



Below is the unedited questionnaire response of:

Anna Tillman
Atlanta City Council
District 8

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.

I have results driven business acumen from 30 years of successful business experience; 25 years with major oil & gas corporations and 5 years with small to medium environmental consulting firms. I have gained additional business management skills from ownership of a 240-acre pine tree farm in South Georgia used for lumber and pine straw sales. I have also spent 15 years working as an educator in both public and private school systems. Business leader and student education combined skill sets provide a unique and fresh perspective in tackling issues governed by Atlanta City Council.

I provided leadership for financial management, contract procurement and overall project management for substantial, multi-million dollar environmental contracts for Shell. This work also included construction management, OSHA-regulated health and safety assurance, contractor management, budgeting, fiscal reporting, regulatory liaison, liability assessment, environmental risk management and much more. As an educator, I had the privilege to enrich the lives of over 1,000 students providing experiential learning opportunities in arts and science.

I'm proud to announce the endorsement of the former Georgia House Minority Leader, Bob Irvin and his wife Lynn Irvin; the former President of Mt Paran Northside Civic Association, Taryn Bowman; Suzanne and Bob Claeys – active Mt Paran Northside neighbors; and Dr. James Rust – member of Georgia Public Policy Foundation and resident in District 8.

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

My vision for Atlanta is to advocate for continued fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets with strict adherence to ethical principles of accountability and transparency in a safe, crime free Atlanta. I will support tax incentives and reduced bureaucracy (streamline permitting, approvals and other processes) for small businesses allowing them to grow, prosper and create jobs. I support recent pay raise incentives to recruit and retain the most competent police and other

city personnel. Along with pay increases, I would put in place an annual performance plan that includes SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely) objectives. Positive incentives will be used when employees exceed their annual targets.

Currently, there is a long list of city employees with ethics violations from all levels of government including the president of Atlanta City Council, several city council members with multiple violations, and the Municipal Clerk. Ethics violations must be treated with a higher level of consequence – particularly with respect to multiple violations. This will be the beginning of restoring trust in our city government.

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

The three greatest issues facing Atlanta are 1) infrastructure and roads, 2) crime, and 3) transparency and ethics.

Citywide infrastructure improvement projects are outlined in the “Renew Atlanta” initiative as well as \$5.6 million allocated to each district for local improvements. This is a great start but may not be enough to remedy all of the issues. I will work at creating additional funding mechanisms through partnering with businesses who may be willing to contribute to have better infrastructure more quickly. Additional funding sources may come as a result of the Trump administration infrastructure plan. I will work to secure Atlanta’s fair share of any federal funding programs that may become available.

Atlanta is known for a high percent of recidivism with the 16-24 year-old age group. We need to become more aggressive in partnering with Atlanta Public Schools (APS) for more robust youth programs to keep kids in school and give them better activities for after school. Keeping kids busy will go a long way to keeping them away from criminal activities. I have found that there are many programs and entities that work separately and I see great benefit in bringing these groups together to develop solutions that stakeholders support – specifically including the District Attorney, City Council, APS, and Mayor. I would support more security cameras in the communities for identifying perpetrators in order to hold them accountable. Once they are held accountable, we need to provide robust support to help them make real change and not repeat. We already track kids that are repeat offenders and we need to do more for them to break the cycle of crime and deviant behavior. We need to partner with communities to develop groups of mentors who can relate to their individual situations and give them real world, common sense advice and support. We also need to develop jobs programs with local businesses and city government; there are many options to keep them busy if we all work together.

To improve transparency and drive ethical behavior, we need to institute real time reporting for City of Atlanta financial transactions. Making all transactions easily and immediately accessible will encourage city employees to be more accountable. I plan to propose clear and direct

consequences for ethics violations. I would support an ethics policy that includes annual training and employee signoff on expectations and understanding of consequences for compliance violations.

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

Respectful relationship development is key to effectively bringing a diverse group of leaders together and achieving consensus for common goals. After election, I will begin the process by developing a stakeholder management database that includes individuals and groups and their interrelationship with City Council initiatives. This will be a living and transparent document that will be updated regularly as I continue to build new relationships. I want to get to know my colleagues personally and will have lunch meetings, team building exercises, and ice breakers on a frequent basis to better understand them and the needs in their districts. I've learned in business that better understanding a person and or situation helps me to make a more informed, better decision. Relationship building and focused team building with colleagues will facilitate collaboration with them in making difficult decisions.

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?

Atlanta has made tremendous strides with the economy over the last eight years. We currently have a balanced budget, the city operates with a surplus and a triple A bond rating. We can continue to grow our budget by streamlining government and eliminating wasteful spending. By maintaining regular external audits and real time transparent reporting; we can quickly and easily see wasteful spending items.

I would support an external management consultant review of Atlanta's financial processes to provide an independent analysis of how our city resources are spent and how we can be more efficient.

In my career, I put a great deal of effort into developing the best, most realistic annual budget for the upcoming year. This was followed by a 6-month budget review to verify that the budget was on target and to understand any issues that needed to be addressed to stay on target. This 6-month review was critical to ensuring that the final, actual spend was within 95-105% of the targeted budget. I met or exceeded this goal most years. I would support a similar initiative in order to ensure that City of Atlanta resources are spent when the money is allocated.

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

Municipal taxation is vital to manage and fund infrastructure, schools and other public facilities that all community based citizens and visitors can use and enjoy. Property tax assessments should be fair, equitable and based on actual fair market property values where feasible. Where mass appraisals are necessary, calculations should be based on a verified information to the greatest extent possible. If it is not feasible to review every individual property every year, then a staggered approach could be implemented where the information is verified every other year or every three years.

The tax assessment process should be conducted in a manner that is sensitive to gentrification to ensure that we aren't pricing homeowners out of their own home.

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

I agree with the Municipal Option Sales Tax and it has gone a long way in clearing out the backlog of upgrades that were needed. I would support a consultant management review of the Department of Watershed Management's process and look for wasteful spending cost savings before giving them more resources. If streamlining and increased efficiency doesn't provide enough financial support, then other alternative funding sources can be evaluated.

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

I will work to ensure that new contracts are written with concise ethical standards with clear language that outlines consequences for noncompliance.

For procurement under existing contracts, I would create a multi-disciplinary independent contractor assurance board to oversee all facets of the procurement process. Board members

should include representatives from the community (potentially the Atlanta planning advisory board), the judicial system, City of Atlanta legislative delegation both Republican, Democrat, and Independent. This Board would assure that contractors are remaining ethical. Also, random audits by an independent external contractor should be conducted.

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

I will review the current Office of Accountability functions to assess whether there are opportunities to improve accountability with what is in place already. As mentioned in several previous answers, I would implement stronger consequences for noncompliance with ethics rules.

City of Atlanta purchasing card should be restricted to an extremely limited number of senior staff and purchases should be available online in real time as part of more transparent process.

I will ensure that my office will be run ethically and responsibly, I will be fiscally prudent with my City Council budget and I will use the money to better the lives of my constituents. I will lead by example and report any spending on my own website if not reported elsewhere. There needs to be a better way to make sure that our resources are being spent frugally and wisely and expenditures are made so that citizens have easy and immediate access to the information.

Awards given by City of Atlanta should be more meaningful. Awards should be tied to measured performance objectives (the SMART objectives mentioned in a previous answer) and should be given when goals are exceeded not simply met. We need to set the bar high for ethics and transparency to help improve trust.

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

Support tax incentives to retain quality businesses and encourage others to continue to move to Atlanta. Engage with business leaders to better understand and gain insight into their ideas on how City of Atlanta can help them grow, prosper and provide more jobs.

Reducing bureaucracy and streamlining the licensing and permitting process for businesses to help them be more efficient which will lead to growth and more jobs.

I will also seek out and engage business leaders that are considering moving to Atlanta and request feedback on initiatives that would entice them to move to Atlanta.

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

Provide tax incentives to developers to include a percentage of affordable housing in their projects. Engage with developers to work out solutions that benefit everyone so we are not pricing out people who cannot afford to live in those communities.

Seek out alternative funding sources from organizations with a vested interest in affordable housing issues. I will research and seek out federal funding programs aimed at increasing and securing affordable housing.

Engage with businesses to encourage them to provide jobs near developments that do include affordable housing as a percentage of the overall project.

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?

It would be helpful to our citizens to hold a government and media symposium so that all of us could better understand the current programs that are in place. The Atlanta Regional Workforce Development Board (ARWDB) could lead the effort to educate us all.

For our younger low-to-mid skill workers, create initiatives to better train our future workforce and give them jobs - we need to do all we can to prepare our future workforce with summer jobs and internships at small businesses and large corporations. Primary focus should be on summer jobs and afterschool programs.

Create partnerships with local businesses, large, medium and small to educate and train our low-to-mid skill workforce. We could also have more career forums to educate, screen and assess potential employees. Develop partnerships with local community colleges to provide technical skills training.

For our older workforce, I would support symposiums and other initiatives for people who are looking to pursue a new career. Many people are working longer, retiring, then going back to work. These people may find themselves at a low-to-mid skill work level after a

long, higher paying career. Others may need more technical skills to keep up with technological advances.

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.

The number one priority is to repair our aging and crumbling roads. The life expectancy of an asphalt road is 20-30 years and many of our roads are much older. Renew Atlanta includes a citywide plan to repair main roads but there are many surface streets that desperately need repaving. City council members have a budget for district projects but it is not clear when and where these projects are occurring.

Atlanta Department of Watershed has worked hard to repair corroding sewer piping, however, there is more work to be done since they are still reporting sanitary sewer overflows. It is unconscionable that Atlanta citizens are occasionally exposed to sanitary sewer flows in their neighborhoods and creeks that run through their backyards. This is a health and safety issue and needs to be addressed with urgency.

Synchronizing traffic lights will go a long way in making traffic flow more smoothly. This could be implemented quickly and would go a long way in reducing traffic congestion especially on heavily travelled roads.

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?

I would fully support funding a larger police force and strongly support having more policemen getting out of their cars, walking the beat, and meeting the constituents. This would make them more visible and more of a crime deterrent.

We should partner with local business, NPU leaders, business men and women to develop a strategy to create better policing on a local basis. Police departments need to be more localized

which will encourage them to get out of their vehicles and get acquainted with the community. It is much easier to police people who you are familiar with.

Install more security cameras at high risk intersections based on crime data from police zones. Partner with police zone majors to identify high crime areas in their zones to prioritize security camera location. This is a proactive collaboration with police to prevent criminal activity versus figuring out what happened after the fact.

Partner with DAs office to identify individuals that are repeat offenders causing trouble. Individuals who are repeat offenders need to be given mental health services to help them understand the need to change their behavior and keep them out of future conflicts. I would support proactive mental rehabilitation services. Homeless people should also be given mental health services since some homelessness may be tied to behavioral issues.

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?

I would support another attempt at Georgia General Assembly passage for a tax increase to support the arts. If this happens, I would work to ensure that the funds are used solely for the arts and not other purposes.

Partner and engage with local colleges, universities and foundations to develop creative funding mechanisms for arts and culture.

Diligently search for cost savings initiatives within Atlanta City government and support using cost savings dollars to fund art and cultural projects.