



Below is the unedited questionnaire response of:

Greg Clay
Atlanta City Council
District 3

2017 Candidate Pre-Interview Questionnaire

1. Describe briefly your qualifications for this office. In addition, please identify up to 5 organizations or individuals who are actively supporting your candidacy and why you believe their support is important.

My qualifications to serve as a councilman extends through my diverse experiences as a leader in municipal government, Atlanta's civic community, and areas of service that I have participated in over the years through many organizations. As a public administrator, receiving my M.P.A. from the University of Kansas (*U.S. News & World Report, #1 School for City Management and Urban Policy*), I have had the opportunity to serve within six municipalities in three states, leading multi-million dollar enterprise operations in two of them—making decisions that impact citizens every day. This direct experience with +30 elected officials, city and county executives, industry and community leaders, has afforded me the insight to help navigate through difficult policy and issues impacting our community. My additional professional experience in marketing, fundraising, and community engagement have helped me build a professional acumen and local network that yields a successful skillset in getting work done with people. Civically, I have served in leadership capacities working in partnership with other community stakeholders to navigate through issues related to developing our youth, education, homelessness, and workforce development. Serving as the vice-chair for a charter school, chair of a local workforce development collaborative through Atlanta Public Schools, and other roles in the community have allowed me to stay connected to the work that needs to be done. My qualifications also extend to other proactive capacities and opportunities such as being a member of the alumni base and/or participant in the United Way V.I.P. Program, Outstanding Atlanta, LEAD Atlanta, New Leaders Council, ARC Education Task Force, ARC Millennial Advisory Panel and the Metro Chamber ATLeaders committee.

As a first-time candidate I am humbled by the organic support my campaign has received. At the last public fundraising disclosure, we had 375 contributors compared to the nearest competitor's 47. We have also received political endorsements from the Atlanta Police Union I.B.P.O. Local 623, The Collective PAC, and the Georgia New Guard PAC so far. These endorsements are important because of the networks that they represent, and their pursuit of credible candidates to support their work. Their support also helps to show that a first-time candidate can be successful in a race with other candidates that have been on the ballot. We have also been endorsed by many small businesses and community members in District 3. Their support matters most because they want to be a part of enhancing opportunities and service deliver for residents and businesses.

2. What is your vision for the City of Atlanta and how would you implement it? Please be specific.

I believe that one of the most valuable assets of our city is the makeup and uniqueness of our many different neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods are primarily residential, while others have

a more mixed-use feel. My vision for the city of Atlanta is for us to have thriving neighborhoods, flexible to the quality of life needs that exist, with top-notch service delivery and a rich culture neighborhoods can be proud of. This vision can be realized by the way we strengthen our neighborhoods based on their needs, be smart about our growth and land use, and work together with the many different stakeholders of our city.

I want to strengthen the infrastructure and participation of our NPU's, where citizens can get involved and serve—bringing more neighborhoods, and people within them, to the decision making table. I want to facilitate stronger relationships between our neighborhoods, our faith based institutions, our schools and learning centers, big business, small business, our nonprofit community, and other governmental entities, in order to help guide community priorities on an ongoing basis. We must take a different approach to building relationships with each other considering our challenges of the present and future. As a city councilman, I will stand at the intersection of these many different activities, conversations, and efforts, engaging the community in a different way. Our new approach to community engagement will be open, transparent, and responsive to all areas of our district. I want to actively engage our constituents, using my Great 8 Priorities as a way to keep people involved; Partnerships, Service Delivery, Mobility, Quality of Life, Youth Development, Building Communities, Innovation, and Arts & Culture.

3. Please identify the three greatest issues or problems facing the City of Atlanta and specifically how you would work to solve them.

Three of our greatest issues as a city are our problems involving transparency, relationship building, and constituent empowerment.

In regards to transparency, constituents should have confidence in knowing that their elected officials are dealing fairly and in an ethical manner. If elected, I will operate in an honorable manner to ensure that my colleagues and constituents do not lose faith in our governing system. Furthermore, we as a city must do a better job in relationship building to guarantee that all stakeholders are present and equally represented in making decisions for the city. Often times, we overlook the detrimental effects of policy on the community, because we are solely focused on the benefits on the city. By insisting that all stakeholders are present at the table, everyone's voice will be heard in the city's progression. Lastly, empowering the constituents is a must to ensure a vibrant and growing city. Voter participation has been low recently, because people do not feel that their government works for them. Confidence is low, because the news constantly reports stories of unethical campaign reporting or procurement issues. If elected and with an open-door policy, I will see to it that the citizens of District 3 know that they are being represented from the building they can call their own.

4. As a City Council member, how would you manage collaborating with your colleagues on difficult citywide issues versus representing your own constituents?

I want to have a great, respectable, working relationship with my colleagues on council. That means we must work through the difficult decisions together, and the not so difficult decisions, in order to keep the confidence of constituents. I will manage collaborating with council members by keeping servant leadership at the forefront, while being mindful of the needs of my district. Many underlying needs of District 3 resonate throughout all the districts. But we do have some issues related to blight and development that are different than others. We want increased public safety, increased mobility, smart economic development, and great quality of life projects and efforts we can be proud of, and I understand that all Atlantans want that as well. Through communication and the proactive opportunities to continue to build working relationships with each other, I believe that we can have effective dialogue that leads to policies and resources that continue to advance all council districts. By keeping the public informed and pushing for more inclusive community engagement, I will ensure that my colleagues and I include all the necessary stakeholders when making tough decisions for our city.

5. How do you view the City of Atlanta's financial position? Should the City of Atlanta have additional tools in place to ensure financial management going forward?

As reported, the city of Atlanta is in one of the best financial conditions it has been in, compared to recent years. Our bond rating is very competitive, and we have reserves in excess of +\$100 million. While we do have adopted policies that speak to the amount of reserves we should have available based on our annual budget, from my experience as a practitioner, we should always be mindful of policies that allow us to plan for the worst financial conditions. The city council has the opportunity to take a more proactive approach during the fiscal year planning process, and I plan to be very involved and present in the budget conversations that we have for annual expenditures. Furthermore, if further thresholds of legislation need to be drafted considering our fiduciary responsibility, I will not shy away from sponsoring legislation.

6. Please describe your philosophy regarding property tax assessments and municipal taxation.

Considering municipal taxation and the city receiving revenue to provide services, I will be a councilman that looks at all revenue streams that provide city services and service our existing debt. Taxation should be a base level means to generate revenue for those services to be executed by the city in addition to fines, fees, grants, and other revenue sources. We should also be continuously looking at how tax dollars are spent through the budget process. One-penny

sales taxes like the E-SPLOST have helped our local school system to help fund school facility improvements, in addition to other sales taxes that now go toward specific transportation projects. Other actions related to mileage rates and bond issuances should be an ongoing part of how we make decisions on how we are taxing our constituents to either pay for services, or capital projects.

Taxation should also be a means to help provide services to the people of the city of Atlanta, not punish them. This means, the constituents should be given time to adjust to the increase in property values in their neighborhoods, resting assured that they will be able to keep their most valuable asset--their homes. Our city is constantly growing, and neighborhoods should not be negatively impacted by its growth and tax assessments. If elected, I will work hard with my colleagues for the best interest of the city, and even more strenuously with the Westside Future Fund and its Anti-Displacement Tax Fund program to help ensure that the members of District 3 are not displaced due to increased property values.

7. What is your opinion of Atlanta's MOST, and what approach do you support to fund long-term water and sewer operations?

I believe that the Municipal Option Sales Tax and the Clean Water Atlanta Program have done a great job to ensure that the city's water and sewer system are updated and maintained properly, especially with a lack of federally funding. I support the notion that all people who share in the necessity to keep Atlanta's water clean and sewer system up-to-date should contribute to paying including constituents, visitors and business people alike. Clean and safe drinking water is one of the most valuable resources of our city, and should be protected by a proven method that keeps our utility rates from sky rocketing. Because of the costs, long-term water and sewer operations should be able to be maintained through the enterprise operations fully, but if we must consider alternative means through additional funding methods, I will work with colleagues to find the best route for our citizens and customers.

8. Would you change the current procurement process to protect against "pay to play"? If so, what changes would you support?

I am not a supporter of any environment conducive to "pay to play" procurement, and this scandal has disgraced our city. As a council member, I will utilize our current legislative ability to conduct investigations into matters that call for identifying unethical employees and participants that decrease the public trust. I also want to pursue what further roles our Internal Auditor can play in the oversight of certain processes and procedures within procurement.

9. If elected, describe your role in ensuring ethical and transparent management of City resources by City employees?

City employees are the backbone of our city, and they need to be given adequate resources to continue the good work of the city. However, abusing the resources of the city for one's own personal gain will not be tolerated, and shall be reprimanded accordingly. As a councilmember, I plan to be transparent with heads of departments about the expectations I have as a representative of my district. This transparency in action includes frequent reports, questions, or updates on the work that is getting done throughout our city—knowing that it takes resources to get this work done. As an elected official, I will ask the right questions, at the right time, serving as an advocate for an open-book policy of the city's budget, overlooking where money is spent and how resources are being used.

10. What economic development strategies would you prioritize to ensure the City of Atlanta captures its fair share of future job growth?

Through our Tax Allocation Districts, we have been able to see a lot of growth happen within the boundaries of these areas. Particularly in District 3, we have seen pockets of growth within our district outside of the TAD, but I believe we need more. In working with Invest Atlanta, I want to continue to define ways to invest in small businesses while crediting those that continue to create jobs. By leveraging the academic and innovation culture of our district, I would like to incentivize those businesses that would like to move into district 3, hire locally, and assist with sustaining their business models. I am interested in ways we can use local dollars to use federal funds, and other economic development tools that can keep us competitive not just in district 3, but throughout Atlanta. I also want to utilize Community Improvement Districts to help sustain some of our commercial corridors, so that their reinvestment helps to build areas up even more. For those areas that require additional public investment, I want to identify the areas that need them most while bringing the neighborhood and current businesses into the decision making process. Using local funds

11. What strategies would you implement to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing?

In a collaborative effort with developers, the Atlanta Housing Authority, Invest Atlanta, Land Bank Authority, and other philanthropic stakeholders with expertise in providing affordable housing, I will ensure that these organizations are given the necessary resources and information from the city to combat blight and homelessness. If elected, my focus in regards to affordable housing will be that not only will people have a place to call home, but that they will also be able afford to stay in these dwelling places. I would like to pursue strategies that enable the city to work closer with property owners and developers to make promises—but get units up and completed. I also want to explore Opportunity Housing, where housing is affordable, but there are also partnerships that help residents with accomplishing additional goals related to mobility.

12. What workforce development strategies should the next administration prioritize? How will these strategies address and improve economic mobility among low-to-mid skill workers?

I believe that the number one thing we need to do related to workforce development is to continue to build robust partnerships with industry, with a short, mid, and long-term focus. I have had the opportunity to serve on the Atlanta Public Schools CTAE Advisory Board for six years, and chaired the board for two years. I am also a member of the ARC's Educated Workforce Taskforce. The conversations related to making sure programs and partnerships exist for our career pathways for students, must continue to be enhanced as industries continue to look for talent. Strategies related to partnerships will need to focus on more internships and apprenticeships for K-12 students, and more externships for teachers. At the collegiate level, we must guide these same type of strategies to make sure that students, and those in the workforce are introduced to career pathways, rather than just high-turnover jobs. In District 3, I would like to build programming around new businesses and projects coming into the area, to connect directly with our school clusters and our students. I want to continue, and elevate, conversations related partnerships with local industries and our school system to talk through robust, public-private partnerships.

- 13.** What are the three most important transportation/infrastructure projects that should occur in the City of Atlanta? Please rank them by importance and urgency and explain your reasoning.

As a District 3 resident that consistently bikes, operates a motor vehicle, utilizes ride-sharing applications, and uses public transportation, I understand that we can enhance how we get to where we need to go--and where we want to go. I want to bring more technology and best practices to the table in the way we consistently move around our neighborhoods, the district, and the city. The resources exist, and as our community continues to grow, we need to be as responsive and proactive as we can to make sure the sustainable resources are in place for the present and future. Through technology driven assessments and understanding our citizen's needs, we can make bigger and bolder strides to ensure that we can move around District 3 more efficiently, and safer. ADA compliance, walkable communities, less potholes and hazards, and congestion solutions are all a part of what I want to see for us in the district.

Regarding specific projects, I will rank them accordingly:

1. MARTA Enhancements- Specifically in District 3, I will work with MARTA to take another look at our bus routes and stops within the district, and amenities at current stops. The amount of time it takes during trips on public transportation is my biggest concern for this item, and safety.
2. Walkability Enhancements- We need more investment into ADA compliant infrastructure that also enhances our community walkability. I would like to see more sidewalks, and crosswalks throughout district 3. Safety is my biggest concern.
3. The Beltline- With the onboarding of the Westside Trail, we have a lot of activity associated with the BeltLine in District 3. Plans for rail cars also make for an interesting conversation for how the Westside Trail will potentially tie into other transportation considerations going forward.

- 14.** What strategies would you pursue to improve the safety – both real and perceived – of all residents, visitors, and workers in Atlanta? What partnerships are needed to realize these strategies?

If elected, I will advocate for a collaborative effort from all first responders and community members alike. Encouraging ideas like community policing will facilitate the prevention of safety issues. All residents, visitors, and workers of Atlanta need to feel free to live, work, and play in the city, and this daunting task cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of our first responders. Every member in the community must play a role. Organizations like the Citizens Police Academy, the Atlanta Police Foundation, and Atlanta Police Athletic League that champion the idea of community engagement, are just a few of the many organizations I want to cooperate with to ensure the safety of all throughout the city. I also want to begin surveying our communities to begin to understand their specific needs about safety and security, the changes in how safe they feel based on our efforts, and specific measures and tasks that we develop to guide our work.

15. Georgia ranks 49th among states for per-capita arts funding. What actions would you take to ensure our arts and culture organizations have the funding they need to thrive and enrich our city?

Growing up as an artist, I always understood the importance of artistic expression and the significance of arts & culture. As a student at Benjamin E. Mays High School, I was accepted into the Pratt Institute for oil painting, but did not attend. Instead, I chose to pursue an even higher calling in public service. Now, I use my artistic skills to help create vision for communities. As a part of my campaign, I am working with members of the arts & culture community to ensure that they have a seat at the stakeholder table. One of my Great 8 Priorities, is Arts & Culture, and the way we will communicate success stories and engage the community will be through this lens. I am also working to build stronger partnerships across industry and neighborhood lines to build more awareness around arts & culture specific to District 3.