

Committee for a Better Atlanta

Candidate Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Candidate Information

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Position Sought: City Council Post 1 At-Large

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Questions

1. In your opinion, what are the three greatest issues (problems or opportunities) facing Atlanta? *City Finances. Public Safety. Quality of life.*
2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding this office.

I have dedicated my life to public service. I have served on numerous boards and committees throughout the city including; Public Safety Committee Chair, Lakewood Amphitheatre Oversight Committee, and the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board. I have also been an advocate in politics, and a consistent voice for improving education, public safety, and transportation.

As a businessman, I specialize in Public Relations and Strategic Marketing. In this capacity, I have consulted members of the Georgia General Assembly and Small Business Owners in the region. I am also very involved in mentoring future leaders - regularly visiting public schools to speak to our children about the importance of getting a good education and being involved in their community.

I have been a featured guest discussing public policy issues in numerous publications, radio and television shows, and have participated in many forums throughout the city. I have also received awards for my service to the community.

3. What events or experience caused you to decide to run for this office?

As a native Atlantan, and resident of Southeast Atlanta, I have grown uneasy with the divestment of my community. Codes are not being enforced, streets are not being swept, yet taxes continue to escalate. The lack of transparency, when it comes to city finances, has caused me to enter this race for Atlanta City Council Post 1 At-Large. I will bring a *fiscally conservative* approach to governing at City Hall.

4. Please identify up to five organizations or individuals who are actively supporting your candidacy.

We have a long list of supporters. I am a current and past member of numerous boards and organizations throughout the city of Atlanta. Many of my colleagues and neighbors are supporting our campaign.

5. The city government faces a \$50 million budget shortfall this fiscal year. How would you close the budget gap?

First, I would advocate for an independent audit of every department in city government. I believe that we must understand how our current tax revenues are being spent before we can devise a solution to fix the shortfall.

6. Since 2004, the city's official goal has been to have 2,000 police officers. The Police Department is now at 1,615 officers. Do you support the goal? If so, how would you pay for the additional officers given the city's budget problems?

First, we must work to improve the morale of our current officers. Atlanta is losing officers (that our tax dollars have paid to train) to other cities. We must look at the services that we currently provide that is not in the city charter (this also speaks to question #5). The city has got to get back to the charter and provide services mandated that the city of Atlanta must provide. I believe the city should look at partnering public recreation facilities with private organizations to save money. I also believe that investing in public safety now will lead to greater revenue in the future through increased tourism.

7. Mayor Franklin has used tax-allocation districts and tax abatements to support redevelopment projects. What would you have the city government do to support desirable redevelopment projects in the years ahead?

In my opinion, one of the best initiatives to come out of the Franklin Administration has been the use of TADs and tax abatements.

Atlanta has also been hard-hit by the sub-prime lending crisis. We need to do more to inform homeowners about their options and to market abandoned properties to new buyers. Atlanta's competitive advantage depends, in part, on the availability of a wide-range of affordable living. As your Citywide Councilman, I will work with the new administration to support sustainable growth and redevelopment.

8. Traffic congestion is a major problem in Atlanta. If you could implement only one initiative, enhancement or management change to reduce congestion in Atlanta in the next four years, what would it be? Note: This should be something within the city government's ability to implement.

I will encourage the next Mayor and Council to hire a 'transportation czar.' This position would serve in the same capacity of a city manager. Their main objective would be to solve the city's traffic and transportation issues through their expertise on transportation, funding and traffic management. This individual would be appointed as a city of Atlanta representative on the boards of MARTA, The Beltline Inc., and MARTOC, which is the state legislative oversight committee. The purpose of hiring a 'transportation czar' is to condense various ideas under one body, representing the city of Atlanta – locally/internationally by establishing and implementing real transportation improvement initiatives. *** Note: I would recommend this new position only after our budget has been balanced.*

9. In your opinion, what are the three greatest infrastructure problems facing Atlanta over the next four years? Please rank them in terms of importance and urgency.

- Accounting mechanisms, which helps establish how our tax dollars are being spent, are antiquated.
- Fractured relationships and a breakdown in communication between City Council and the Mayor's office.
- The lack of trust between taxpayers and city government.