



Below is the unedited questionnaire response of:

**Eshé Collins**  
Atlanta City Council Post 3



## 2025 Written Questionnaire

*Please type your response to questions in the field provided. **Please limit answers to approximately 300 words less.***

### Pillar 1: Governance, Leadership, and Partnerships

1. Briefly describe your qualifications for this office and why you have chosen to run for office. In addition, please identify up to 3 organizations or individuals who are actively supporting your candidacy and why you believe their support is important.

I am honored to serve as the Post 3 At-Large member of the Atlanta City Council, a role I pursued because of my lifelong commitment to public service and my deep roots in this city. A true Atlanta native, I began my career as a classroom teacher in Atlanta Public Schools, later serving as Chair of the Atlanta Board of Education. Today, I also lead the Southern Education Foundation's Equity Assistance Center-South, where I partner with districts and governments across the South to advance fairness in public education. With this background as an attorney, nonprofit leader and public servant, I bring a proven record of results, strong fiscal oversight, and the ability to build consensus to tackle our city's toughest challenges. I chose to run for City Council because I believe Atlanta must remain a thriving city for all—where every resident has access to affordable living, economic opportunity, safe neighborhoods, and sustainable infrastructure. My candidacy reflects a vision of equity, transparency, and accountability in city government. I am proud to have the support of the Atlanta Realtors Association and Atlanta Firefighters. Realtors are on the frontlines of our housing market, and their support underscores my commitment to expanding affordability and ensuring responsible development across the city. The Atlanta Firefighters' endorsement reflects trust in my dedication to public safety, first responders, and the resources they need to protect our families. While I currently have no opposition, I continue to seek additional endorsements throughout the campaign season to build a broad coalition of supportive partners.



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2. A recent poll conducted by the Committee for a Better Atlanta of likely City of Atlanta voters cited issues of transportation, unsheltered homelessness, and housing affordability as the top issues facing the City of Atlanta. If elected, how would you work to address them? Please be specific.

Transportation, unsheltered homelessness, and housing affordability are deeply interconnected issues, and I believe Atlanta must address them with urgency, collaboration, and accountability. On transportation, I will prioritize investments that make our transit system more reliable, equitable, and safe. That means advancing MARTA expansion, improving first- and last-mile connections, and ensuring sidewalks, bike lanes, and roadways are accessible to all residents, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. A connected transportation system is critical to economic mobility and reducing congestion. On unsheltered homelessness, I will work closely with community partners to expand access to supportive housing and wraparound services. This includes mental health care, workforce training, and substance abuse treatment, coupled with strong coordination between the City and nonprofit organizations. Homelessness cannot be solved by enforcement alone; it requires a compassionate and comprehensive strategy that addresses root causes. On housing affordability, I will continue to champion policies that increase the supply of affordable units, preserve naturally occurring affordable housing, and expand down payment and rental assistance programs. By aligning zoning, incentives, and public-private partnerships, we can ensure that teachers, firefighters, seniors, and working families can afford to live in the city they serve.

3. How do you view the unique responsibilities of an At-Large City Council seat compared to District-specific roles?

Serving as an At-Large councilmember carries the unique responsibility of representing every neighborhood, family, and business across the entire City of Atlanta—not just one district. While district representatives focus on the day-to-day needs of their communities, an At-Large member must balance those local concerns with a citywide perspective. That means building consensus across diverse constituencies, ensuring that policies work equitably for all communities and advancing solutions that strengthen Atlanta as a whole. I view the role as a bridge-builder—supporting my fellow District councilmembers, elevating shared priorities and policies, and making sure no part of our city is left behind. It requires collaboration, big-picture vision, and a commitment to creating a thriving Atlanta for all residents.



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4. How do you view the relationship between the City of Atlanta and Fulton County? How will your office work to steward the relationship? What changes, if any, would you advocate for?

The City of Atlanta and Fulton County share a critical relationship that directly impacts residents' quality of life, from public safety and health services to transportation and economic development. While our jurisdictions are distinct, effective collaboration between Atlanta and Fulton County is essential to address challenges like homelessness, affordable housing, and criminal justice reform that cannot be solved in silos. As an At-Large member, again I see my role as a bridge-builder—ensuring that Atlanta's needs are clearly represented while also fostering a spirit of partnership with Fulton County leaders. I will work to strengthen joint initiatives around housing affordability, behavioral health services, and workforce development, recognizing that shared resources and coordinated strategies can deliver greater impact for residents. I would also advocate for greater alignment in areas where fragmentation slows progress, such as data sharing, service delivery, and funding streams for homelessness, public safety and health and other priorities. By reducing duplication and improving coordination, both governments can stretch limited dollars further and improve outcomes. Ultimately, my goal is to steward a relationship rooted in transparency, accountability, and shared responsibility, ensuring that both entities deliver equitable, effective services to all residents.

5. Voters approved three funding measures in 2022 to deliver transportation, public safety and parks infrastructure improvements. How would you grade the City's performance delivering these projects and what concrete action is needed to ensure projects move forward faster?

I would give the City a "B-" for its performance delivering the projects approved by voters in 2022. There has been meaningful progress in laying the foundation—such as prioritizing projects, securing bond funding, and beginning work in some neighborhoods—but the pace of visible results has not matched residents' expectations. Voters supported these measures with the clear expectation that transportation improvements, upgraded public safety facilities, and better parks would move forward quickly. The delays point to a need for stronger project management, greater transparency, and clearer accountability. Residents should not have to question where their tax dollars are going or when improvements will be completed. As an At-Large member, I will advocate for concrete actions to accelerate delivery: establishing public dashboards with real-time project updates, streamlining procurement processes to avoid unnecessary delays, and ensuring departments have the staffing capacity and technical expertise to manage multiple projects simultaneously. I will also call for more regular reporting to Council and the public, so voters can track both timelines and budgets. When voters say yes, government must deliver. By strengthening execution and communication, we can deliver the transportation, safety, and parks improvements voters were promised and strengthen trust in local government.



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### Pillar 2: Inclusive Economic Growth

6. What future funding streams do you believe are needed to pay for the things we need to grow? What are the opportunities and how should they be evaluated?

To fund Atlanta's growth responsibly, we must diversify our revenue streams beyond property taxes and ensure that every investment is equitable and accountable. Public-private partnerships remain a powerful tool for accelerating projects in affordable housing, workforce development, and transportation while sharing risk and cost with the private sector. Dedicated funding for transportation—such as renewing TSPLOST or adopting mobility fees on large-scale development—would provide consistent, long-term investment in transit, sidewalks, and roadways, directly linking growth to responsibility. Development impact fees and inclusionary housing tools can also ensure that new growth contributes to affordable housing, parks, and other vital infrastructure. While federal and state grants provide important opportunities, we must acknowledge the uncertainty of relying too heavily on them in today's political climate. A divided Congress and shifting state priorities often make such funds unpredictable, requiring Atlanta to maintain local flexibility and stable funding sources of its own. Finally, we should continue to leverage, not burden, Atlanta's strong philanthropic and nonprofit community to collaborate on innovative programs and pilot initiatives. By aligning all funding sources with principles of fairness, sustainability, and transparency, we can grow in a way that is fiscally sound and inclusive.

7. What role should the City of Atlanta play in improving income inequality among city residents? Which tools and strategies would your office advance, if elected?

The City of Atlanta has a critical role to play in addressing income inequality by ensuring that every resident has access to economic opportunity, affordable housing, quality education, and safe communities. While government cannot solve income disparities alone, City Council can lead by shaping policies and partnerships that expand pathways to prosperity for all Atlantans. As an At-Large member, I will prioritize tools and strategies that directly address the root causes of inequality. This includes improving quality of workforce development programs that truly connects residents to high-demand jobs, particularly in growing industries. Just as important is collaboration with our education systems—K-12 schools, colleges, and technical programs—to create strong feeder pipelines that prepare Atlantans with the skills employers need. By aligning education with workforce needs, we can ensure more residents are job-ready and able to compete in a growing economy. I will also advocate for expanding support for small businesses, especially minority- and women-owned enterprises that drive Atlanta's economy, and for preserving and building affordable housing to keep working families rooted in their communities. Equitable transit investments must also be a priority, since reliable transportation is essential for connecting residents to jobs, schools, and services. Finally, I believe community benefit agreements must be a standard practice for large developments, ensuring that residents directly benefit from new investments through local hiring, affordable housing, and neighborhood improvements. This work is a must.



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8. Tax increment financing through Tax Allocation Districts (TADs) is a key tool used to support redevelopment in targeted areas across the City of Atlanta. Extending the life and expanding the use of TADs requires continued collaboration between the City, Fulton County, and Atlanta Public Schools. What is your position on extending the City's TADs, and how would you navigate the intergovernmental partnerships required to do so effectively?

TADs are an important tool for driving redevelopment and economic growth in targeted areas of Atlanta. When structured thoughtfully, they allow future tax revenues to be reinvested into infrastructure, housing, and commercial projects that otherwise might not advance. I support extending the life of existing TADs and expanding their use strategically—while ensuring they deliver equitable outcomes and clear community benefits for residents living in and around these districts. I bring a unique perspective as a former Chair of the Atlanta Board of Education, where I served during a period when TADs were a central issue. I understand firsthand the concerns of Atlanta Public Schools when revenues are redirected and the importance of protecting classroom resources. That experience equips me to navigate these conversations with credibility and a deep respect for the needs of students, families, and educators. As an At-Large member, I will advocate for transparent agreements, shared data, and regular communication between the City, Fulton County, and APS. TAD agreements should also include accountability measures—such as affordable housing, local hiring, and community benefit provisions—so redevelopment strengthens neighborhoods, schools, and Atlanta's long-term fiscal health.

### Pillar 3: Safe and Thriving Neighborhoods

9. Atlanta is currently going through a Zoning 2.0 re-write, the first re-write in nearly 40 years. What priorities are most important to see in that process for you and are there concerns you would like to see addressed in the final document? As a city elected official, what would be your approach to considering land use and zoning decisions more broadly?

Atlanta's Zoning 2.0 rewrite presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to align our land use policies with the needs of a modern, growing city. In this process, I am most focused on creating a fairer development system, expanding housing choices, and ensuring growth that protects our environment and neighborhoods. The zoning code must create pathways for more diverse housing options—including duplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units—that expand affordability and allow seniors to age in place and young families to find attainable homes. I am also focused on ensuring that zoning decisions support inclusive economic growth by encouraging mixed-use development, walkable communities, and equitable access to transit. Sustainability should be embedded in the code through incentives for green building, stormwater management, and protections for our tree canopy. My concerns include the risk of displacement and the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing as redevelopment accelerates. The final document must include tools and safeguards to protect long-term residents while welcoming new growth. As an elected official, my approach to land use and zoning decisions will be rooted in transparency, community engagement, and data-driven analysis. I believe zoning should balance citywide goals with neighborhood voices, ensuring development reflects Atlanta's diversity and character while preparing us for a more connected future.



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10. What strategies would you implement to improve the supply for affordable housing in your district? What are the barriers to success and how will you work to overcome them?

Improving the supply of affordable housing requires both preserving what we have and creating new opportunities for residents at all income levels. I would prioritize tools such as inclusionary zoning, incentives for mixed-income developments, and the use of public land for affordable housing projects. Strengthening partnerships with nonprofit developers and leveraging public-private financing can also expand the pipeline of units more quickly. The biggest barriers are rising land costs, limited available parcels, and community resistance to density or new development. Regulatory delays and fragmented funding streams also slow progress. To overcome these challenges, I will advocate for streamlined permitting, stronger community engagement that addresses concerns with transparency, and better coordination across City, County, and State agencies. Affordable housing is central to keeping Atlanta diverse and vibrant. By aligning policy, funding, and community input, we can ensure working families, seniors, and young people can afford to stay in our city.

11. What is the single biggest improvement (policy, program, partnership, investment) that the City can make towards addressing unsheltered homelessness?

The single biggest improvement the City of Atlanta can make to address unsheltered homelessness is investing in a coordinated system of supportive housing paired with robust wraparound services. Housing First models have proven that stable housing is the foundation from which individuals can address other challenges such as mental health, substance use, or unemployment. Without a permanent place to live, it is nearly impossible to access consistent care or maintain stability. Supportive housing must be coupled with expanded partnerships that connect residents to behavioral health care, job training, and workforce opportunities. Collaboration with Fulton County, service providers, and nonprofit organizations will be critical to align resources, reduce duplication, and ensure individuals are not simply moved from one location to another without long-term solutions. The barriers to success are fragmented funding streams, insufficient affordable housing supply, and gaps in behavioral health services. As an At-Large member, I will advocate for increased investment in permanent supportive housing, stronger diversion programs, and transparent coordination between the City, County, and State. By treating housing as the first step, not the last, Atlanta can move from managing homelessness in the short term to solving it with dignity and accountability.



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12. How would you leverage existing assets like the Public Safety Training Center to continue supporting public safety operations, staffing levels, and other outcomes and reduce reliance on private security?

Atlanta must ensure that our public safety strategy is centered on well-trained, well-supported professionals who are accountable to the communities they serve. The Public Safety Training Center provides an opportunity to modernize training, improve recruitment, and strengthen retention by equipping officers and firefighters with the skills they need to respond effectively and responsibly to a wide range of emergencies. My priority would be to ensure the Training Center is used to emphasize community-based policing, de-escalation tactics, and partnerships with mental and behavioral health professionals. By aligning training with best practices, we can build trust while enhancing public safety outcomes. The Center should also be a pipeline for diversifying our public safety workforce as well. To reduce reliance on private security, the City must invest in sustainable staffing levels through competitive pay, professional development, and supportive working conditions. Now that the Center is here, we can use it as a hub for continuous learning and regional collaboration while ensuring Atlanta is prepared to meet its safety challenges. I firmly believe that public safety should remain a public responsibility, rooted in accountability and community trust.

### Pillar 4: A Sustainable and Connected City

13. What is needed to ensure the Hartsfield-Jackson International airport remains the busiest and most efficient airport in the world, as well as an economic engine for Atlanta and the State?

The airport is Atlanta's crown jewel and one of the most important economic engines for the state and region. To ensure it remains the busiest and most efficient airport in the world, we must prioritize infrastructure, operational excellence, and strong local governance. Continued investments in terminals, runways, and technology are critical to handling passenger growth while maintaining a world-class travel experience. Equally important is a focus on sustainability—incorporating green building practices, renewable energy, and efficient transit connections that reduce congestion and environmental impact. Also, the airport must remain an economic engine by expanding opportunities for small, minority, and women-owned businesses to participate in contracts. As mentioned in a prior response, result-driven workforce development is critical. Preparing Atlantans for careers in aviation, logistics, and hospitality ensures that the airport continues to generate opportunity for local residents. Finally, it is vital that the City of Atlanta retain control of the airport's governance. Local management has been central to its global success, ensuring accountability, transparency, and reinvestment in both operations and the surrounding community. By protecting local governance and aligning investments with equity, sustainability, and efficiency, we can secure Hartsfield-Jackson's role as a global leader and a powerful economic driver for decades to come.



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14. Atlanta's water infrastructure is aging and requires long term solutions to meet the demands of citizens and businesses. What solutions would you propose to address this critical need?

Atlanta's aging water infrastructure is a critical challenge that requires long-term, forward-thinking solutions. Safe and reliable water systems are the foundation for public health, economic development, and quality of life, and we cannot afford to delay investments. First, we must commit to a long-term capital improvement plan that prioritizes replacing aging water mains, some of which are over 100 years old. Expanding projects like the Bellwood Quarry Reservoir, which created a 30-day emergency water supply, demonstrates how large-scale investments can improve resilience. Similar efforts to upgrade treatment plants and pumping stations must remain a top priority. Second, Atlanta should expand green infrastructure strategies such as bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavement to reduce flooding and stormwater runoff. Cities like Philadelphia and Chicago have demonstrated that such investments can lower costs while improving water quality and neighborhood livability. Third, we must improve public transparency. A real-time infrastructure dashboard could allow residents to track water main replacements, service disruptions, and spending progress, ensuring accountability. Finally, partnerships with Georgia Tech and local businesses can drive innovation in leak detection, smart meters, and conservation incentives. By combining capital upgrades with innovation and transparency, Atlanta can modernize its water system to serve residents and businesses for generations. We cannot delay—these projects demand immediate action paired with long-term dedication.