

*There was insufficient time to ask several questions from the Newport Hills Community Club board and from the forum audience. Please make a brief response to the questions below and limit your response to five sentences or less.*

**CANDIDATE NAME: John Albertson**

1. **Public Safety** –

A) How do you see the city’s and council’s roles in preparing for large scale public emergencies such as earthquakes, quarantines, and mass evacuations. In your answer, please comment upon our city’s current state of preparedness

The City is well-prepared in many respects, so are the Bellevue Schools, and programs for involving citizens has improved greatly in the past year, but much more work needs to be done in the area of assuring the daytime occupancy loads of the City are factored into response plans.

*Audience Question*) Is there a role for city government to ensure safety of the underground utilities located in “The Pipeline” right of way that runs through our neighborhood.

Absolutely there is a responsibility and a role.

2. **Traffic and Speeding** –

A) Several of our major streets with bus stops are without sidewalks, and are likely to remain that way for some time. Are the city’s sidewalk funding programs sufficient?

No, the city spending priorities on transportation are skewed and overly dependent on a number of last-century transportation technology bets.

*Audience Question*) We talk about traffic calming but the city continues rapid downtown growth and the infrastructure doesn’t seem to be able to handle it. What can be done to slow it down or to control it? Do you have any further comments on traffic calming initiatives?

My 50-year old neighborhood is due South of Downtown and has substantial cut-through traffic, and we do not have a significant associated safety or speeding-cars noise problem. Our neighborhood has narrow lanes and limited pavement markings, informal asphalt sidewalks, mature vegetation spilling over the roadway, very little streetlighting. This might seem backwards from “modern” standards, but it works. Sidewalks are only as helpful for traffic calming if people will use them regularly. Even informal traffic calming cues should be considered. There are models around the world where less roadway formality

3. **Coal Creek Park** –

A) With regard to public use and access to Coal Creek Park between I-405 and Coal Creek Parkway, do you believe it should be left alone, maintained as is, or eventually improved upon?

Left alone unless there is neighborhood interest. I am not a believer in making our city parks the magnet park destination for every other regional city that does not invest in their

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own city parks.

4. **District Boundaries** –

A) A portion of Newport Hills is within the Renton school district. Residents in the past have petitioned for a school boundary adjustment, but the Renton and Bellevue school boards never could come to an agreement. Since each school district spends almost equal amounts per student, bond debt service is the main sticking point. What steps will you take, if elected, to work with the school boards on resolving this issue?

There are other overlaps like this in SE annexation areas, if a government of a community is interested in neighborhood cohesion, it should find a way to allow kids who live on the same block attend school together. I would support greater cooperative work with School Districts, and would welcome public meetings so the people impacted by current and proposed changes Renton has taken on substantial bonding in the past few years after failing to convince and aging population to invest in schools. Bellevue may well face the same fate if affordability for families with children under 18 are not addressed.

B) Would you be supportive of Newport Hills using their neighborhood enhancement project (“NEP”) money for this purpose, even if it required the City to obligate future portions of the NEP or other neighborhood investment programs to meet the affected residents’ objectives?

Yes, as I said at the forum, the previous generation got so many things “right” in Newport Hills, there may be better uses for addressing the most important needs of the current generation of residents.

C) A portion of Newport Hills falls into the Valley General Hospital district, and residents must service their latest bond issuance to cover emergency room operating losses and increase pay for doctors and nurses, even though we are not transported to this emergency room to receive these services. What steps will you take, if elected, to work with the boundary review board, hospital district, and the City Attorney’s office to revise the Hospital district border so that residents aren’t included in future tax/bond proposals?

I would request any historical documents on this matter from the City attorney, plus a current briefing, opinion, and calculation of the revenue amounts involved, then approach the other parties you reference.

5. **City Support** –

A) What is your opinion of the city’s level of community support and distribution of resources to neighborhoods? Would you work to change either during your upcoming term if elected?

More city workers would be directed to address code compliance where absentee landlords are allowing their properties to overtly decline, and all field employees would be required to provided un-edited reports on neighborhood issues they are tracking where the City stands to be of value in improving the end-result. These reports would be indexed into the city geographic information system for simpler retrieval and analysis.

6. **Vision** –

*Audience Question*) Please paint your 20 year vision of Bellevue, placing particular emphasis on what is unique and specific about Bellevue that should be preserved.

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Bellevue has to find a way to live within it's means, without boiling itself in decades more of tax and fee increases. Bellevue needs to stop patching over local congestion symptoms and stranding capital investment in non-sustainable transportation infrastructure that is dependent on the failing oil economy. More multi-modal investments need to be considered. A Bellevue 20 years from now is a citizen of the planet and not just an assemblage of a few dozen zip codes with taxes and ordinances.

7. **Senior Citizen Issues** –

*Audience Question*) The senior population of Bellevue is a large percentage of the total. What do you see as your responsibility in their particular problems of transportation, medical services, etc.

My responsibility would be to advocate for greater inclusion of Seniors in how our community forms. There is limitless wisdom and energy untapped in our Senior population, and that fact needs to be recognized more visibly by our Council.

My own parents have relocated to Seattle after living near downtown Bellevue 36 years, they simply find the communities there way more accessible and less commercialized for profit. I think access to broader medical care options (I support the growth of Overlake Hospital, but question if it will lead to more affordable care for people who live in our community), and Bellevue's all take and no give structure were also factors in their relocating. Seniors on fixed income cannot hope to be mobile or participate in our society to any reasonable extent. This was the generation that fought wars and worked extremely hard to grow the Northwest economy.

Seniors need meaningful interaction, ability to participate in and around lively civic places, so they need destination that are not all city-amplified, but are service oriented, and to get there they need very efficient transportation options. I am proudest of my city when I find Seniors who are helping others in their generation maintain their mobility.