16;47;16	01;17;09;01	The issues before us today that are facing the city of Charleston are to be proven to one question. Livability. Is our standard of living now on the floors. Do we feel safer now than we did four years ago or eight years ago? Do we feel like we're losing our charm and the things and the characters make Charleston, Charleston?
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;17;09;03	01;17;10;23	How do you answer that question?

Councilman Peter Shahid	01;17;10;26	01;17;29;18	If you're comfortable with that, then re-elect this man to my left, re-elect John Tecklenberg. Give him another four years. And he's announced that this is going to be his last four years in office, he would be a lame duck mayor. If you're happy with that direction, re-elect him. The question isn't what the issues are. We know what the issues are.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;17;29;19	01;18;09;08	The issues are affordability for housing, managing stormwater and flooding, public safety and overdeveloped. Now, who on this stage is going to answer those questions for you? Who on the stage is going to give you the vision and leadership that you need to answer those questions? Look at the experience that we may have collectively or individually. Look at my services for eight years on city council and the things I've been able to accomplish to make this city better for you, not just for the citizens of West Ashley, but the entire city completely.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;18;09;10	01;18;24;18	And look at my experience. I've been 40 years as an advocate to promote ideas and ideas and suggestions to make the city better place for all of us to live. Leadership is the ability to articulate your vision.
Councilman Peter Shahid	01;18;24;20	01;18;26;06	Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;18;26;09	01;18;31;01	Thank you. Next up is Representative Cogswell.
William Cogswell	01;18;31;03	FINAL REMARKS	Thank you again for having us tonight. I enjoyed the opportunity to speak with you all. I want to use my first minute to just do a public service announcement and beg everybody here to vote. Early voting has started today. The election is two weeks from tomorrow. So please go out vote. I assume by you being here you probably will be voting.
William Cogswell	01;18;50;26	01;19;13;09	But I'm asking you to be annoying and tell all your friends vote. Because ladies and gentlemen of the city of about 165,000 people in the last mayoral election, only 22,000 people voted. So we need people to show up at the polls. This is your opportunity to express, if you've been happy with the current state of affairs and Councilman Shahid stole some of my lines,
William Cogswell	01;19;13;09	01;19;34;07	But bottom line is eight years is a long time. Eight years is a long time. Especially having gone through one of the biggest economic booms in our city and our country's ever been through. And ask yourself, are we better off or are we better off with traffic? Are we better off with affordability? And we're better off with development?
William Cogswell	01;19;34;14	01;19;56;06	We're better off with flooding. My answer is no, and that is why I'm in the race. That's why all of us are in the race, and so is I think it is time for a change. I think it's time, frankly, for my generation to step up. I think we need leadership. I think we need vision. I think we need somebody that has a proactive approach to actually getting things done.
William Cogswell	01;19;56;06	01;20;08;17	And I have that experience in both the public and private sector to lead our city forward. So I would appreciate your vote, but please make sure you go out and cast the ballot. Thank you.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;20;08;19	01;20;13;00	Thank you. Next up is Ms Gadsden.

Mika Gadsden	01;20;13;03	01;20;34;09	I'm going to make an assumption, almost a safe assumption if you're in this room, you're probably passionate about this city's history and the story that the city tells. Typically, I would introduce myself as the daughter of two Jim Crow refugees. Both my parents are from the Jim Crow South. My father from Wadmalaw, and my mother is from eastern North Carolina.
Mika Gadsden	01;20;34;12	01;20;58;27	And they left the Jim Crow South and they met in New Jersey where I was born. I am what you call a cumbia hybrid. I graduated from Charleston County, a public school, St Andrews High School, Go Rocks. That's a little bit of my story. I think it matters. But it was a story that I was presented with this weekend and yesterday as I was canvassing and knocking doors.
Mika Gadsden	01;20;58;29	01;21;21;13	I met a young lady. Her name was Colleen. This is a true story. I was with my my, my volunteer, Megan, who is a manager at Husk. And Colleen opened the door. She was bleary eyed and she was crying because she just was presented with another rent increase. And as a result, they really hit home for me. My rent went up \$400 last year.
Mika Gadsden	01;21;21;15	01;21;44;09	That's a lot. That's a lot. This is a mother of two and she literally was finishing crying because she didn't know what to do. She called her mother and we had this long conversation myself, my volunteer Megan, and Colleen, she lives on James Island. Managing multiple jobs, working in catering, helping folks with addiction. And she can't afford to live on James Island.
Mika Gadsden	01;21;44;11	01;22;09;06	Is that the story we want to tell? As a city? A story of having housing that's inaccessible. A story of displacement. A story of the haves and have nots. We need to tell richer and fuller stories, and they need to incorporate everybody here. It's really important that you hear from working class people like myself. And I really do hope that you consider me as a candidate.
Mika Gadsden	01;22;09;06	01;22;17;24	You can visit VoteMika.com where you can learn more about me or you can Google me, there's some interesting things out there. Thank you for your time.
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;22;17;26	01;22;20;11	Thank you. Mayor Tecklenberg, you are up now.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;22;20;12	01;22;44;16	Thank you. Thank you for having us this evening. And thank you all for the opportunity to serve as mayor for the last eight years. I really love my job helping people every day. I feel like I'm a caring person. I also I'm positive and a problem solver. And I think you can see that in a lot of the areas that we've talked about tonight.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;22;44;18	01;23;05;24	I want quickly, we ran out of time on all those things. So let me catch up on a couple of things. On paying their fair share. I did want to let you all know we're going to adjust the hotel business license fee about double, so hotels will pay a much bigger share of, of that they should be. Regarding the flooding and sea level rise.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;23;05;26	01;23;28;19	I could spend all night. Please just go to the website and check out our flooding and sea level rise strategies. You'll see all the projects, all the strategies out there is the most comprehensive in any city in America. It's really amazing. And part of that is because I really try to hire the best people. Dale Morris, he's incredible he's our chief resiliency officer, Matt Felton.

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Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;23;28;19	01;23;47;25	He's the head of the Storm Water Department. Everybody gives these guys accolades. We've got a great team in the city of Charleston. We hired my dear friend, Chief Luther Reynolds and now Chief Chino Walker to keep us safe. We have an incredible team of employees at the city of Charleston, and it's an honor to work with them as well.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;23;47;27	01;24;07;10	So every day, you're right, there are so many issues that we face. But I got to tell you, I look into the skin doing all these requests. If I'm doing one of these three things every day, I feel good about my schedule. Public safety is number one. We've increased funding for our police and fire department. They have the best training in the state.
Mayor John Tecklenburg	01;24;07;10	01;24;25;04	They're just incredible. Our men in blue were 100% staff, fire department, flooding and sea level rise. We talked about that tonight. Please look at the website. And so I ask you to affordable housing. We didn't talk about it tonight. The city of Charleston is doing more than any other. Thank you for this opportunity. -TIME EXPIRED-
Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;24;25;07	01;24;30;11	Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Gammons. The floor is yours.
Debra Gammons	01;24;30;13	01;24;34;05	I love our city. I love the city of Charleston.
Debra Gammons	01;24;39;15	01;25;06;00	I grew up with my mom and my grandmother and I stand on their shoulders along with Lucille, with her and Septima Clark and the Grimke sisters, all of those who helped build Charleston and build this area. And I am so proud of that, of my grandmother, my mom and all of their family growing up here, grew up during segregation, and I learned from them the importance of being strong, being confident and seeing everyone.
Debra Gammons	01;25;06;00	01;25;48;19	And that's what I want to, as mayor, see everyone representing you, being the mayor of the people. That's what I will do. I'm inviting everyone to the table and listening to them. You can invite people in, but if you don't listen, you don't work with them. It does you no good. So I will do that. I have the energy, the enthusiasm, the experience in order to be the fantastic mayor for the city of Charleston, keeping in mind our history and good and bad that we have preserving what we have, I just spoke with somebody who's there, who knows or has family in Jupiter, Florida, and he said that Jupiter was kind of sort of like Charleston.
Debra Gammons	01;25;48;22	01;26;00;20	And people kept coming and development kept going on and now its horrible. I do not want that to in Charleston. You guys don't want that to happen. I will make sure it doesn't happen that we maintain our quality of life here in Charleston.
Debra Gammons	01;26;02;15	01;26;25;06	People come because of our rivers, our marshes, our freedoms, our trees, our homes, our buildings, our charm, our southern hospitality. And I will maintain that as your mayor, I will represent everyone. I love our city, and I am so proud of my mom and my grandmother for bringing me up. I will work with all the schools that I'm doing now.
Debra Gammons	01;26;25;09	01;26;32;20	I'm an attorney. I am a law professor. I work with laws and I will continue to do that for you.

Christian Senger (Moderator)	01;26;32;23	01;26;50;08	All right. Thank you. Thank you to all the candidates for their insight into the pressing issues of our city today and for being with us tonight. Thank you to the Historic Charleston Foundation for hosting this and allowing me to moderate. I am honored to have been here. Also, a reminder for everyone on Election Day Tuesday November 7
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