



Below is the unedited questionnaire response of:

**William Harrison**  
Atlanta City Council  
District 9

## 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 for this office include a combination of education, work experience and experience gained fulfilling my civic responsibilities throughout my entire life. Educationally, I am a graduate of a “top tier” undergraduate criminal justice program at Sam Houston State Univ., and a graduate of Thurgood Marshall School of Law. My most current civic responsibilities include being an Atlanta City Council Appointee to the Atlanta Citizens Review Board and chosen by Atlanta Police Chief Turner to become a member of the APD-Community Partners Group. Also, I currently serve as a Board Member on the FBI Citizens Academy Atlanta Alumni Assoc., and Board Member on the Liberty Park – HOA. I have the active support of a number of organizations and neighborhood associations throughout the city, namely the ACRB, former Fulton County Sheriff Jacqueline Barrett-Washington, various member of the legal community. I believe their support is crucial in that these are individuals and organizations that have proven track records of success in the Atlanta community.**

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

**My vision for the City of Atlanta mirrors my vision for the 9<sup>th</sup> District; To achieve the absolute highest quality of life for all of our citizens and promote economic development that will in turn provide sustainable programs and services beneficial to all of Atlanta.**

**I would achieve this vision through an aggressive legislative agenda designed to continue to promote economic growth, including affordable housing. Also, achievable by working with my fellow council members and working via established programs, like Renew Atlanta.**

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

**(1) Maintaining Fiscal Responsibility - It is imperative that this newly elected Council maintain the current economic growth the city is experiencing. I**

**suggest doing so through sound fiscal policies that will continue to produce improvements to our Public Works Department and other infrastructure projects.**

- (II) Ethics – In light of the current investigation of City Hall procurement, and previous questions surrounding the process of procurement, it is also imperative that we move toward transparency in our city government, and hold our elected officials accountable.**
  - (III) Economic Development – We need to attract and maintain the type of economic development that will also enhance our educational structure and provide programs, transportation and services for our citizens. Economic Development that invests in the constituency.**
4. As a City Council member, how would you manage collaborating with your colleagues on difficult citywide issues versus representing your own constituents?

**I would manage collaborating with my colleagues by building consensus among my colleagues. Building bridges to compromise rather than division among council members. I have a history of successfully building those bridges in difficult times serving as Chair of the ACRB as well as serving on the Board for the Police Department.**

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?

**We have come a long way in the past eight years. I can remember times when our city was not as economically sound during the process of electing a new mayor and Council. Yes, there should be “tools” in place to ensure, to the best of our ability, sound financial management.**

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

**Property Tax Assessments and Municipal Taxation are very important. Property Tax Assessments are an integral part of the Education process. As a Council member, my philosophy would be to be as fair and equitable in valuing real estate for ad valorem tax purposes to all residents and property owners.**

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

**MOST, was approved by the voters, and thus is not a "new" tax, but has been reauthorized. It has been somewhat successful in being a funding source to fund certain projects regarding Long-Term water and sewer services. I am in favor of MOST and any other additional funding that does not burden the citizens of the city.**

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

**Yes, if the current process is inherently flawed. It appears from the many investigations over a period of decades, that this process may not be secure or sound to prevent misuse. Once elected, I would favor changing the process or implementing "oversight", once I become familiar and have had the opportunity to assess the problems.**

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

**If elected, my role in ensuring ethical and transparent management of City resources by City employees is primary. It is our responsibility, as elected city officials to make the constituency comfortable by ensuring an ethical day-to-day operation of the City.**

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

**I would support investment in our community that creates new jobs, affordable housing, enhance commercial districts to create quality shopping and dining experiences, cultivate an entrepreneurial and academic environment that fosters innovation, encourage activities that attract visitors and conventioners.**

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

**If elected I would, integrate a diverse mix of housing options into areas centered around MARTA, emphasize quality of housing as part of promoting Atlanta as a prime business location encourage innovative approaches to affordable multi-family housing and mixed-use**

**development, consistent with the quality and character of Atlanta’s existing neighborhoods. New housing and the daily consumers it produces will support areas that want to improve retail/commercial areas.**

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?

**The next administration should create an improved network to assist both businesses and residents with employment needs, as well as create job training programs available for all residents and improve data base coordination.**

**An improved improve data base coordination, will assist in reaching low to mid skill workers, and provide an opportunity to increase or enhance their skill-set so that they can become more marketable.**

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.

- (I) An aging infrastructure which requires significant investment. This is evident in the increasing number of “sinkholes” that have developed over the past 4 years.**
- (II) The high cost of providing new public parking demands a high level of strategic planning and commitment.**
- (III) New and innovative ideas regarding alternative transportation. Whether that looks like walking, bicycles or over-city Tram. We will need to embrace alternative means of transportation, and elected city officials can start by promoting alternative means.**

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?

**Having worked closely with APD, there are already a number of strategies that have been implemented to improve safety. And there are a number of interagency teams consisting of Homeland Security, FBI, DEA and multiple jurisdictions from the Metro area. I have witnessed the precision of these teams and the success they have produced to reduce crime in our area. A greater cohesiveness between APD and citizens groups is a must, and as elected officials, we can promote a working relationship between the two to create Community Policing Atlanta.**

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 move to gather artists, arts supporters and residents to create or develop the case for increased municipal support for the arts and begin a consistent but effective campaign. There are a number of ideas available to achieve this very important goal of increased funding. Over the past 10 years Toronto has been successful in their plan to increase funding, and have created a “map” of how to achieve a greater amount of funding over time.**