

Special Election for City of Orlando District 5
13 Questions from Spectrum News 13

1. Why are you running? If elected, what would be your top goals as city commissioner?
I am running because as a former City of Orlando employee, Permitting Office and Community Redevelopment Agency, I have the relationships, local government experience, and understanding on how to continue to get the work done needed for District 5 and the City of Orlando. I have experienced the tragedy like many in this community; the loss of my husband to gun violence, the loss of my son to health challenges, homelessness and others, but I have overcome every situation and work to help others overcome their situations. I bring real-life solutions to problems or issues people are having. Upon being elected, my top goal is to hear from the people, together we will work to create a safer community, which includes housing affordability options, ending homelessness, creating streamlined permitting processes, and more education on business opportunities.
2. Downtown Orlando was recently impacted by the law that bans public sleeping. How can District 5 meet the needs that arise as a result of the law's passage?
We have to explore innovative ways to create more beds for the un-housed community, which means increase affordable housing options, as well as increase services for those who are in need of mental health and addiction treatment. Upon being elected, I will reactivate the homeless think tank, review recommendations, and figure out where there are funds to implement these solutions.
3. What is your view on the current state of safety in the downtown area? What would you do to address safety concerns downtown during peak bar/restaurant hours?
Because I loss my husband to gun violence, the safety of this community is a top priority for me. The downtown area has so much to offer for entertainment and as the next Commissioner, I am committed to finding funds to alleviate some of the financial burdens the bars and nightclubs currently have with the new afterhours license. I will work to create more incentive programs, and stick to the nighttime economy study that I participated in with Responsibility Hospitality Institute in 2015. I will collaborate with the existing businesses to work on a more diverse downtown.
4. Amid those downtown safety concerns, there have been several new initiatives to make the culture and business makeup of downtown more family friendly. How do you balance this new vision for downtown while continuing to support existing downtown businesses?
The established businesses hear from their patrons and employees on what is needed for downtown to be a family friendly environment, so I am committed to ensuring there is a taskforce and committees created to ensure all voices are heard. Magnolia Ave has not been activated and we need to work together to figure out how to incentivize retail and more fine dining experiences, which will create a more family-friendly downtown.

5. There are a number of affordable housing developments in District 5, but there is still a great need for more affordable housing. What ideas do you have to help those in need of an affordable, sustainable place to live despite options that are seemingly already there?

As the next commissioner, I will encourage more public-private partnerships, how can we assist private developers. There are billions of dollars of construction taking place in the city, as the next commissioner I will communicate more with neighborhood associations, churches, and the residents on training and job opportunities to increase income, so residents can afford to live in this community. I will pilot residential development in commercial zones that maybe struggling, encourage accessory dwelling units, inclusionary zoning which requests apartment complex developers to include a certain amount of affordable units with offset in impact fees, and explore tiny home communities.

6. While making way for many new businesses in Creative Village, some long-time residents have expressed concerns that historic Parramore has been erased. What will you do to ensure that the history remains intact and that Parramore proper is not forgotten?

As a current board member of the Parramore Main Street District we continue to celebrate the history and past of the Parramore Community. As the next commissioner, I will work with OCPS to see if we can include some books and have different events at the schools within the district, educating the students on the Parramore history. I will work with the Wellsbuilt museum on potential funding sources to expand the facility and promote the museum through various social media platforms. I will also work to create a walking trail throughout the Parramore community to highlight historical figures and sites within the district.

7. District 5 will be home to a new \$500 million entertainment complex across from the Kia Center, which will include a hotel, retail space, housing, and parking, scheduled to open in 2027. How do you ensure this doesn't just drive tourism, but also has a positive impact on other businesses and the residents of District 5?

As the next Commissioner, I will ensure the residents are educated on what development, are taking advantage of job opportunities throughout the construction process and beyond, and will have the opportunity to remain in this community while revitalization takes place. I am committed to creating a District 5 where the residents can Live, Work, and Play here!

8. How would you eliminate the food desert in District 5 and bring nutritious options to residents?

As the next Commissioner, I will create policy that encourages all new apartments add a community garden in their layout; this allows for a sense of pride and ownership within the complex and allows the youth access to learn about agriculture. I would also create a pilot program with local corner stores to create a fresh produce section and assist with the process of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Electronic

Benefits Transfer (EBT), similar to the one at DGX (Downtown Orlando Dollar General). I will work with organizations to educate the residents on healthy eating.

9. How would you change the perception of the Parramore community when it comes to crime?

As a Parramore resident raising my son here, I am proud to say that crime has been reduced, our streets are safe and I would do more 5Ks and other neighborhood events so that people can witness and explore the positive changes happening in Parramore. As the next Commissioner, I will work with both CRAs to explore rebranding and come up with a plan to revitalize Colonial Drive and Orange Blossom Trail. Colonial Drive and OBT are the gateways into the Parramore community and they must be cleaned up and welcoming.

10. We often talk about engaging youth in the community in an effort to address crime. What is your plan to engage parents? Will you include them in any initiatives to making the community safer for youth in the area?

As a youth mentor through my nonprofit Change For The Community, it is important to ensure youth voices are heard and I intend to create youth councils throughout the district. I intend to have a satellite office so that the entire district has more access to meet with me and have their voices heard. I will attend PTA meetings within the district to connect with the parents on upcoming neighborhood meetings. I will have zoom call check-ins during the month to get feedback from the community and ensure everyone's voices are heard.

11. You have two areas in District 5, the Orlando Gasification Plant and Griffin Park Homes, that were subject to pollution and air quality concerns. What are your plans to clean up District 5?

There are several Brownfield grants available and we need to remediate the lands to ensure the environment is safe and breathable. I will ensure the city plants and encourages the use of plants that are not just pretty, but provide shade and absorb carbon dioxide while releasing oxygen.

12. What would you do to increase accessibility to parks and other recreational activities for youth?

As a single mom and youth mentor, I know the importance of youth activities and as the next Commissioner I am committed to increasing middle school youth activities and programming as well as work with the businesses in the community to explore job opportunities to keep the teenagers occupied and out of trouble. The youth are our future and we have to ensure they have positive reinforcements to be the best them.

13. If suspended Commissioner Regina Hill is reinstated, do you plan to run against her when the seat is up for reelection in 2025? Commissioner Hill has done some really positive things in District 5 and has trail blazed for other young women like myself. If Commissioner Hill is reinstated, I plan to continue to work with her to serve the people.