



## Candidate Pre-Interview Questionnaire

The Committee for a Better Atlanta (CBA) is a coalition of business organizations concerned about Atlanta. In 2009, CBA is interviewing candidates for mayor, City Council president and City Council with the intent of publishing a voter's guide of candidate evaluations. The evaluations will be based on the answers to the questions in this document, plus in-person interviews to be held this summer.

Your answers to these questions are very important to the CBA interview and evaluation process. ***Candidates who do not complete this questionnaire will not be scheduled for an interview with CBA.***

Please complete this questionnaire and deliver it to the Committee for a Better Atlanta so it arrives **no later than 5 p.m., July 31, 2009**. Questionnaires can be filled out electronically and emailed to [cwatkins@macoc.com](mailto:cwatkins@macoc.com), or mailed to:

**Committee for a Better Atlanta  
235 International Blvd., NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Attn: Che Watkins**

If you have any questions about completing the questionnaire – or about the CBA process – please contact Che Watkins at (404) 586-8468.

### **Candidate information:**

Name: Lisa M. Borders

Position Sought: Mayor – City of Atlanta

Address: PO Box 54581

City, State, ZIP: Atlanta, GA 30308

Telephone: 404-581.1037 Cell phone: [Click here to enter text.](#)

E-mail address: [Lisa@BordersForAtlanta.com](mailto:Lisa@BordersForAtlanta.com)

Campaign Web site address: [www.BordersForAtlanta.com](http://www.BordersForAtlanta.com)

**Secondary contact information: (If you prefer that CBA direct scheduling inquiries to someone other than the candidate, check here. PLEASE SELECT)**

Name: Glen Freedman

Relationship to candidate: Executive Assistant

(e.g. Administrative assistant, campaign manager, etc.)

Address: PO Box 54581

City, State, ZIP: Atlanta, GA 30308

Telephone: 404.581.1037 Cell phone: 404.307.9631

E-mail address: [GlenFreedman@BordersForAtlanta.com](mailto:GlenFreedman@BordersForAtlanta.com)

*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?

Our first, and most fundamental, issue is stabilizing and further professionalizing the financial management of the City. This begins with hiring the most experienced managers and providing the critical oversight necessary to ensure that all managers are held accountable. Simultaneously, we must expand the sources of revenue available to support the necessary services for the City of Atlanta. The second and equally critical issue is protecting our neighborhoods and streets. Public safety is essential not only for the protection of our residents but also for attracting new businesses and jobs. My obligation will be to recruit and retain public safety officers. Third is economic development, which necessitates that we resolve transportation and water issues core to growth and aggressively leverage entities like the Atlanta Development Authority and projects like the BeltLine and other TADs to attract and retain the proper mix of business opportunities.

2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding this office. *(Please answer in the space below, but you may also attach a resume or other description to provide us with additional detail.)*

I am the only candidate for mayor who has the requisite corporate leadership, political leadership, civic engagement and broad regional and political relationships to serve the city. My corporate background includes 30 years of business leadership, including operating a healthcare practice, serving as a senior vice president for Cousins' Properties, operating a small business that brought a WNBA franchise to Atlanta and heading the Grady Foundation. This cross-section of experience has taught me the necessary management skills for operating a multi-billion dollar enterprise. I have balanced substantial budgets and right-sized operations. Moreover, as President of the Atlanta City Council, I am responsible for guiding a formerly fractious council through tough legislative challenges including the recent passage of the budget to end furloughs – actively advocating a necessary tax increase in an election year. I am also an active civic leader who has helped pass legislation to toughen our child abuse laws, aided hundreds of students in attending college, provided funding for civic projects like the Carrie Steele Pitts gymnasium and funded senior housing. I have spent thirty years cultivating relationships across the state, including service on the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, serving on national boards, and building political coalitions across partisan lines. I represent the inclusive and dynamic capacity of the City and have a track record of delivering results.

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

My decision to run for mayor stems from a life-long desire to serve Atlanta, ignited first when I was 11 years old and sitting in my grandfather's church, where Maynard Jackson launched his inaugural political bid. However, my youthful goal of service has been sharpened by my experiences as a businesswoman, a public servant and a civic leader. The role of mayor is not simply one of identifying problems – it is one that requires smart, creative answers and a sound temperament. During my service as President of the City Council, I recognized that the next mayor must be one willing to commit herself to the tough and thorny issues of fiscal management while also burnishing the reputation of the city as a place to live, work and play. I am standing for the office of mayor because I am uniquely qualified to restore Atlanta's fiscal stability and grow her capacity.

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

- 1) Endorsed by the Atlanta Board of Realtors
- 2) Yum Arnold, CEO of Leapfrog Services
- 3) Juanita Baranco of Mercedes Benz of Atlanta
- 4) Reverend Gerald Durley of Providence Missionary Baptist Church
- 5) Former State Senator Sam Zamarippa

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

First, I supported the 3-mill increase necessary to close this year's budget gap. Despite the poor financial reporting that has harmed the city, due to a combination of migration from legacy systems to ERP systems and inadequate fiscal oversight by the city's prior CFOs, I have been obliged as President of City Council to understand the current state of our finances and to act in the best interest of the city. It is inappropriate to do otherwise in as an elected official. However, this budget crisis has revealed a fundamental dissonance in our financial structure. Reliance solely on property tax and sales tax revenue leaves the City too vulnerable to changes in economic times and inflexible when unmet needs require significant resources. As mayor, I will identify revenue enhancements that can stabilize and diversify our funding streams, such as point-of-sale tax collection performed by local government and monetization of city assets. Other municipalities have explored additional taxes, such as a commuter tax, a local income tax and a parking lot tax. My goal will be to evaluate all options, discard those that may overburden citizens or harm the ability of business to operate effectively, and focus on those enhancements that work. For example, I would transition our police and fire academies into profit centers by training regional and national recruits. We will also explore the sale of naming rights for our parks and public spaces. The city also owns substantial real estate holdings that should be offered for long-term lease or sale. We must also carefully examine our tradition of property-tax roll-backs without first investing in necessary reserves and infrastructure expenditures.

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?

Atlanta must immediately train new officers to increase police presence across the city. The current force of 1,615 officers must be augmented immediately and deployed in high-crime areas across Atlanta. The Mayor's recent announcement of 139 new officers moves us closer to the goal, but we must manage the city budget annually to match these costs and to increase officers by 50-100 per year over the first 3 years of my administration. Revenue enhancements, cuts to non-essential spending and active attention to retention through a housing pool funded in part by TAD funds as well as one-time incentives for education, expertise and experience funded through public-private partnerships will be critical to meeting these needs during difficult financial times. When absolutely necessary and unavoidable, we must also invest through targeted tax increases, as we did during this last budget cycle.

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?

I will first review all existing TADs and tax abatement programs to determine which programs are ready for debt-retirement in order to allow for reallocation of resources to other development corridors. Simultaneously, I will audit the performance of the ADA to ensure that we are aggressively marketing and utilizing not only our tax programs but those available on a regional, statewide and federal level, such as the Livable Cities grants, Renewal Community funding, Enterprise Zones and the state job credits and business tax credit programs. A centerpiece of my administration will be the active support of the BeltLine, which offers on-going opportunities for redevelopment and investment as each phase of the project comes on-line. We must also do a better job of coordinating across both geographic and non-geographic alliances to leverage access to stronger state funding and flexibility for economic programs. By cultivating statewide alliances, we can push for liberalization in municipal economic development, allowing Atlanta to develop an appropriate mix of localized tax opportunities that permit creative use of our unique positioning as the state's major fiscal center.

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.

While the city has the ability to lobby on behalf of MARTA, to support the BeltLine and the Peachtree Streetcar, and to implement certain aspects of the Connect Atlanta plan, signal synchronization of traffic lights is low-hanging fruit that can yield tremendous benefits for relief of traffic congestion. As a fundamental matter, it is more efficient to move traffic along an arterial when the flow of traffic through a series of intersections includes properly timed lights for travelling motorists. Signal synchronization would require a coordinated set of timing plans for groups of signals in high congestion areas throughout the city on key arterials like Peachtree Street, Piedmont Avenue, Spring Street, Memorial Drive, etc. to smooth and regularize traffic flow. During my administration, I would leverage local and federal funding to pursue this project.

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) Completing mandated water and sewer repairs by the 2014 timeline and simultaneously resolving our water access issues to sustain growth
- 2) Implementing traffic congestion relief projects indicated in the Connect Atlanta Transportation plan, supporting transit projects to improve MARTA's reach and capacity, including light rail, in-fill stations and identifying the appropriate multi-modal facility
- 3) Upgrading government facilities to meet water and energy conservation standards as well as consolidating facilities where appropriate to minimize costs and ensure utility and safety