



**Candidate Pre-Interview Questionnaire**

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

A. **Public Safety** is one of the most critical concerns for the city of Atlanta. Furloughs and growing gang violence have created a “perfect storm” for criminal activity in Atlanta. While the number of violent crimes has dropped, thefts and related property crimes have increased over the past year. These property crimes and some high-profile violent crimes have created a perception of rampant and escalating crime in city neighborhoods, thereby producing widespread anxiety and fear that leaders must address. Left unanswered, the

climate will breed more crime by individuals who believe they can act in a perceived or actual relaxed law enforcement environment.

The **Revenue Structure** for the City of Atlanta should be restructured and expanded. Revenue structures, industry trade targets and public policy should be developed in tandem. Strategic revenue realignment is an achievable goal within the reach of creative policymakers. In addition, increasing the City's revenue and tax capacity also means attracting more diverse streams of income. Sales tax revenues are less and less effective as the primary means of tax base stability. The need to diversify our economy beyond sales taxes is painfully evident now and as it was during the tourism decline after September 11, 2001. In today's global economy where e-commerce drains retail and other sales taxes and the consumption of goods is increasingly becoming the consumption of services, cities must create diverse tax bases to achieve stability and growth. Recognizing that the City of Atlanta has local controls that some major cities do not, policymakers must use their power to create new sources of revenues in addition to property and sales taxes. (These controls include the power to amend the City Charter without state legislation; the power to own an airport; control over health and pension costs for city employees; and, the ability to reorganize without state legislation.) One of the quickest remedies would be a Statewide municipal point of earnings income tax (city residents could be exempted or all could pay regardless of their homestead, this point would require further study). Many others cities have such an instruments. The funds generated may be targeted to specific uses (public safety, infrastructure, parks & recreation, ect.) to augment the General Fund. Business license fees could be adjusted downward based on the number of employees that pay the tax.

**B. Regional Governance** is an important opportunity that the City of Atlanta should pursue aggressively. Isolationist governance and duplicative services undermine efficiency and cost-savings for area cities in towns, including Atlanta. I support regional cooperation similar to the borough system of New York City. Such a system allows current incorporated areas and independent governing bodies to maintain much of their autonomy, but centralizes many services, land use planning and strategic planning efforts while spreading the cost, thus lowering it, over a wider tax base.

Certain services like police and fire protection hinge on manpower and response time. Smaller dispersed units scattered across jurisdictions are difficult to serve and maintain due to distance and cost. What will always work best is integrated service delivery. Issues of local control such as planning and zoning decisions should still reside within the reach of the people.

Further, Atlanta is viewed as the main talent and technology center of a burgeoning mega-region (one of ten recognized nationally) that includes Charlotte, Raleigh and Durham, North Carolina. The region consists of approximately 22 million residents and \$730 billion. Vast long-term possibilities lie in partnerships within this mega-region. It is less expensive to share the cost of delivery for pertinent services than to continue to allow the creation of edge and micro-cities around the region. Such cooperation for large-scale

regional planning will only make the region—America—more competitive on the global stage.

**2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding this office.**

Representing Atlanta's District Three for two electoral terms on the Atlanta City Council, I also served as President Pro Tempore in 2001 and chair of Public Safety & Legal Administration and Community Development Committees. As a legislator, I introduced, passed, authored and co-authored more legislation per term than any other person in the City's history. The total number of legislation passed by me nears over 1000 pieces. My accomplishments include limiting the number of package stores in neighborhoods, demolishing dilapidated structures, and supporting new construction of affordable housing in the community. I also authored legislation to prohibit the City from doing business with institutions that engage in predatory lending, and passed the Public Safety Improvement Fund.

I doubled the amount of Community Development Block Funds invested in his district, after eight years totaling more than 25 million dollars. Also, I led the fulfillment of the City's 30-year promise to rebuild the historic Washington Park Natatorium, and secured over \$130 million for the creation of the Westside Village on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. It is the largest single investment in the African-American community in Georgia. More streets, sidewalks, and infrastructural deficiencies in District Three were repaired than in any other district. Former Secretary Cuomo of the Department United States Housing and Urban Development selected me as a Community Builder Appointee.

Since 1998, I have served as a national board member of the American Diabetes Association's "Community & Volunteer Development Committee", board member of the ADA (Atlanta Chapter). Bond also serves as a founding member of the ADA's "Fathers Day Council"—Atlanta Committee, '03-present. Bond serves on the boards of the Ollie Street YMCA, and is a founding board member of the Centennial Place YMCA.

I am an alumnus of Leadership Atlanta and the Black-Jewish Coalition's Project Understanding. Also, I am a member of St. James # 4, PHA, AFSCME, Atlanta Inner Circle, Fulton County Youth Council, and Fulton County Human Services Call to Manhood Committee, Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials, Georgia Municipal Association and Atlanta Urban League Young Professionals.

A fifth generation Atlanta, I am the son of former Georgia State Senator and NAACP Board Chairman Julian Bond and Alice Clopton Bond. Bond attended Morehouse College and Georgia State University. I am the father of three children, Lauren, Mychael, and Schuyler, who attend Atlanta public schools. My family worships at Antioch North Baptist Church.

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

I am a public servant at-heart. Having served in elective office previously, my commitment to service in Atlanta has never waned. I continue to be concerned for the plight of my hometown. However, several events shook me to my core and ran counter to the values I always believed my city upheld. The most egregious was the handling of the Kathryn Johnston case, a former constituent of the district I represented. This case demonstrated a dearth in leadership that believes that it should be accountable to the electorate. I firmly believe that elected officials are to serve the people. The corporate CEO model does not encompass the entirety of leadership empathy, concern and responsibility that public officials must possess. Public officials must be good administrators but they must also be good, responsive, ethical leaders.

**4. Please identify up to five organizations or individuals who are actively supporting your candidacy.** Herman J. Russell; Mack Wilbourn; former Mayor Sam Massell\*; Paul Zucca; Andy Young. *\* supports but cannot endorse*

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

- Continue to right-size and reengineer business processes to reduce the cost of doing business
- Eliminate non-essential contracts
- Aggressive federal grant applications to provide offsets for eligible programs currently funded through the general fund
- Utilize lease purchase programs for all city vehicles to shift long-term and ongoing maintenance overhead (I have already done this with Fire & Public Work Vehicles during my last term of Office, it should be expanded)

**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 you pay for the additional officers given the city's budget problems?**

Yes. I believe that we must higher more police and make benefits more competitive for officers. Police work in the city of Atlanta should be a career and not simply a job, a concept shared by applicants, police management and policymakers. Atlanta can achieve the hiring and competitive goal of 1:1 salary/benefits ratio by fully utilizing the Public Safety Improvement Fund, a law I introduced and passed. This legislation authorizes the collection of revenues to be deposited in an off-budget account for the purpose of capital expenditures of the City's public safety responsibilities/departments (Police, Fire, and Corrections). Needed equipment, supplies, repairs and other necessities would be covered under this legislation. The importance of this fund is that it would allow the City's current public safety budget, which is nearly 50 percent of our total annual budget

(each year) to be available for more competitive salaries and higher pensions. Atlanta Police officers leave because the salary and benefits are not competitive with other departments. Seeking to hire any number of Police without addressing this is a continued 'fool's errand'. Atlanta will continue to provide the best basic training and experience for officers who will continue to use that same training to improve a multitude of other Public Safety agencies. We can no longer afford to not make policing a solid career, not a job, in this City.

**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?**

As the creator of the Westside TAD and the sponsor of the legislation that enabled the development of Atlantic Station, I firmly believe in this approach. It, however, is only one tool in the City's redevelopment tool box and one that should not be over-utilized. The City should layer such efforts with fee waivers, employment credits when hiring local residents, and other job creation and business development incentives such as Federal 'HUB' zones, which I also created while on Council. Additional job stimulation incentives can be offered for businesses that revitalize dilapidated buildings and areas.

TAD's ought to be designed and aligned with TOD's (transit oriented developments) to further encourage density around MARTA Stations, (Lindbergh & Westside Village for example) promoting a 'live, work, play' environment that encourages the public transit option. Federal monies are available for such developments.

For neighborhood redevelopment and growth, the City can create housing enterprise zones that would support the purchasing of housing stock in select neighborhoods and for first-time homebuyers or on properties that require rehab. The City must also concentrate those efforts at times with a 'block by block' approach to lift an entire community. Atlanta is littered with 'infill housing ghost'- new homes in neighborhoods that now are dilapidated and empty. This has happened when local CDC's attempted to develop infill housing but because of negative conditions in the wider community such as other dilapidated properties in close proximity and rampant property crime the new homes did not sell. Developing on a 'block by block' concept will allow the redevelopment of a street or area that will lift 'all bouts with the tide', protecting the investment and improving the community at the same time.

Programs such as the "Purchase on home for a dollar" should be reinstated, where the City acquires older housing stock that is dilapidated or abandoned, sells for a 'dollar' but offers a low interest rehab loan and requires the resident to remain in the home for a minimum of five years. This will make the older housing stock in the central city more attractive to potential homeowners and will help to stabilize those communities. Also the city must embark on an aggressive "In Rem" program to obtain, clean, close, demolish and at times when appropriate acquire vacant lots for 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? This should be something within the city government's ability to implement.**

I support an integrated system of transportation both inside and outside the city of Atlanta. In order to manage current needs and future projected growth (1 million more cars), the Atlanta region must create coordinated transportation linkages that get people out of their cars. Primary dependency on the automobile will choke the economic growth and progress of our city and region. In Atlanta, we need a light rail system that will serve as "spokes in the Beltline's wheel," thereby providing more passenger routes inside the city limits. I fully support the investments and comprehensive approach to transportation planning projects in Atlanta Regional Commission's 2040 Plan. This plan views transportation planning not only through the lens of land use best practices but also contemplates the impact on the environment and economy.

**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.**

- Water/Sewer System
- Roads and Bridges
- Parks System (need to develop more public green space)