

Candidate Information:

Name: Howard Shook

Position Sought: District 7, Atlanta City Council

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

1. Securing a water supply.
2. Building and maintaining a dependable finance infrastructure within City Hall.
3. Maximizing existing transportation modes while providing cost-effective new options.

2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding this office.

Before running for City Council I served in several community leadership roles, including President of the Ridgedale Park Neighborhood Association, President of the Buckhead Neighborhood Alliance, co-founder of Partnership for Better Government, and a board member of the Buckhead Area Transportation Management Association. After joining City Council I have served on all seven standing committees, chairing Utilities for two years and Finance for the last four. In addition I served as Co-Chair of the City Council Select Committee on Pensions, am a four-year member of The Budget Commission, and serve on the board of the Buckhead Community Improvement District.

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

Two of the greatest sources of citizen frustration in Buckhead during my predecessor's service were chronic sanitary sewer overflows and the weekly violence, trash, noise and traffic congestion generated by the Buckhead Village. I was fortunate enough to be able to work with a new mayor and council to remediate both problems. I am standing for re-election in '09 largely out of a sense of obligation to apply my fiscal and pension experience towards the complex task of stabilizing City Hall's fiscal infrastructure.

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

1. Sam Massell
2. Karen Handel
3. Herman Russell, Sr
4. Edward Lindsay
5. Lee Morris

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

Pension (20% of the General Fund) & healthcare programs must be made sustainable. Collect revenue from traffic & code enforcement (\$40M left on the table). Unflinchingly prioritize city activities, eliminating non-core services and make outsourcing decisions based on prudence, not politics.

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?

More cops? Of course. But, why not also pursue a goal of *fewer criminals*? Those 'missing' 385 cops carry a \$30-million-plus price tag (or roughly two more mils for over-taxed Atlantans). Let the public decide via referendum. Meanwhile, a relatively small number of career and juvenile criminals cause a disproportionate amount of our crime and, while often arrested, beat the cop back to the neighborhood. A 'Crime Summit' should be convened wherein police, judges, solicitors, district attorneys and public defenders can close the revolving door.

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?

City Hall should 'partner' with developers, with the 'partnership' defined as each entity doing what it does best to collectively produce a sum greater than its parts. For government, that means effective and affordable provision of core services (no tax break will overcome inadequate water, rampant crime, etc). I have supported the BeltLine (& other existing TADs) that seek to harness market forces but frankly disagree with squandering taxpayer dollars on areas failing to an honest 'but-for' test.

8. Traffic congestion is a major problem in Atlanta. If you could implement only one initiative, enhancement or managerial change to reduce congestion in Atlanta in the next four years, what would it be?

Installation of the needed links connecting GA400 & 85. Their absence creates congestion shock waves that ripple through every thoroughfare and neighborhood collector street in Buckhead.

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.

1. Bridges (Several have single-digit inspection ratings)
2. Sidewalks (Non-ADA compliance = huge legal exposure)
3. Storm water (A half-billion dollar problem)