

Candidate Pre-Interview Questionnaire

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Candidate Information

Name: DeBorah Williams

Position Sought: City Councilman District 4

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Please answer the questions in the space provided on this questionnaire.

1. In your opinion, what are the three greatest issues (problems or opportunities) facing Atlanta?

- a. Too many contracts to non-city residents
- b. The city budget needs to have a payout system which holds the contractor accountable for how funds are spent
- c. The budget needs to be balanced

2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding this office?

DeBorah Williams is a Civic Leader and Community Activist. A graduate of Booker T. Washington High, she enrolled in Atlanta Metro College to begin studies towards a degree in human service, but later felt a stronger urge to pursue the Ministry. Her services to her counselees and protégés as a servant led her to efforts to make social change working with numerous Community Organizations. Following her passion, Williams sought to make change through policies, many of which were oppressive to her constituents; this realization led her to become active not only in her Church, but in the West End Neighborhood Association, (WEND) NPU. In 1993, she established a 501c (3) outreach ministry, and moved this Ministry to 555 Hopkins Street in the West End, where she directs the non-profit, **REDEEM** Outreach Ministries, which has developed and operated numerous Community development programs over the past 17 years.

Williams establishes programs such as opening doors for the disadvantaged and establishing satellite advocacy programs for Senior Citizens, youths, ex-offenders and the homeless. Williams is also a Master Gardener with a desire to keep Atlanta clean, beautiful and thriving. Williams is a graduate of The University of Georgia's Better Process Control School (FDA), receiving Certification in 2007. In 1995, she was appointed to the City of Atlanta's Government "Keep Atlanta Peachy Clean" Board.

DEBORAH WILLIAMS other contributions include :

- 1) Established housing and development project for homeless and displaced ex-offenders and veteran (Re-entry).
- 2) Established and developed the "Mother Clyde West End Memorial Community Garden" (intergenerational).
- 3) Established and conducts Redeem Our Youth (ROY) summer work camp (volunteer training).
- 4) Established and organized community service credit hours for High School, College students and court cases.
- 5) Escorts Senior Citizens to the Mayor's Senior Citizen's Ball. Also arranges transportation by limousine provided by Willie Watkins Funeral Home.
- 6) Organized one of the most effective neighborhood senior citizens Watch, with law enforcement zone
- 7) Worked with West End seniors to adopt a park located at Lucille and Holderness Streets.
- 8) Established South Atlanta/West End Farmer's Market Co-op to employ seniors and youth.
- 9) Build collaboration with Mechanicsville's Civic Association to establish an additional neighborhood co-op.
- 10) Worked with law enforcement (Paul Howard) to close 3 drug houses on Oak and Atwood streets.
- 11) Organizes "Community Night Out" annual Block Party celebrating 12 years 2009.
- 12) Worked for 12 years with the Department of Corrections Diversion and Detention Centers as volunteer chaplain assisting inmates with counseling, community service Project and hosting Sunday services.
- 13) 10 years involving area businesses in community service projects and marketing through her Solid Rock Business Network Radio Broadcast which airs on AM1480 WYZE Radio. Every first Wednesday @ 9 am

Williams is the recipient of numerous certificates and awards, including her most recent award the WSB-TV community leadership award in the "*Children of the Night*" project to stop prostitution of young women and girls in the city of Atlanta around Metropolitan Parkway and Fulton-Industrial Boulevard.

- 2008** Older Atlantans Task Force Community Service Group Award for creating (Senior citizen jobs inside the Mother Clyde West End community garden food co-op)
- 2008** Atlanta Planning Advisory Broad (15 years of Commitment and Dedicated community leadership)
- 2008** Connelly Elementary School's Career Day Certificate of Special Recognition for participation
- 2007** First recipient of the Georgia Stand -Up Civic Leadership Innovation Award
- 2007** FDA Certification
- 2006** United Way Certified Investment Volunteers

- 2005** West End Seventh Day Adventist Community Service Award
- 2000** Booker T. Washington High school (Courage Award)
- 1999** West End Seventh Day Adventist Community Service Award
- 1996** MLK JR. Center for Nonviolent Social Change Certificate of Appreciation Award
- 1995** TBS Super Citizen Award -Ted Turner
- 1995** City of Atlanta Certificate of Appreciation Award (Mayor Bill Campbell)
- 1995** Atlanta Police Department - Zone 4 Community Leader Award
- 1995** WEND -West End Neighborhood Development - Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award
- 1994** Community Notary
- 1992** Certificate of Ordination

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

A lack of service, abandoned commercial and residential structures, public safety, public transportation issues, water and sewage infrastructure issues, lack of youth education and recreation, and representation as a taxpayer for the last 16 years has caused me to run.

4. Please identify up to five organizations and individuals who are actively supporting your organization?

Jackson Memorial Church, Yonah Bala Bay, Keturah Whitaker, college students, and Trinity House alumni.

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

I would close the budget gap by (working with other council members to)reducing the number of city government contracts to non-residents, outsource services, close underutilized community centers, offer incentives for early retirement, pare down council members stipends, freezing all vacant positions, suspend certain city projects and events, raise recreational program fees, delay equipment purchasing, and reduce/freeze monthly salaries.

6. Since 2004, the city's official goals has been to have 2000 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?

Yes, I do support the goal. I would pay for the additional officers by drawing on state and federal resources. (If or if not granted our officers need to be educated on how to be police friendly when patrolling the community on called on arrested)

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

The city government would launch a redevelopment fund entitled "The Atlanta City Redevelopment Grant & Fund." This fund will provide funding for redevelopment projects and other city based projects (in accordance with the goals of the fund) in the form of grants and loans, to city government entities, non-profit organizations and private developers, etc.

- 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's government ability to implement.**

I would implement multiple strategic changes to reduce congestion in Atlanta in the next four years. I would work very closely with city traffic engineers and transportation planners to create the implementations. They are as follows:

- a. Privatization of highways
- b. Road pricing; tolls
- c. Widening strategic roadways
- d. Increasing "flow pressure" via automated highway systems; ramp signaling
- e. Public transportation projects
- f. Reversible lanes
- g. Increase HOV lanes
- h. City based car pooling

- 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.**

- a. Wastewater and sewer treatment
- b. Staggering costs of city wide repairs
- c. Transportation planning and funding