

Westview Questionnaire

Would you be transparent about your Council budget? How?

Transparency is necessary for residents to trust their elected officials. Without that trust, how can we govern in their best interests? With an incumbent council member who has “been slapped with a series of fines totaling \$6,500 by the city’s ethics office—for spending taxpayer money on each of her last four re-election campaigns,” we must ensure that we enhance existing safeguards in place, if necessary, explore legislative options to introduce new safeguards in combating corruption and promoting transparency. I would be transparent about my Council budget by publishing it through our websites, social media, and community meetings. My budget will be open to community scrutiny and public directives in accordance with their needs as I am not owned or aligned with special interest groups who would benefit from the lack of transparency.

What is your stance on displacement of legacy and low-income residents? How would you enact policy to support those residents and prevent displacement?

The people who have made the very culture of Atlanta what it is today should not be excluded from the benefits of the economic growth that is occurring to the city. Growth for a few at the expense of the many is unsustainable, harmful, and destructive to the overall well-being of our city. Displacement of legacy and low-income residents must stop immediately with city council leading the effort. I will work to enact the following policies;

- Freezing property taxes for individual homeowners who live in neighborhoods where property taxes have increased by 10% or more for three years in a row and who have household incomes below the Atlanta median income (\$65,000).
- Create a permanent legacy resident fund to prevent displacement. Money from the fund will be used to subsidize property taxes and/or home repairs for legacy residents who cannot afford to keep pace with rising costs and code violations.
- Providing housing for the unhoused by requiring the Atlanta Housing Authority to release inventory of undeveloped land and former public housing developments within a year of them becoming available and work with non-profits and other existing organizations to find new ways such as land trusts and housing co-ops to provide housing.

These are a few of my platforms that seek to eradicate the displacement problem in our city. We have to do more to ensure that each and every resident in district 4, in Atlanta, can stay, live, and thrive in Atlanta.

Do you support the Policing Alternatives and Diversion Initiative (PAD)? What role do you see diversion and alternative to policing initiatives, such as PAD, playing in building a new approach to community safety and wellness? Currently, PAD is only .5% of the public safety budget, so how can we financially support it to ensure success?

I am in complete support of the Policing Alternatives and Diversion Initiative! Pad needs to be funded adequately and appropriately in order to be a central aspect of our public safety approach. PAD has provided public safety recommendations for legislators and officials to implement in order to actualize community safety and wellness. This campaign seeks to uplift and provide platforms to organizers and organizations that have been on the frontlines fighting for a new approach to community safety and wellness. Entities such as PAD and Reimagine Atlanta have provided public safety recommendations for legislators and officials to implement in order to actualize community safety and wellness.

We need to identify and invest in a continuum of first responders to respond to emergency and non-emergency requests received through 311 and 911. We also need to enact the recommendations of the City of Atlanta's Reimagining the Atlanta City Detention Center (ACDC) Task Force to end the practice of jailing people for quality-of-life ordinance violations, traffic infractions, or inability to pay fines and fees. These are a few of the ways we can actualize community safety and wellness.

Will you hold monthly town halls and allow input from constituents before voting on controversial matters that affect our daily lives for years?

Yes! I will also continue working with community organizations, leaders, and residents to ensure their voices and directives are heard. All of the technology available to us should be used to guarantee that the constituents are engaged and participate in this process. My campaign is a people-powered campaign, it is the people who I have to listen to, not corporations or developers. This requires me to stay in communication with my constituents throughout my term, not solely for re-election.

What would you like to see improved regarding pedestrian safety and how would you enact that plan? For example, how would you address the Cascade Corridor? Would you add speed bumps and sidewalks to the budget, or support continuing to use the General Budget funds for those overdue improvements?

To improve pedestrian safety, we have to increase the funding and prioritization of our infrastructure. We need to increase funding to fix roads and sidewalks that have long been neglected to guarantee safe, accessible, clean, and well-managed roads with traffic calming devices. It is imperative that we lower the requirement of signatures needed to install speed bumps because many properties are owned by landlords/developers, not residents. We need to repair and improve pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks and crosswalks. I do support continuing to use all available funds to increase the collective safety of our pedestrians.

What steps will you take to decriminalize current city ordinances that disproportionately target black and brown people and poor people?

There are many steps we can and must take to decriminalize the current city ordinances. Community organizations and initiatives have proposed and studied many of the following steps to remove the target off of Black, Brown and impoverished people. We can develop a hospitality policy for all City-owned facilities and parks to ensure that policies, programming, and facilities include amenities for people experiencing homelessness (such as places to shower, charge a cell phone, or use a storage locker). This policy should respond directly to the guidance and insight provided by people who are homeless or have experienced homelessness.

We need to implement the recommendations of the Reimagining ACDC Policy Workgroup to end the practice of jailing people for city ordinance violations. We have to transform the Atlanta City Detention Center into a Center for Equity to more effectively address the needs that drive minor law violations. We also need to authorize and fund the City of Atlanta Public Defender's office to provide representation for civil legal matters and holistic services to address the barriers that lead to recurring interaction with the criminal legal system. Lastly, I will work with my fellow progressive colleagues in the efforts to decriminalize the municipal code!

Westview residents love our trees, but they can be prohibitively expensive to maintain, which has created dangerous and even fatal situations for our beloved neighbors. What can be done to not only plant new trees, but maintain existing trees on public and private property?

The city needs to invest in hiring arborists to aid us in the maintenance of existing trees and planting new trees. We can avoid damage to people, property, and power lines by hiring more specialists to identify and remove hazardous trees. We need to explore burying power lines in areas with high tree density to decrease the number of outages caused by falling trees.

The proximity of I-20 creates airborne contaminants, which has been proven to shorten life spans, endanger children in their third trimester, and generally hurt the long-term health of residents. The highway transects our neighborhood in a way that historically was not allowed in more affluent areas of Atlanta. How would you address this inequity, and the effects of similar environmental racism that subtracts 20 years from our collective life expectancy?

This inequity has provided white middle-class and affluent neighborhoods with a favorability at the expense of communities of color, which has produced an unequal and skewed pattern of infrastructure development. Environmental racism will only continue to be exacerbated with the climate crisis at our front doors. We must recognize that in order to fix this inequity, we need to be radical and take care of these issues at the core. We exist under a socio-economic system that dehumanizes and seeks to exploit those it deems “other.” This requires us to work together to create new socio-political and economic relations that seek to remove the systemic barriers that lead to subtracting 20 years from our collective life expectancy. With the incoming federal infrastructure funds, we can direct these resources to address this inequity and remove the stench of environmental racism that has been with us for decades.

Incredibly frequent power outages plague residents, residents working from home, and local businesses alike. They routinely disrupt our economic and physical wellbeing. How do you plan to lessen this burden on us?

Our infrastructure desperately needs to be appropriately prioritized in our budget to combat these outages. It is a shared story in District 4 that when a storm happens, we should expect to lose power. With all of the resources we have available, this should not be happening in our city. I will work to create dedicated city funds and partnerships for the express purpose of building emergency community resources as it relates to climate change (i.e. heat waves, flash flooding, power outages, etc). We can lessen this burden by burying power lines in areas with high tree density to decrease the number of outages caused by falling trees.

We have had issues for years with excessive street flooding, which damages homes and creates sudden expensive repairs. How do you plan to fix this problem?

Hydrologists have given us toolkits and guides to protect residents in creating safeguards against street floods. To fix this issue, we need to tackle the environmental

racism that is plaguing Atlanta. We need to ensure that all our communities have access to protections against street flooding such as parks, retention ponds, updated sewer systems, and more. I will work with colleagues on the city council who wish to tackle this issue and invite the council to listen to the directives provided by residents and scientists. The city has the knowledge and the resources to fix the issue of excessive street flooding, it requires bold and innovative solutions from elected officials.

The current public transportation options create unfavorably long commutes for residents. Long commutes have been shown to have a heavy burden on quality of life, from healthy family relationships to stable mental and physical health. Atlanta is due to receive sizable federal funds from the CARES Act this year. Specifically, which public transportation projects will you support to relieve these long commutes? How will you also improve MARTA to serve our neighbors with these already approved federal funds?

The voices who are selected to make the decision on improving MARTA need to be first and foremost the members of the community who depend on MARTA. Too often in decision making spaces, low-to-no income residents aren't invited to provide their knowledge and expertise on what needs to be done. The incoming federal funds need to be decided upon with a collective of community members, representatives of community organizations, and elected officials who seek to provide an equal distribution and a particular focus towards neglected neighborhoods.

Studies show that a common denominator of police officers that use excessive violence is a history of domestic violence. Will you support screening for prospective police officers to disqualify them if they have domestic violence priors?

Yes! This is one of the ways we must bring accountability to those the city hires. We must also recognize that we need to do more than screening to ensure that the safety of those who interact with police is ensured. With the passage of the new training facility that I have opposed, unlike my opponent, the 28 year incumbent, we must renew our commitment to envisioning public safety without centering the police.