



Below is the unedited questionnaire response of:

Dan Burroughs
Atlanta City Council
District 4

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 most important qualifications are that I'm dedicated to paying attention and applying my time accordingly, as well as the fact that I live much the same life in a similar way as most of the constituency, giving me an exceptional ability to relate to District 4 residents of all stripes. I'm thoroughly educated, both in academia and in common sense living. Finally, I bring a level of imagination, excitement and optimism that is not only missing from City Council, but will be vitally necessary in tackling our current and future issues. I have yet to be endorsed by any major groups, only the various and wonderful individuals in District 4 and other citizens who have resonated with my message, but their concerns and support are all the confirmation I need to validate my campaign.**

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

My ultimate vision for Atlanta is for us to be a city which demonstrates to the world that socioeconomic mobility needn't be an impossible challenge, for us to be a city where anyone can come and ultimately better their life and the world at-large. For us to accomplish this, we must enable the largest number of people to fully realize themselves. That assistance to self-realization is accomplished through having a world-class educational system which emphasizes critical and creative thinking, broad access to secondary sources of education including important capitalist concepts like personal finance and the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, as well as making it as easy as possible for labor to move and organize and for employers to start businesses. And while all of this is happening, we should implement systems of governmental transparency and citizen participation which maximize the numbers of voices

being heard and needs being met, so that our city's operations reflect the needs of all its citizens.

3. Please identify the three greatest issues or problems facing the City of Atlanta and specifically how you would work to solve them. **1) Our biggest issue is socioeconomic mobility. We deal with that by ameliorating the issues which prolong poverty, such as poor education, unreliable transportation and the disruption of families via high fines and the jailing of individuals over petty offenses. 2) We MUST increase civic participation as we are to have a populous which even cares to be properly represented. When the most voices are brought to the table, the city government will reflect the widest array of citizen desires, and the issues which we all share will be more easily and properly addressed. 3) The third biggest issue, which is in many ways a function of the second, is budgetary prioritization and ethics. In short, it is completely unethical for us to be spending money on glamour projects, like stadiums and streetcars, when we could be finally getting sidewalks and speed bumps on some streets, or working on our educational system or paying down our watershed debts.**

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

It is the people of District 4 who would be voting me into office, therefore my role as a representative for District 4 must come first. That said, a greater Atlanta is vital and a direct benefit to the people of District 4. I'm prepared to fully support any of my colleagues' plans and policies which are provably beneficial to all Atlantans and don't place an undue burden on the people of District 4. On the other side of that I plan to build solid working relationships built on trust and integrity, so that my colleagues can support me making improvements in District 4 with confidence that I'm benefitting the city as a whole.

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?

I view the city's financial position as sound and in a position to continue growing, and we largely already have all of the tools we need, given sound management. If there's anything I could add I order t ensure continued financial stability it would be an online, daily-updated database of city expenditures broken down by department, which would be publically accessible, in order to maintain confidence in our fiscal accountability and keep officials honest. I would create a similar database for city contracts.

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

Municipal taxes are a benefit, and they are vital to providing the city services necessary to sustain an environment that is secure and economically empowering to the individual citizen. However, it is possible for taxation to work against those aims, and such situations should be avoided whenever possible. We must also remember that non-progressive taxes, such as sales taxes, have an outsized effect on the poor because they consume a greater portion of their income.

When it comes to property tax assessments specifically, it's important to balance the city's responsibilities and the profitability of real estate ownership with ethical practices. In short, you should expect to turn a profit from buying property in Atlanta, but it should never be permissible for rising tax assessments to push people out of their primary residences, especially if they fully own their home.

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

It goes without saying that Atlanta's sewer system was in dire need of repair, and so to the extent which it has successfully helped find those repairs, I support the MOST. However, we must remember that sales taxes always disproportionately affect the poor, as those taxes eat a greater share of their disposable income. That said, it's definitely worthwhile to explore other sources of funding, especially if it can be smartly targeted toward those who use the most water. Additionally, while I recognize the need for MOST, if we have money to be spending in stadiums, then we have money to more quickly pay down the principles of our watershed debts, the faster pay down resulting in lower overall costs for the city and an accelerated time frame for ending the MOST.

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

I think the most simplistic way to avoid pay for play is to publish a public database of all city contracts, as well as expenditures for each department. Public records for city contracts will help ensure competitive bidding, as well as allowing the public the opportunity to research which companies are reaping the benefits of municipal funds. And of course, we must make sure that when infractions are found, we prosecute the offending official to the greatest extent of the law.

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

My role in ensuring ethical and transparent management begins with exercising sound judgement and integrity within my own office. For my part, I intend to make public all of my offices expenditures, itineraries and visitor logs. I will make District 4 the most responsive City Council office. I also plan to push transparency and accountability policies which will include online databases of city contracts, expenditures and city council visitor logs, in addition to creating an online archive of all neighborhood association, NPU and city council meetings so that the greatest number of people can stay abreast as to what's happening in their city.

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

I'd prioritize enhancing our current educational systems and putting new ones into place which will ensure that Atlanta will have one of the most educated workforces in the world, especially when it comes to creative and critical thinking. Automation will be a reality which will severely contract the number of available blue collar jobs, even some traditional "corporate" jobs. We must have a workforce that is ready and able to do the things which robots can't do while inventing the industries of the future. That will be the most important task in ensuring our citizens' future economic viability.

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

This is an issue which will be best handled when the individual citizens, who have the direct power to effect pro-affordable-housing practices through the NPU, finally realize and grasp on to the power which is given to them. There already exists the adequate forum to pressure large developers into creating affordable housing. Part of why I think it's so important for council members to attend NPU meetings is to be able to remind the attendees that such is their power. That said, being a council member entails influence, and I certainly intend to lean on developers and landlords alike to keep creating affordable housing, as well as not raising rent prices in a way which is disadvantageous to the economic stability of those who already live in the community.

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

The most effective long-term strategy to improving Atlanta's workforce will be ensuring we can provide the best possible education to both our child and our adults. In addition to traditional educational paths, trade schools must be readily accessible, and even more importantly people should be able to easily educate themselves on the basics of personal finance . We must also foster an environment where it is simple for even a fully educated older adult to find a class and learn a new skill. I fully believe that knowledge the key to economic and social mobility, as such our answers will be found in ensuring we have a maximally educated populace.

12. 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.

1) MARTA buses and trains need to operate on a 24/7 schedule. When labor can freely move at all times of the day, businesses can effectively operate at all times of the day, and the fullness of our city's economic potential can be unlocked.

2) We need to be preparing for the eventuality of self-driving vehicles and the changes that will pose to life as we know it. We also need to begin building in such a way as to facilitate, and not complicate, the implementation of future transportation infrastructure.

3) Spending on glamour projects such as the streetcar should end immediately. There are reasons why cities such as San Francisco have street cars. We don't meet those conditions. As it stands, the street car is a waste of money for the performing of a function which is best and most efficiently carried out by a 24/7 bus loop which connects Atlanta's major centers of interest and employment.

13. 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? **People need to actively see the police interacting in their communities, and both the citizenry and the police need to feel that we are all in this together. I believe strongly in the necessity of community policing, of individuals being able to**

recognize the police as part of their community, part of their tribe, and vice versa. It's proven that individuals on all sides of any conflict respond better to people with whom they are familiar and have a certain level of trust, and we build that familiarity and trust by fostering an environment where the members of the community to know and love each other as neighbors and fellow citizens, not as mere potentially dangerous strangers. When it comes to reducing crime overall from the root, we must understand that most crime is a symptom of poverty, and as such we must combat impoverished mindsets city-wide. When we get to the point where effective, positive formal and informal education are readily available and promoted to all of our children, our citizens will be more readily able to meet their own economic needs, reducing the overall motivations toward criminal activity.

14. 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? **Until we can win the ideological fight with the state capitol and win access to more funds for arts education, the most effective immediate remedies would be to ensure we are exploring 100% of grants and other monies which are already available, then leaning on our entertainment class to donate some of the necessary equipment and funds, many of them being Atlanta natives and with the**

background necessary to understand how vital creative education is in a student's development and ultimate success.